

Let's Go

Mentive



...with our landscaping

Let's Go Native

The purpose of this guide is to encourage the use of native plants in our landscape planning. We've chosen plants that mirror the desert around us, yet this list is not exhaustive. With a little rain, the desert seems miraculously transformed. Changing colors, forms, and textures draw people from all over the world, eager to view the desert 'spring blooms'. Those of us lucky enough to live here can create our own little miracle with the tips this "Let's Go Native" guide provides.

Why Native?

Because... native plants provide us with intensely colored flowers, unusual shapes and textures, and heady fragrances. Desert plants do this despite the great fluctuations in day-to-night temperatures, alkaline soils that lack organic material, minimal rainfall, summer floods, drying winds, and intense sunlight.

Because... planting natives saves us time and money. Desert plants require less water, less fertilizer and less maintenance than those grown in milder climates. Using the natural vegetation already in place and adding local drought tolerant plants requires less investment.

Because... ground water, our most precious resource, is limited. The community of Twentynine Palms relies entirely on ground water for all its water needs, a resource not replenished at the rate it is being used.

Because... our choices help protect the native vegetation in Joshua Tree National Park. Our community shares an extensive border with Joshua Tree National Park. As good neighbors, we should select non-invasive species with "stay-at-home" seeds. An invasion of foreign grasses has already altered the Park's fire ecology. In other California deserts weedy mustards have out-competed many colorful annual wild flowers.

Because... Going Native brings us into harmony with the natural beauty of the Mojave right in our own backyards! As a mobile society we tend to carry with us the gardens of our experience. But to attain success and lasting satisfaction as a desert dweller, it helps to remember "to garden where you live."

Nature is our finest landscape architect

Planning Ahead

Plan before you plant! Knowing what to plant and where to plant will save both time and money. Depending in which section of the Morongo Basin you live, you will need to consider your temperature extremes. Site elevation will preclude the use of some types of plants due to freezing (not good for succulents) or extreme summer heat (high elevation plants may not be adapted!). When planning your landscape, make sure each plant has enough space to grow and mature. Don't over-plant - you'll only end up having to severely prune or remove plants later on. Avoid the temptation to plant lawns - these areas will need to be watered twice a day during hot weather, both costly and wasteful. A good design should create a natural habitat with lots of room for future growth. Try sketching out a plan for your yard, measuring off areas on which you'd like to focus. Group plants according to their needs for sun, water, and maintenance.

What should I plant?

Refer to the Plant Selection Chart at the left and keep in mind the following:

PLANTING THEMES - Several themes can be shown off in your garden, such as color, size, or type. You might have a nice cluster of cacti in a rocky area, then a grouping of similar shrubs with grayish leaves, or incorporate a hummingbird garden. Group plants according to their water needs. That way you can keep your irrigation simple and appropriate for your yard. If you find that you cannot live without a small patch of "lush green," consider planting a shady spot with some water-needy species. You might install a small birdbath or fountain to attract a variety of birds.

SIZE - Make sure plants have room to develop both canopy and rooting structures. Remember, a plant's roots can grow to at least twice the width of the above ground foliage.

WATER USE - Again, group plants together that have similar water needs. Plants with low water requirements are normally native, drought tolerant plants. Moderate water use plants are those usually introduced into the area, and high water use plants include lawns, annuals, and some perennials.

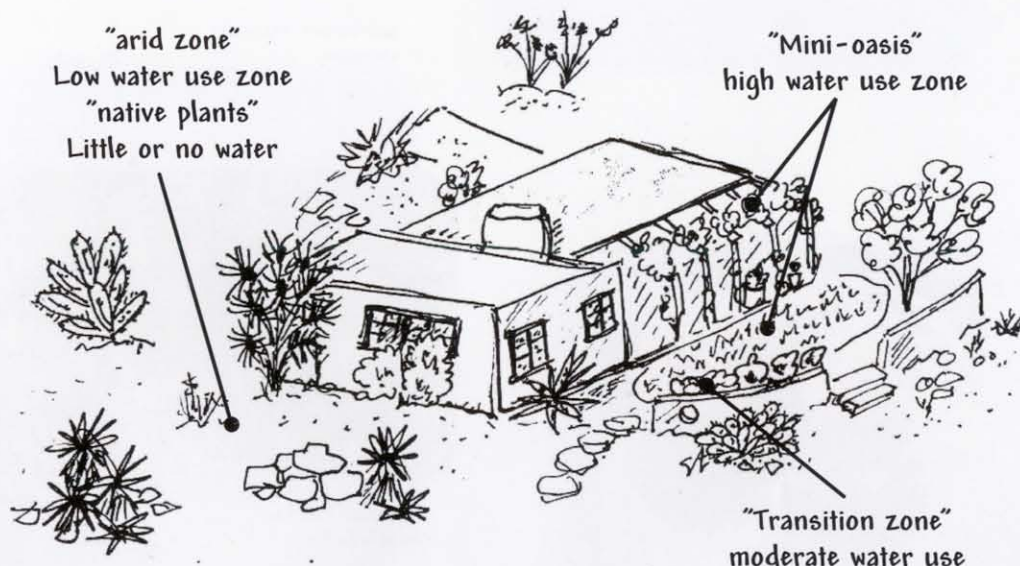
GROWTH RATE - All plants grow at different rates. Over watering natives can result in rapid, spindly growth or root rot.

