

## College of Agriculture and Life Sciences Extension Publications

---

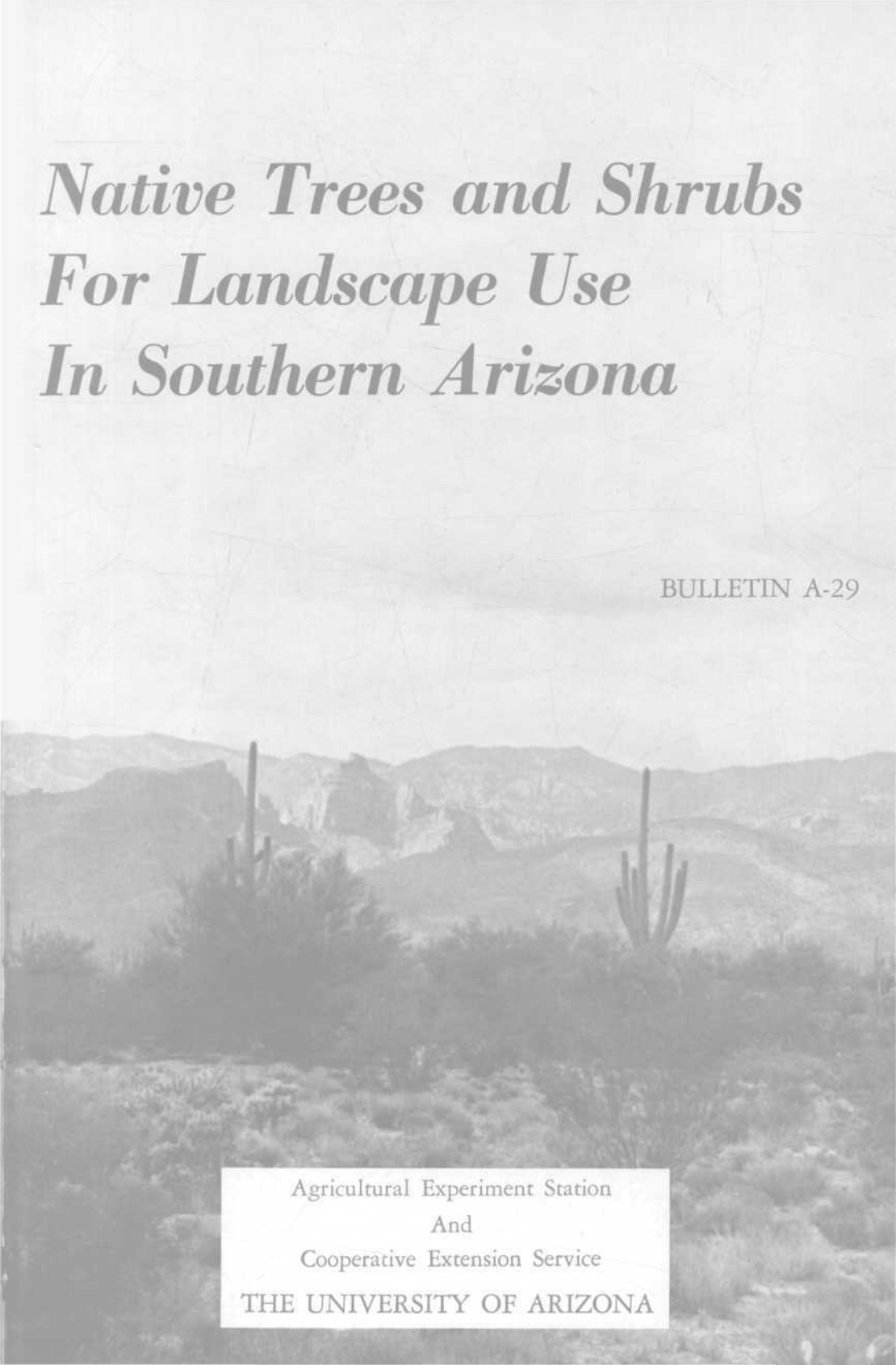
The Extension Publications collections in the UA Campus Repository are comprised of both current and historical agricultural extension documents from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at the University of Arizona.

