

Arboretum to Receive Research Grant

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Boyce Thompson Arboretum

Boyce Thompson Arboretum has been informed that its proposal for a new Hatch project, *Legumes of Arizona – An Illustrated Flora and Reference*, has been approved by the University of Arizona Agricultural Experiment Station. This project is ideal because it brings scientists at Boyce Thompson Arboretum, the Desert Legume Program, and the University of Arizona together to work on a plant family of critical importance to the State of Arizona.

The Legume Family is one of the most economically and agriculturally important plant families in the world. From protein-rich food plants such as soy beans, to forage plants such as clovers, to medicinal/herbal plants such as sennas, to ornamental plants such as redbuds, to poisonous plants such as locoweeds, to the many species that host nitrogen-fixing bacteria in their roots, the Legume Family impacts

almost every aspect of human existence. And yet, there is no comprehensive reference to these plants for the United States in general or the State of Arizona in particular.

Problems associated with arid lands habitation and arid lands agriculture are increasing at an alarming rate, and solutions are needed now. Many species of legumes are native to arid lands, making them ideal for the agricultural industry of the water-challenged southwestern United States. *Legumes of Arizona* will serve the needs of many groups including, but not limited to, farmers, horticulturists, landscapers, homeowners, botanists, herbalists, pharmacognosists (individuals who study medicinal plants), and a wide variety of plant researchers.

As we search for new food crops, native plants for the horticulture industry, medicinally useful plants, plant oils and fibers, and even new technologies for fixing atmospheric nitrogen, this legume flora and reference will serve as an invaluable resource. It can, in fact, become a guide for informed selection of legume plants with the greatest potential for success in the desired endeavor, from agriculture to the search for new drugs.



Boyce Thompson Arboretum Demonstration Garden Koi Pond (Kevin Creighton)