PLANT SPACING - Keep in mind the mature size of the plants and their use when deciding on spacing; allow them room to grow to their full size. Check the spacing of your plant in the natural landscape. To avoid future headaches and expense do not install plants too close to one another or to buildings, walkways, power lines, and other problem areas. If the plants will be used as a solid mass they should be spaced so that they will grow

If you are building a home or other structure try to disturb as little of the natural vegetation as possible during construction. Natural vegetation stabilizes the soil, protects ground water, and provides habitat for native animals.

Initially it may be hard to find native plants in local nurseries, but always request them. Your interest in native plants will influence suppliers to carry them. Try to avoid cultivars that may cross-pollinate with our local species, and to germinate native plants from collected seed.

Avoid harvesting (or digging up) wild plants. The disturbance to the ecosystem is irreversible, and besides, most native plants don't transplant well.



Basic Concepts of Xeriscaping-

Quality landscaping that conserves water and protects the environment

The Mini-Oasis - Plant thirstiest species closest to the buildings. Annuals, herbs, vegetables, exotics and non-native perennials will not thrive in nutrient-poor native soils and need to be planted in amended soil.

The Transitional Zone - These plantings require supplemental watering, but infrequent irrigation once established.

The Arid Zone - Once established, plants survive solely on annual rainfall. All plants selected for the arid zone should be natives or desert adapted species.

together in 3-4 years. If they will be used as a screen, a windbreak, or to create a hedge they may be planted close together and pruned as a group rather than as individual plants.

How to buy plants

So, you're ready to go shopping, or maybe even grow your own plants! Here's a handy list of things to keep in mind:

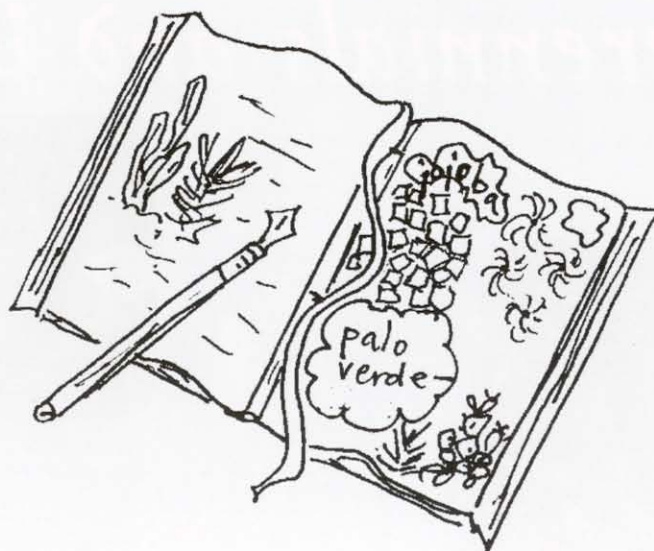
Roots: Make sure the plant has a well-developed root system that will hold together when removed from the container. If roots have pushed their way out from the bottom of the container, avoid it! Root bound plants have a tough time growing out.

Health: How does it look? Is it droopy, yellowish, not looking so hot? Don't buy it! Is it vigorous, the right color and healthy looking? Go for it!

Shape: Keep an eye out for well-developed, uniform shapes... but give our natives a break! They may look a little odd in the nursery, but remember that natives have their own unique characters and shapes. Just pick healthy ones.

Bugs and Disease: Examine your plant for varmints and unwanted troublemakers. Avoid specimens with curled or chewed leaves or fungus.

Please remember! Do not remove unique cacti, smoke trees and ocotillo from native deserts! Before you buy these kinds of plants, make sure they have been grown from seed OR are properly tagged with Department of Agriculture tags, indicating they were obtained with legal permits.



Simple Steps to Planting



BEFORE planting, make sure all underground utilities have been located and marked! Call Dig Alert at 800-227-2600 two days in advance.

When to Plant: The best time for planting natives is October and November; alternately you could plant in February through April. Some cacti and frost sensitive plants should not be planted in cool weather; avoid November through March.

Planting Hole: The planting hole should be 2 times wider than the pot and a little deeper than the height of the pot. Watch out for caliche. This is a hardpan of calcium carbonate that is like concrete to dig through and might break your shovel in half. It is possible to grow plants in areas with caliche soils, but it requires some effort.

Caliche soils cause plant growth problems, including:

- Restricted water movement
- Restricted root growth
- Restricted nutrient availability

Remove caliche if possible before planting.

Make sure the planting hole is large enough for mature plant root development. It might look like a huge hole, but consider how far your roots will grow.

Pre-fill the hole with water; make sure water drains from the hole. Use a good soil mixture when planting. Do not backfill using the caliche you just dug out!

Separating a Plant from its Container: To remove a plant from a container, lay the pot on its side and gently push on all sides of the pot to loosen up roots and soil. Next, carefully pull the pot away from the plant. Pulling the plant out by the stem may harm the plant. This can be tough, but always try to avoid damaging the roots. You can use a utility knife to cut the pot away.

Placing a Plant in a Hole: Carefully set the plant in the planting hole, checking to make sure the hole is the right size. Adjust as needed. Planting too deep will kill your plant; planting too high will expose the roots. After adjustments, roughen the edges of the root system by hand or gently with a trowel to separate roots that have become root bound or tightly wound. This will allow the root system to properly develop. Notes: If roots are circling around the root system, cut them off. This doesn't damage the plant and will prevent the stem from becoming "choked." When planting cactus and ocotillo, lightly dust the root system with sulfur to prevent root disease.

