

across the rivers in southern Illinois and western Missouri and becomes more common as you head into the southern states.

As its name implies, this native climber likes to grow in wetlands, floodplains and swamps. All of the sites where I've found this plant growing in Ballard and Carlin's counties are flooded for some portion of the year when the rivers decide to overflow their banks. In addition to growing getting its feet wet, *C. missouriensis* prefers a bright location and is usually found competing for sunlight along with all the other vine species that like to grow in swampy conditions. The stems of this herbaceous vine grow to a length of 6-10 feet and the plants die back to ground level each winter. The flowers consist of four sepals (no petals) that curl backwards resulting in an umbel-like appearance.

Finding this plant in the field is a matter of being in the right place at the right time. Searching for the purple-blue flowers before the neighboring vines have put out all of their foliage affords the best chance for success. Another option that requires good eyesight is to search for the distinctive seed pods, sometimes referred to as "Devil's Corners" because