**This item is archived to preserve the historical record. This item may contain outdated information and is not intended to be used as current best practice.**

Current extension publications can be found in both the UA Campus Repository, and on the CALS Publications website, <http://cals.arizona.edu/pubs/>

If you have questions about any materials from the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences collections, please contact CALS Publications by sending an email to: [pubs@cals.arizona.edu](mailto:pubs@cals.arizona.edu)

---



*Native Trees and Shrubs  
For Landscape Use  
In Southern Arizona*

BULLETIN A-29

Agricultural Experiment Station  
And  
Cooperative Extension Service

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

*Cover Photo: Typical foothill scene*

Here are other publications you may obtain from your local County Agricultural Agent or County Home Agent.

Lawns for Arizona, Bulletin A-6

Pruning Hedges, Shrubs, and Trees,  
Bulletin A-7

Control Insects of Flowers, Shrubs, and  
Shade Trees, Bulletin A-18

Home Citrus in Arizona, Circular 282

Flowers for Southern Arizona, Circular  
243

*Issued in furtherance of cooperative extension work in agriculture and home economics, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U. S. Department of Agriculture. George E. Hull, Director of Extension Service, The University of Arizona College of Agriculture, Tucson, Arizona.*

*10M—Reprinted Dec. 1964—Bulletin A-29*

*Native Trees and Shrubs  
For Landscape Use  
In Southern Arizona*

By

Joseph S. Folkner  
Assistant Horticulturist

And

Robert F. Charles, Jr.  
Formerly Research Associate in Horticulture

The University of Arizona

The plants listed in this bulletin have been selected for landscape use. They warrant further use in relation to development of home plantings, school grounds, parks, and commercial and industrial establishments.

*Plants Are Imported*

People have landscaped their homes and cities over the ages as an expression of the advances of civilization and culture. The emphasis on plant material in the Southwest has been,



Territorial style home landscaped entirely with native plants. Note hedge of Creosote bush and Palo Verde trees.

in the past, on species introduced from other areas. The first introductions were by Padre Kino and other missionaries. Then later, as people migrated either from the east or west coast, plants with which they were familiar were imported. Many species were introduced into the desert from sub-tropical regions and other semi-arid parts of the world.

#### *New Interest in Native Plants*

In recent years an increasing interest in native species for landscape use has been expressed. An inclusion of native plants will add a phase of southwestern vegetation to the landscape, in addition to reducing water usage.

The soils in which many of the native species are growing are similar

to those around residential and other urban areas. The plants have grown for several years without mulching, fertilization, and other common garden practices. These practices would be advantageous when the initial plantings are made, but are not necessary to maintain the species.

The plants included in this bulletin have been growing in this southwestern climate for hundreds of years under conditions of relatively low water supply. They have become adapted to our desert.

In addition to surviving the southwestern climate, these species have resisted insects and diseases. The plants included here have resisted the

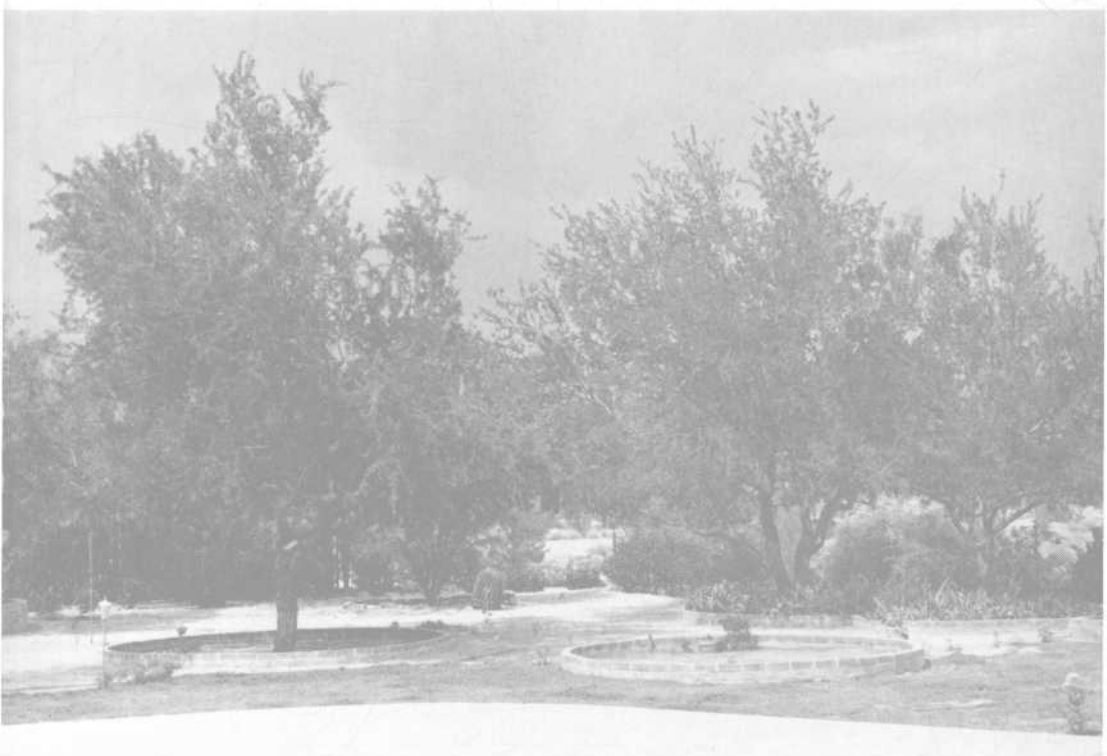
garden insects and diseases that have, as of late, become more troublesome.