Back Filling and Watering: After setting the plant into the planting hole, back fill about half way, placing the displaced soil back into the planting hole. Gently compact the soil around the root structure using the handle of a spade or shovel. Next, completely fill the hole with water. Allow the water to soak into the root ball and surrounding soil. Complete filling the hole with back fill and gently compact again. Do not over compact the soil! Add another dose of water to soak in and eliminate any large air pockets.

Water Basin: Build a mound with dirt around the outside edge of the planting hole. This mound is used to hold mulch (see Mulching) and water. The basin edge should be about 2-3 inches high and 3-4 inches wide. Finish planting by applying 2 inches of mulch within the basin.

Caring For Your Landscape

Native plants need very little maintenance, but all plants need some attention.

Mulching:

To keep the roots cooler and conserve water, place mulch around the base of your plants. The use of rocks or gravel as mulch is an attractive, natural idea since the high desert winds can blow organic mulch away from the plant. If using organic mulch, make sure mulch does not touch the stem or trunk of the plant, as many native plants may rot near the stem if exposed to too much moisture.

Fertilizing:

Native plants don't need any fertilizer! Isn't that handy? Non-natives may require some extra nutrients. Look for a well-balanced, slow-release fertilizer and apply a few months after planting. Check manufacturer's recommended application.

Watering:

The frequency and duration of irrigation depends on the plant type, soil type, age of the plant and environmental conditions such as sun and wind exposure. The goal is to establish a deep root system that is protected from the problems of heat and water evaporation that occur near the soil surface. All new plantings require regular watering until they become established, usually a period of one year. Once established, desert natives can survive without supplemental irrigation but look better with some additional watering. Other species may need a permanent schedule of irrigation.

Drip systems are the most efficient irrigation systems for desert climates and are quite easy to install prior to planting. Generally trees and large shrubs will need two to six 2-gallon/hour drip emitters. Smaller shrubs and native plants need only a single 1-gallon/hour emitter and the smallest plants need a ½-gallon/hour emitter. Check your soil to make sure the water is percolating into the root zone and adjust the system accordingly. Monitor the plantings for signs of stress, especially during the first year.

An irrigation system is optional if you choose native or very low water use plants. However, be prepared to water by hand for the first year. After establishment, water the plants during times of drought or as needed. Scheduling irrigation during the cool morning or evening hours rather than the hot midday hours will help reduce water loss due to evaporation.

Pruning:

Native plants that are properly chosen for the location and are not over watered will need little, if any pruning. Only prune when necessary to remove dead, broken or damaged branches. As a tree grows, the lower branches may be removed and the canopy thinned to allow more airflow and light penetration. Mature trees only require pruning every 3-5 years. Shrubs may need pruning every year to control growth or remove unwanted flower pods. Avoid shearing and sculpting plants - let them do their own natural thing!

The community of Twentynine Palms promotes the development of efficient, well-planned, attractive landscaping and encourages the use of native plants that conserve water and promote energy savings. Help us conserve, to provide a healthy environment for ourselves and for future residents. Limit lawn size, irrigate efficiently, mulch around trees, adjust watering schedules seasonally, and use water-efficient plants. The water table and your pocket book will thank you.

