



ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM

PLANT CARE INFORMATION

Foothill Palo Verde

Parkinsonia microphylla

DESCRIPTION: The Foothill Palo Verde is the most commonly seen tree in our region of the Sonoran Desert. It is the nurse-plant for many other species of plants, including the Saguaro. It can be commonly found from 500' to 4000' elevation. It blooms in spring, following the Blue Palo Verde. Flowers of the Foothill Palo Verde have four yellow petals and one ivory petal, giving the appearance of creamy-yellow flowers. Growth rate is moderate and ultimate size will probably be less than 15' tall and 25' across. Ethnobotanical uses include grinding up the seeds for flour, boiling the green pods with meat, and eating the sweet green seeds as well as the flowers.

RECOMMENDED USES: Patio tree, enhanced desert, revegetation.

CULTURE:



Hardiness: Hardy down to at least 20°F.



Sun tolerance: Foothill palo verde can take a little shade, but is better adapted to full sun.



Watering and feeding: Watering for the first growing season will need to be a couple of times a week, barring a big rain. Once established, after several years, it can subsist on little or no supplemental water, though it will grow and bloom better if supplied with some irrigation. No fertilization needed.



Soil requirements: This plant thrives in most any desert soil.



Pruning: As needed; never more than 25% in one year. If rabbits are a problem, cage the trunk until it is large enough to withstand nibbling.