#### *Little Care Needed*

Supplemental care of native desert species does not appear to be necessary. Pruning may be done to help shape the plant, but little is necessary.

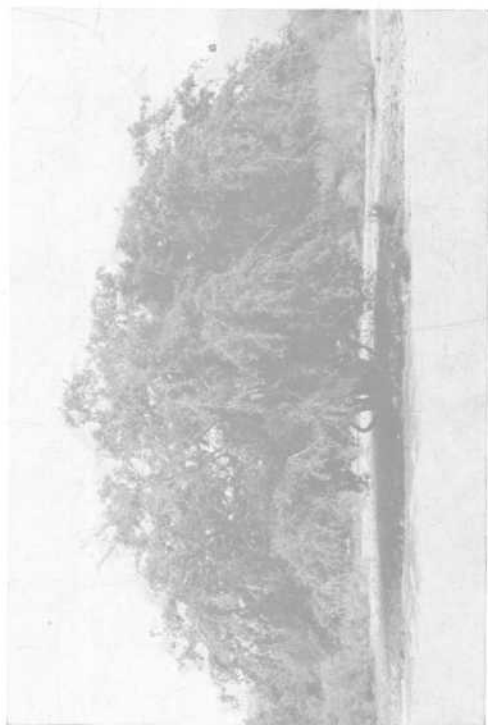
Little water is usually needed to establish these plants. It is common knowledge that the desert goes for months without rainfall. Once a plant is established in the home landscape, it should survive under the same conditions as it would in the open desert.

These plants are as much a part of the desert as the many cacti. They will survive under similar conditions and are much easier to handle.



This garden was developed around existing Ironwood trees.

# TREES



*Celtis laevigata* var. *reticulata* — Netleaf Hackberry  
(palo-blanco)



*Cercidium floridum* — Blue Palo Verde

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	HT. IN FEET	COLORFUL TIME	FLOWER COLOR	REMARKS
<i>Acacia farnesiana</i>	Huisache Sweet Acacia	23-35	January- March	Yellow	In foreign countries this plant is cultivated for by-products such as glue, forage, and flowers. Flowers are aromatic and used for perfume. Deciduous.