**Thanks for
"Going Native"**



PLANT SELECTION CHART

	Botanical Name	Common Name	Size HxW	Flower Season	Flower Color	Thorns	Cold Hardiness	Growth Rate	Water Use	Soil
Perennials & Vines	*Argemone munita	Prickly poppy	3'x2'	Sp, S, F,W	White	Y	15°F	Fast	Low to none	L
	*Baileya multiradiata	Desert marigold	6"x1'	Sp, F	Yellow	N	0°F	Fast	Low	L
	*Cucurbita palmate	Coyote melon	1'x6'	S	Yellow	N	0°F	Fast	Low to none	L
	*Datura wrightii	Datura	1.5'x5'	Sp, S, F	White	N		Fast	Low to none	L
	*Epilobium canum latifolium	California fuschia	2'x2'	S	Red	N	15°F	Mod	Low	
	*Maurandya antirrhiniflora	Snapdragon vine	1'x10'	Sp, F	Pink, purple	N	20°F	Mod	Mod to low	L
	*Oenothera deltoides	Dune primrose	1'x1'	Sp, F	White	N	12°F	Fast	Low to none	L
	*Penstemon spp.	Penstemon	Varies	Sp	Pink, red	N	18°F	Mod.	Low	L
	*Senna covessii	Desert senna	1.5'x2'	Sp, S, F	Yellow	N	20°F	Mod	Low	L
	*Sphaeralcea ambigua	Globe mallow	3'x3'	Sp	Orange	N	-6°F	Mod to fast	Low	L, H
	*Vitis californica	California wild grape	Vine	Sp	White	N	0°F	Fast	Mod.	
	Lantana spp.	Lantana	Varies	Sp, S, F	Yellow to red	N	28°F	Fast	Mod to low	L, H
	Melapodium leucanthum	Blackfoot daisy	10"x10"	Sp, S, F	White	N	0°F	Mod.	Mod to low	L
Verbena gooddingii	Fragrant verbena	1'x1.5'	Sp, F	Lavender	N	25°F	Mod.	Mod to low		
Grasses	*Achnatherum hymenoides	Indian ricegrass	2'x1'	S	Cream	N	-33°F	Mod.	Low	L
	*Achnatherum speciosum	Desert needlegrass	2'x1'	S	Cream	N	-13°F	Mod.	Low	L
	*Aristida purpurea	Purple three-awn	1.5'x1.5'	Sp, S, F	Tan w/purple	N	10°F	Fast	Low to none	L, H
	*Muhlenbergia rigens	Deergrass	2'x2'	S	White	N	10°F	Fast	Low to none	L
	*Pleuraphis rigida	Big galleta	3'x3'	W, Sp, S	Tan w/purple	N	10°F	Mod.	Low to none	L
Cacti & Succulents	*Agave deserti	Desert agave	1.5'x2'	Sp, S	Yellow	Y	20°F	Mod	Low	L
	*Echinocereus engelmannii	Hedgehog cactus	3'x3'	Sp	Magenta	Y	15°F	Slow	Low to none	L
	*Ferocactus	Barrel cactus	Varies	Sp, S	Varies	Y	15°F	Slow	Mod to none	L
	*Opuntia spp.	Prickly pear	4'x10'	Sp	Yellow	Y	Varies	Slow	Low	L pref, H
	*Opuntia basilaris	Beavertail cactus	1'x3'	Sp	Pink	Y	10°F	Slow	Low to none	L, Cal
	*Opuntia echinocarpa	Silver cholla	3'x2'	Sp	Yellow	Y	0°F	Slow	Low to none	L, H
	*Yucca brevifolia	Joshua tree	30'x15'	Sp	Cream	Y	0°F	Slow	Low to none	L
	*Yucca schidigera	Mojave yucca	12'x10'	Sp	Purple tinged	Y	12°F	Mod.	Low to none	L
	Agave spp.	Agave	Varies	Sp	Cream	Y	20°F	Varies	Low to none	L pref, H
	Dasyliirion wheeleri	Desert spoon	4'x6'	S, F	Cream	Y	0°F	Mod	Low	L, Alk
Hesperaloe parviflora	Red yucca	3'x5'	S, F	Pink to red	Y	10°F	Fast	Mod to low	L	
Shrubs	*Asclepias spp.	Desert milkweed	4'x2'	Sp	Cream	N	20°F	Mod	Low to none	L
	*Atriplex canescens	Four-winged saltbush	5'x10'	S	Yellow green	N	0°F	Mod	Low	L, Sal, Alk
	*Atriplex polycarpa	Desert saltbush	4'x2'	Sp, S, F	Light green	N	25°F	Mod	Low to none	L, H, Alk
	*Baccharis sarothroides	Desert broom	6'x6'	F	White	N	15°F	Mod to fast	Mod to none	L, Alk
	*Ceratooides lanata	Winterfat	2'x1.5'	Sp, S	Inconspic	N	0°F	Mod	Low	L, H, Alk
	*Chrysothamnus nauseosus	Rubber rabbitbrush	4'x3'	Sp, F	Yellow	N	0°F	Fast	Low to none	L, H, Alk
	*Encelia farinosa	Brittlebush	3'x4'	Sp	Yellow	N	28°F	Fast	Low	L pref
	*Ephedra spp.	Mormon tea	4'x4'	Sp	Tan cone	N	-18°F	Mod	Low to none	L
	*Eriogonum fasciculatum	California buckwheat	2'x4'	Sp, S, F	White to pink	N	15°F	Mod to fast	Low to none	L
	*Fouquieria splendens	Ocotillo	15'x12'	Sp, S, F, W	Orange	Y	10°F	Slow	Low	L
	*Hyptis emoryi	Desert lavender	10'x8'	W	Silvery blue	N	25°F	Mod	Low	L
	*Isomeris arborea	Bladderpod	4'x6'	Sp, S, F, W	Yellow	N	15°F	Fast	Low to none	L, Alk
	*Justicia californica	Chuparosa	3'x4'	Sp, S, F, W	Red	N	28°F	Mod to fast	Low	L
*Larrea tridentata	Creosote bush	12'x8'	Sp, S, F, W	Yellow	N	5°F	Slow	Low	L	
*Nolina spp.	Nolina	8'x6'	Sp, S	Cream	Y	20°F	Varies	Low to none	L	
*Salazaria mexicana	Paperbag bush	3'x3'	Sp	White- purple	N	5°F	Mod	Low	L	
*Salvia apiana	White sage	5'x6'	Sp, S	White to lav.	N	20°F	Fast	Low	L	
*Salvia mohavensis	Mojave sage	2'x2'	Sp, S	Pale blue	N	0°F	Mod	Low	L	
*Simmondsia chinensis	Jojoba	8'x8'	W, Sp, S	Not showy	N	20°F	Slow	Mod to none	L, H	
*Viguiera spp.	Golden eye	3'x3'	Sp	Yellow	N	25°F	Slow to mod	Low	L	
*Zizyphus obtusifolia	Gray thorn	10'x10'	Sp	Yellow	N	15°F	S to mod.	Low	L, H, Sal, Alk	
Cassia wislizeni	Shrubby senna	4'x3'	S	Yellow	N	10°F	S to mod	Low to none	L pref, Lime	
Leucophyllum frutescens	Texas ranger	8'x5'	S	Rosy lav.	N	5°F	Slow	Mod to none	L, Alk	
Rhamnus californica	California buckthorn	12'x10'	Sp	Green-white	N	15°F	Slow to mod	Low	L, H	
Rosmarinus officinalis	Rosemary	Varies	W, Sp	Blue	N	20°F	Mod	Mod to low	L	
Vauquelina californica	Arizona rosewood	12'x9'	S	White	N	15°F	Slow	Low	L pref	
Trees	*Acacia greggii	Catclaw acacia	10'x15'	Sp	Yellow	Y	0°F	Mod	Low to none	L pref
	*Cercidium floridum	Blue palo verde	30'x30'	Sp	Yellow	Y	12°F	Mod to F	Low	L pref
	*Chilopsis linearis	Desert willow	20'x20'	Sp, S, F	Rose to white	N	-10°F	Mod	Ample to L	L
	*Fraxinus velutina	Ash, velvet ash	40'x25'	Sp	Not showy	N	-13°F	Fast	Mod	L, H
	*Pinus monophylla	Pinon pine	25'x20'		Not showy	N	0°F	Slow	Mod to low	L
	*Populus fremontii	Fremont cottonwood	50'x25'	Sp	Not showy	N	0°F	Fast	Ample to M	L
	*Prosopis glandulosa	Honey mesquite	25'x40'	Sp	Yellow	Y	0°F	Mod	Mod to low	L, H, alk
	*Prosopis pubescens	Screwbean mesquite	15'x15'	Sp	Yellow	Y	0°F	Mod	Mod	L, H
	*Psoralethamnus spinosus	Smoke tree	15'x10'	Sp	Deep blue	Y	25°F	Slow	Low	L
	Cupressus arizonica	Arizona cypress	35'x20'		Not showy	N	-20°F	Fast	Mod	L pref
	Eucalyptus polyanthemos	Silver dollar gum	60'x30'	Sp, S	Cream	N	14°F	Fast	Mod	L
	Morus alba	White mulberry	35'x40'	Sp	Not showy	N	-18°F	Fast	Ample to M	L, H, Alk
	Parkinsonia aculeata	Mexican palo verde	20'x25'	Sp	Yellow	Y	18°F	Fast	Ample to L	L pref, H, Alk
	Pinus halepensis	Aleppo pine	40'x30'		Not showy	N	13°F	Fast	Mod	L
	Pistacia vera	Pistachio	18'x18'		Not showy	N	10°F	Slow	Mod to none	L, H, Alk
	Punica granatum	Pomegranate	20'x10'	Sp	Orange-red	N	5°F	Mod	Mod to low	L, H, Alk
	Schinus molle	California pepper tree	30'x30'	S	Cream	N	20°F	Mod	Low	L pref
Vitex agnus-castus	Chaste tree	25'x25'	S, F	Varies	N	10°F	Mod	Low	L, H	

* Plant is native to the Morongo Basin and/or Joshua Tree National Park

Key Code

Water Use

None	Does not need supplemental water once established, looks better if watered during dry periods
Low	Requires some supplemental watering, or place near watered plant
Moderate	Requires water as the soil begins to dry

Soil

L	Light, predominantly sandy soil with rapid drainage
H	Heavy, predominantly clay soil with slow drainage
Alk	Alkaline soils above pH 6.5
Cal	Caliche or hardpan soils
Sal	Saline soils

Cacti and Succulents



Barrel Cactus
Ferocactus (single stemmed) and *Echinocactus* (clustered stems)

- Colorful flowers bloom over a long season
- Needs afternoon shade until well established
- Good in groupings with ocotillo or other vertical accent plants



Beavertail Cactus
Opuntia basilaris

- Clusters of tiny spines dot blue-green pads—take care!
- Tolerant of hot, sunny locations and able to go long spells without water
- One of the least demanding landscape plants



Desert Agave
Agave deserti

- Candelabra stalk develops at maturity from 10-30 years
- Nectar rich yellow flowers pollinated by bats and certain birds
- Commonly reproduces by sprouting from base of mother plant
- The leafy blue-green rosette grows well in pots and as an accent plant on well-drained soil



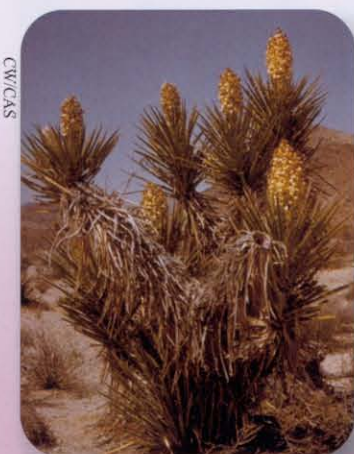
Hedgehog Cactus
Echinocereus engelmannii

- Cactus with upright cylindrical stems, magenta flowers and red fruits
- Stems multiply in spreading clusters
- Use in mixed desert landscape, cactus garden or pot



Joshua Tree
Yucca brevifolia

- Tree-like yucca is the signature plant of the Mojave Desert
- Produces foot-long clusters of creamy flowers pollinated by specialized Yucca moth
- Recommended for elevations above 2500 feet



Mojave Yucca
Yucca schottigera

- Single or multiple trunks protected by shaggy leaves
- Yucca moth pollinates large clusters of purple-tinged flowers
- Banana shaped fruits contain multiple flat seeds favored by birds and mammals
- Can live to a very old age accumulating trunks and height
- Plant in full sun and well-drained soil



Prickly Pear
Opuntia spp.