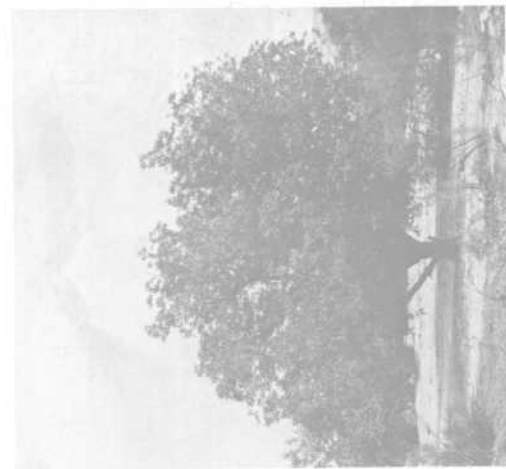
<i>Celtis lactigata</i> var. <i>reticulata</i>	Netleaf Hackberry (palo-blanco)	30-48			Deciduous trees requiring continuous moist soil. Most specimens are generally good shade trees. This tree is more valuable as a shade tree than a flowering specimen.
<i>Cercidium floridum</i>	Blue Palo Verde	15-30	Late March or April	Bright yellow	One of the most attractive desert species. Drought resistant. Requires little care.
<i>Chilopsis linearis</i>	Western Desert Willow	6-24	July- August	White or lavender	Drought tolerant. Has been used widely in landscaping. Graceful habit and large or small tree. Flowers are sweet-scented. Deciduous.
<i>Cupressus arizonica</i>	Arizona Cypress	40-70			Tree grows from a well developed trunk to a crown which is narrowly pyramidal or broad and flat. Excellent landscape species. Rapid growth. An evergreen specimen.
<i>Dalea spinosa</i>	Smoke Tree	6-24	Early Summer	Indigo flowers, bright lavender	This is a good ornamental, but should be restricted to frost-free areas. Loses leaves in drought.



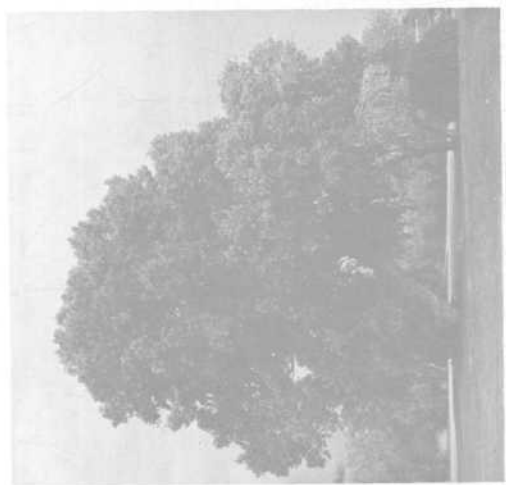
*Chilopsis linearis* — Western  
Desert Willow



Blossoms of Western Desert Willow



*Juglans reppestris* var. *major* —  
Arizona Black Walnut



*Populus fremontii* — Fremont  
Cottonwood



*Platanus racemosa* var. *wrightii* —  
Arizona Sycamore

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	HT. IN FEET	COLORFUL TIME	FLOWER COLOR	REMARKS
<i>Fraxinus velutina</i>	Arizona Ash	35	March-April	Yellow-green	An attractive specimen requiring little care and infrequent irrigation. Good shade tree. Deciduous.
<i>Juglans rupestris</i> var. <i>major</i>	Arizona Black Walnut	40-50			Good shade tree. Is well formed and requires little supplemental care. Deciduous.
<i>Olneya tesota</i>	Desert Ironwood	5-15	May-June	Lavender	Ironwood is one of the most interesting trees of the desert. It has been used for fuel, novelties, and food. Ironwood is drought resistant and requires little care.

<i>Parkinsonia aculeata</i>	Palo Verde (Horse Bean)	40	May	Bright yellow	Found in Southern Arizona, Texas, Florida and to South America. Young bark is smooth, yellowish green becoming brown. Foliage needle or threadlike with leaflets in rainy season. Rapid growth.
<i>Populus fremontii</i>	Fremont Cottonwood	50-75		Greenish yellow	This is an excellent shade tree for ranch or large suburban lots and particularly colorful in the fall. Requires a good moisture supply. Deciduous. Male tree not messy with cotton.
<i>Platanus racemosa</i> var. <i>wrightii</i>	Arizona Sycamore	20-50	February-April		A large tree with a scaling bark. Trunk is white and quite attractive. Good for shade, but requires additional water. Deciduous.
<i>Prosopis juliflora</i>	Honey Mesquite	9-30	April-June	Yellow	Drought tolerant and a good shade tree. Tree has pods and is attractive. Quite common in the desert areas. Deciduous.