- Branching cactus with flat pads and long spines; some plants become quite large
- Large yellow flowers develop into purple egg-shaped fruits
- Pads and fruits provide water and food for birds and small mammals
- Good in desert gardens for accent or as a barrier



Silver Cholla
Opuntia echinocarpa

- Multi-branched shrubby cactus with yellow flowers
- Silvery spines provide its name
- Pack rats use dry spiny fruits in their nests
- Very tolerant of desert conditions



Blue Palo Verde
Cercidium floridum

- Deciduous clusters of yellow flowers in spring, blue-green branches year around
- Prune to accentuate beautiful branch structure
- Naturally occurs in washes and on sandy sites
- Small mammals use seed as food



Catalpa Acacia
Acacia greggii

- Fuzzy, fragrant yellow flowers in spring; rust-colored pods
- Deciduous shrub or tree once established can be left alone
- Plant away from walkways
- Seeds are eaten by quail, flowers are a source of nectar for bees



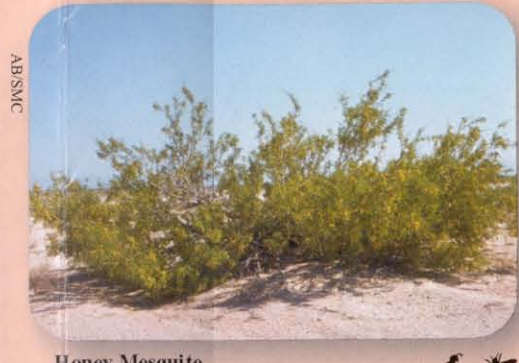
Desert Willow
Chilopsis linearis

- Not a true willow but has narrow willow-like leaves
- Bumble bees and butterflies are attracted to pink trumpet-shaped flowers
- Graceful variation in form makes this a good screening plant
- Fragrant



Fremont Cottonwood
Populus fremontii

- Deciduous tree, grows fast to 40 feet or more
- Requires summer and fall water and roots are invasive, don't plant near septic system
- Leaves changing from green to yellow brighten fall season
- Easily grown from cuttings
- Good shade tree or windbreak; excellent for birds



Honey Mesquite
Prosopis glandulosa

- Deciduous
- Graceful deep-rooted tree naturally found at edge of desert washes
- Both flowers and pods provided food for Native Americans
- Excellent ornamental shade tree, provides food for wildlife



Piñon Pine
Pinus monophylla

- Slow growing evergreen, tree of the cowboy west
- Hardy and drought resistant
- Pine nuts make excellent bird and people food



Screwbean Mesquite
Prosopis pubescens

- Deciduous
- Deep-rooted and drought tolerant with unusual coiled fruit
- A fine desert shade tree with green fern-like foliage
- Provides cover for wildlife



Smoke Tree
Prosopis spicosa (formerly *Dalea spicosa*)

- Slender gray spiny branches give this tree its name
- Grows naturally in stream beds where moving water scours the seeds
- Deep blue sweet-pea like flowers bloom from April to June
- Striking accent tree

Perennials and Vines



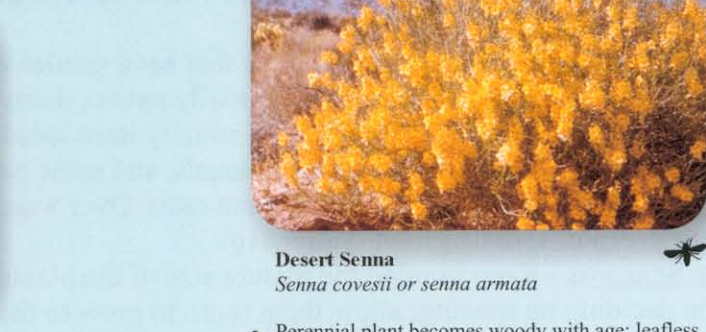
Penstemon
Penstemon spp.

- Easy to grow colorful perennials
- Tall showy flower spikes of red to pink tubular flowers
- Use in rock gardens or to create a hummingbird garden



Datura
Datura wrightii

- Large white trumpet-flowers open in the evening
- All parts of the plant are toxic when ingested
- Create a fragrant moon garden or use for summer green foliage



Desert Senna
Senna covetii or *senna armata*

- Perennial plant becomes woody with age; leafless green stems
- Yellow blooms from April to October; reseeds easily
- Good as mass planting or scattered for burst of color



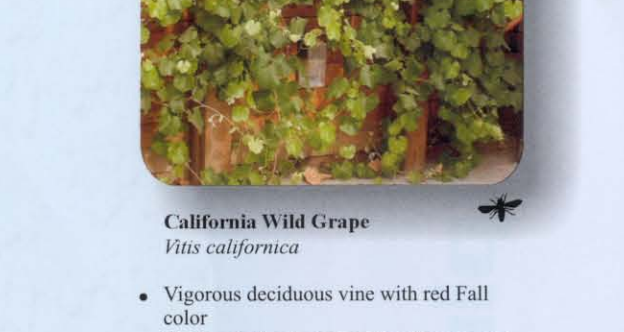
Globe Mallow
Sphaeralcea ambigua

- Grayish-green perennial bears beautiful orange flowers
- Combine with desert marigold and penstemon for beautiful desert flower garden



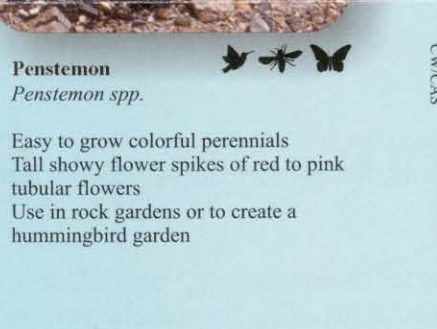
Dune Primrose
Oenothera deltoides

- Attractive blue-green foliage
- Showy white 3-inch flowers are pleasantly fragrant
- Use around a patio for evening enjoyment
- Interesting birdshape when dried.



California Wild Grape
Vitis californica

- Vigorous deciduous vine with red fall color
- Use for fall color, as a groundcover, or a climber



California Fuchsia
Epilobium canum latifolium (formerly *Zauschneria*)

- Bright red tubular flowers attract hummingbirds
- Best in semi-dry location
- Good for edging beds, in sunny rock gardens, or as a groundcover



Desert Marigold
Baileya multiradiata

- Compact short-lived perennial; reseeds readily
- Bright yellow daisy-like flowers are encouraged by pruning back
- Scatter through the landscape to add color; good for bouquets



Prickly Poppy
Argemone sp.

- Tough but short-lived perennial requires very little care
- Showy white 4-inch flowers almost year-round
- Good focal point for flower garden



Snapdragon Vine
Maurandya antirrhiniflora

- Delicate twining vine dies to the ground in winter
- Produces small pink to purple snapdragon-like flowers in spring and fall
- Plant in a pot, hanging basket, or train on a trellis in an entryway



Coyote Melon
Cucurbita palnata

- Handsome dark green ivy-shaped leaves with silver veins
- Flowers are bright orange and produce a gourd-type fruit
- Use as groundcover or climber
- Not edible



Big Galleta
Pleuraphis rigida

- Grow this perennial bunch grass from seed collected locally
- Four-inch long dense flowering spikes appear through summer
- Rejuvenate by cutting to the ground every few years; excellent erosion control



Desert Needlegrass
Achnatherum speciosum

- Feathery green grass grows well on rocky slopes
- Plant from seed collected locally
- Excellent food for wildlife



Purple Three-Awn
Aristida purpurea

- Perennial bunchgrass in small dense clumps
- Grows in both cool and warm seasons
- Slender barbed seeds have three long purple awns at tip
- Gather seeds in fall for propagation
- Good for colonizing disturbed or barren areas



Deergrass
Muhlenbergia rigens

- Forms tall elegant white flower spikes in summer
- Use in mass for naturalizing or in transition zone



Indian Ricegrass
Achnatherum hymenoides

- Feathery form takes on golden color in late summer
- Plant among boulders

Bunch Grasses

Shrubs



Brittlebush
Encelia farinosa

- Silvery-green rounded shrub
- Don't over water; discontinue irrigation in early fall to allow plants to harden off
- Versatile, stunning desert plant with daisy-like yellow flowers provides erosion control flowers
- Wildlife food and cover plant



California Buckwheat
Eriogonum fasciculatum

- Forms a clump of semi-upright stems
- Grows best in full sun
- Useful for erosion control or in rock gardens
- Wildlife food and cover plant



Chuparosa
Justicia californica

- Open, twiggy shrub with gray-green, heart-shaped leaves
- Needs protection from hard frost
- Do not prune until danger of frost has passed; do not prune in fall
- Soak deeply 1-2 times a month in summer
- Plant in full sun
- Deep red tubular flowers attract hummingbirds



Cresote Bush
Larrea tridentata

- Dense, rounded, spreading shrub with dark green leaves
- Use as a wind or privacy screen
- Distinctive odor; sometimes called "rain bush"
- Small mammals use seed as food



Desert Broom
Baccharis sarothroides

- Bright green stems
- Numerous slender straight twigs
- Always green but in leaf only when soil moist
- Female plants covered with cottony fluff (seeds) in late fall
- Useful for erosion control, replanting of disturbed land or natural desert landscaping; somewhat weedy



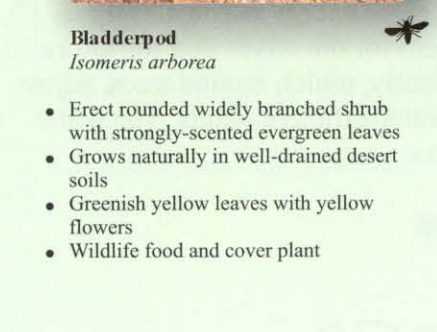
Desert Lavender
Hyptis emoryi

- Upright grey-leaved shrub with spikes of silvery-blue flowers in winter
- Pleasant lavender scent
- Good informal hedge; attracts birds and bees



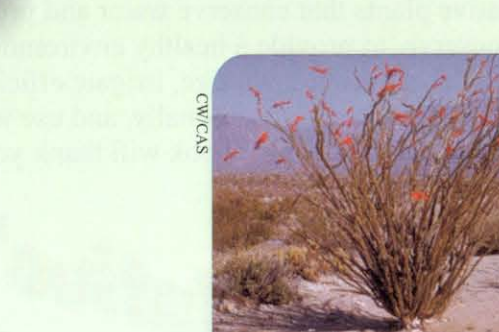
Desert Milkweed
Asclepias spp.

- Slender gray-green vertical stems
- Spring and fall clusters of pale yellow flowers top each stem; horn-shaped ornamental pods
- A strong vertical accent; flowers attract butterflies; good in courtyard or near pool



Bladderpod
Isomeris arborea

- Erect rounded widely branched shrub with strongly-scented evergreen leaves
- Grows naturally in well-drained desert soils
- Greenish yellow leaves with yellow flowers
- Wildlife food and cover plant



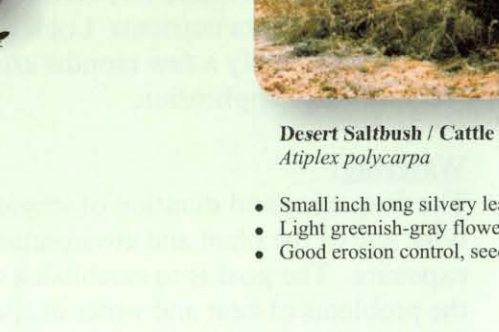
Golden Eye
Figuiera spp.