*Fraxinus velutina* —  
Arizona Ash



*Prosopis juliflora* — Honey Mesquite

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	HT. IN FEET	COLORFUL TIME	FLOWER COLOR	REMARKS
<i>Prosopis pubescens</i>	Screw Bean Mesquite	6-30	May-July	Yellow	Plant has coiled pods and spiny leaf stalk. This plant is also drought tolerant and common in the desert. Deciduous.
<i>Sapindus saponaria</i>	Western Soapberry	6-15	July-August	White	Requires irregular irrigation. Fruit is thought to be poisonous. Birds or insects rarely approach the tree. Deciduous.
<i>Washington filifera</i>	California Fan Palm	20-50			This tree has been long under cultivation and is native to Kofa Mountains near Yuma. A grove will furnish excellent shade. Requires irrigation.

## SHRUBS

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	HT. IN FEET	COLORFUL TIME	FLOWER COLOR	REMARKS
<i>Acacia greggii</i>	Whitethorn	6	Time to time all year	Yellow	Evergreen with continuous moisture. Many branched with numerous thorns. Flowers in round balls and numerous.
<i>Anisacanthus thurberi</i>	Bush Honeysuckle	3-9	June	Red or yellow-orange	Stands both heat and cold. Tan bark which scales off. Deciduous.

<i>Atriplex canescens</i>	Four-wing Saltbush (Chamiso)	3-6	June-August	Green	Woody, irregular in outline more or less flat-topped. Moderate alkaline soil. Remarkably drought resistant. Adapted throughout state. Evergreen.
<i>Baccharis sarothroides</i>	Desert Broom	3-5	Bright green twigs all year		Bright green branchlets practically leafless throughout the year. Tolerant of saline soils.
<i>Beloperone californica</i>	California Beloperone (Honeysuckle)	3-6	March-June	Red-orange	Red tubular flowers contrasting with green, velvety-haired, flexible branches. Deciduous.
<i>Bouvardia glaberrima</i>	Bouvardia	1-3	May-September	Red (pink-white)	Brightly colored. Prefers partial shade. Excellent for patio wall border. Flower is quite similar to the honeysuckle. Deciduous.



Acacia greggii –  
Whitethorn



Baccharis sarothroides –  
Desert Broom

BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	HT. IN FEET	COLORFUL TIME	FLOWER COLOR	REMARKS
<i>Caesalpinia gilliesii</i>	Bird of Paradise	4-12	May-September	Yellow	Escaped from cultivation and moderately drought resistant. Yellow flower has red filaments offering a striking contrast. Red colored flowers are in occasional cultivation. Deciduous.
<i>Calliandra eriophylla</i>	Fairy Duster (Mesquitilla)	3	February-March	Pink or red	Low, bushy shrub of gray twigs. Drought tolerant and needs little cultivation. Gray pods at maturity. Deciduous.
<i>Cassia wislizeni</i>		3-5	June-September	Yellow	A much branched deciduous shrub with dark bark. This plant deserves more consideration.
<i>Cassia leptocarpa</i>	Cassia	3-4	July-September	Yellow	This is a cold-tender, herbaceous shrub, freezing back to ground in winter. Large terminal panicles of bright yellow flowers. Foliage is ill-smelling.
<i>Cephalanthus occidentalis</i> var. <i>californicus</i>	Button Willow	6-24	June-September	White	Flower groups are ball shaped, making the species desirable as an ornamental. Grows best in cooler areas and in wet soil. Deciduous.
<i>Cercis occidentalis</i>	Western Redbud	6-15	February-April	Pink or lavender	Large rounded shrub with many branches from the base. Grows best in northern half of the state. Deciduous.
<i>Dalea greggii</i>	Gregg Dalea	1	July-August	Rose-purple	Flower clusters are small. Silvery leaves present good background for rose-purple flowers. Deciduous.
<i>Erythrina flabelliformis</i>	Coral Bean Chicote	6-20	June-July	Bright red	Large shrub has bright red beans frequently used for decoration. Its short lived branches grow from a large tuberous root. Grows best in warm locations. S. or W. exposure next to wall. Seeds are poisonous.