- Mounded shrub with medium-green foliage
- Irrigate every few weeks in summer
- Medium-green foliage; leaves are broad at base and narrow at tips
- Daisy-like flowers
- Prune after spring flowering
- Very useful landscape plant; nice accent against rocks



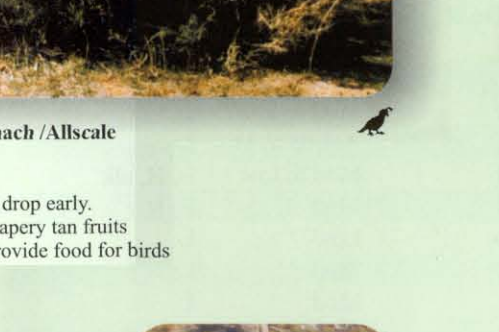
Desert Saltbush / Cattle Spinach
Atriplex polycarpa

- Small inch long silvery leaves drop early
- Gray-green to white leaves covered with felt-like woolly hairs
- Light greenish-gray flowers; papery tan fruits
- Good erosion control; seeds provide food for birds



Joshua
Suaeda chinensis

- Dense, rigid-branching, slow growing
- Dull gray-green foliage; leathery leaves
- Female plants have edible nut-like fruit
- Use as clipped hedge or foundation planting in desert garden



Mojave Sage
Salvia mohavensis

- Compact fragrant rounded shrub
- Do not overwater in summer
- Medium green leaves
- Pale blue flowers in solitary clusters
- Use for low borders near a walkway to enjoy fragrance



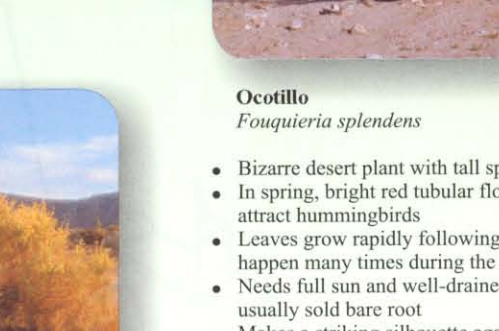
Mormon Tea
Ephedra spp.

- Medium-sized shrub with very slender green stems; appears leafless
- Flowers appear as tiny cones
- Interesting accent plant; great for bird or butterfly gardens



Four-winged Saltbush
Atriplex canescens

- Large evergreen shrub with dense foliage
- Bird cover and food; environmental enhancement plant



Paperbag Bush / Bladdergrass
Salicornia mexicana

- Mint family
- Plant from locally collected seed in full sun with occasional summer irrigation
- Sparse deciduous foliage
- Light-colored pouch-like pods give bush its name
- Intermingle in a flower garden or low hedge



Rubber Rabbitbrush
Chrysothamnus nauseosus

- Erect shrub with numerous stems originating at woody base; sunflower family
- Gray-green to white leaves covered with felt-like woolly hairs
- Good for controlling soil erosion, as wildlife food and cover plant
- Attracts butterflies



White Sage
Salvia apina

- Rounded shrub with silver aromatic foliage
- Fast grower; most growth occurs in winter
- Water once a month in summer when dormant
- Oblong leaves covered with fine hairs
- White or lavender flower spikes
- Use along walkways or patios where fragrance is released by brushing against it

PHOTOGRAPHS

- AB/SMC Brother Alfred Brousseau, St. Mary's College
- CB Carol Bruce
- CC Christopher Christie
- CW/CAS Charles Webber, California Academy of Sciences
- WT William Truesdell
- DB Deborah Bollinger
- DWT Dean William Taylor
- GW/CAS Glenn Vargas, California Academy of Sciences
- JG John Green
- PF Pat Flanagan
- RP/CAS Robert Potts, California Academy of Sciences
- ST Steven Thorsted

Legend

- attracts Hummingbirds
- attracts Quail
- attracts Butterflies
- attracts Insects

References

Composting

When going native with your landscaping, you will actually have little green waste for composting. To learn more about composting and your local Master Composters group, call 1-800-U-RECYCL

Free Plants

The town of Yucca Valley has an "Adopt-A-Joshua Tree" program to save plants that may otherwise be destroyed due to construction. Email Carol Miller at cmiller@yucca-valley.org or write to her at 57090 Twentynine Palms Hwy, Yucca Valley, CA 92284 to be placed on a list for free Joshua trees or Mojave yuccas.

Books

You may find the following additional information helpful as you begin to garden with natives, to discover new plants to try, and to stimulate your landscaping imagination:

Native Plants for Southwestern Landscapes - Judy Mielke. University of Texas Press. 1993

Natural by Design - Judith Phillips. Museum of New Mexico Press. 1995

A Desert Gardener's Companion - Kim Nelson. Rio Nuevo Publishers. 2001.

Organic Garden Design School - Ann Lovejoy. Rodale. 2001.

Websites

California Native Plant Society
www.cnps.org

High Desert Landscaping
www.vvwater.org/guide

Restoration Techniques
www.serg.sdsu.edu/SERG/techniques.html

Coachella Planting Guide
www.cvwd.org/lush&eff.htm

Drip Irrigation
www.digicorp.com

Groundwater Guardians
www.groundwater.org

~ Good Ideas ~

- **Keep the native vegetation on site**
- **Cage and nurture volunteers**
- **Can't find what you want in the nursery?
Grow your own from local seed!!**
- **Rescue plants from development projects**
- **Avoid cultivars of natives**

This publication was created by the Twentynine Palms Groundwater Guardian Team, and made possible through the generous support and assistance from:

- Twentynine Palms Water District
- City of Twentynine Palms
- Joshua Tree National Park
- Morongo Basin Conservation Association
- Private citizens and local businesses

If you have any questions, please contact us at (760)367-7546.