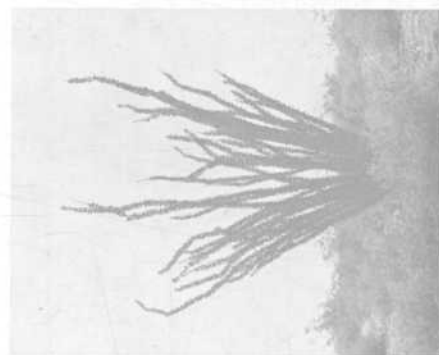
<i>Forestiera neo-mexicana</i>	Desert Olive	6-8	March-April	Yellow	Grows well between three and five thousand feet. Does well in drained, moist soil. Deciduous.
<i>Fouquieria splendens</i>	Ocotillo (Coachwhip)	6-10	April-May	Red	Shrub with slender spiny branches. Frequently used as an ornamental. Does well under drought conditions. Deciduous.
<i>Hibiscus coulteri</i>	Hibiscus	1-3	Year-long	Yellow	Commonly found on well drained soils. Has a rather straggly appearance. Excellent plant for rock gardens. Evergreen.



*Cassia wislizeni*



*Cassia leptocarpa* —  
Cassia



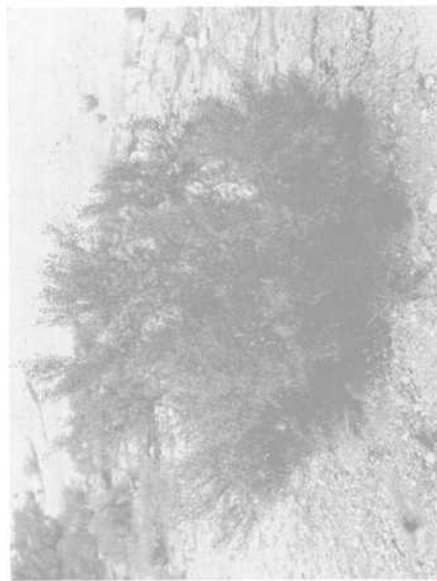
*Fouquieria splendens* —  
Ocotillo (Coachwhip)



*Nicotiana glauca* —  
Wild Tobacco

(Common gray-green plant with range extending south to Mexico City.)

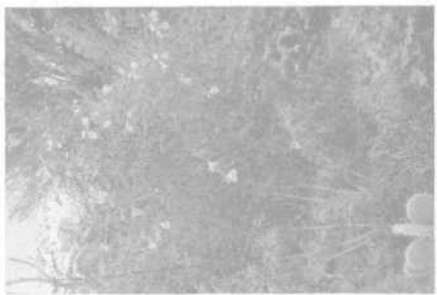
BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	HT. IN FEET	COLORFUL TIME	FLOWER COLOR	REMARKS
<i>Larrea tridentata</i>	Creosote Bush	11	Time to time all year	Yellow	Widely distributed in Southwest. Flowers profusely in spring. Responds to water and fertilizers with lush dark green foliage and many flowers. Plant may be sheared and grown as specimens or a hedge.
<i>Lysiloma microphylla</i>	Lysiloma	3-9	May-June	White	Limited to warm areas three to five thousand feet. Tips may freeze in extreme winter.
<i>Nolina microcarpa</i>	Bear Grass (Sacahuista)	1-3	June-July	White conspicuous flower	Plant resembles a large coarse grass. Common throughout southern Arizona on gravelly or sandy well-drained soil. Quite a showy plant. Evergreen.
<i>Penstemon antirrhinoides</i>	Bush Penstemon	1-4	April-May	Yellow	This plant responds well to cultivation. Does not require heavy rainfall and tolerates near frost temperatures. Deciduous.
<i>Rhus ovata</i>	Sugarbush	15	March-May	Cream (red buds)	An excellent ornamental shrub with bright green leathery leaves. Wide range of temperature and soil. Evergreen.
<i>Simmondsia californica</i>	Coffeeberry (Jojoba)	3-4			Low gray-green plant. Dense evergreen foliage adapted to many uses. May be hedged.
<i>Tecoma stans</i>	Yellow Trumpet Flowers	3-6	August-September	Yellow	Bright yellow flowers and bright green leaves are desirable for ornamental plantings. Plant in warm location. Deciduous.



*Larrea tridentata* — Creosote Bush



*Simmondsia californica* — Coffeeberry  
(Jojoba)



*Tecoma stans* —  
Yellow Trumpet

This publication is issued by the  
Cooperative Extension Service and  
the Agricultural Experiment Station  
of The University of Arizona. See  
your local County Extension Agent  
for additional information.