

INDEX OF 85 EXOTIC PLANTS SEEN AT SCOTTSDALE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Exotic plants can be harmful to the desert ecosystem for several reasons: they may steal nutrients from native plants; they may not afford a good home or appealing food for native animals; they may grow more rapidly and take up space that would otherwise support native plants; they may pose greater fire risk in the dry desert environment (for example buffel grass); and finally, they may consume too much water (i.e. not desert adapted).

No photos have been added yet. Text written by staff (if plant name is not hyperlinked, then no description is available here).

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AFRICAN SUMAC (RHUS LANCEOLATA)

- Scientific Name: *Rhus lanceolata*

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AGAVE SPECIES

- Family: Agavaceae
- Native or exotic succulent.
- Usually form in rosette shapes of hard stiff leaves.
- Most species live many years, flower only once, and then die.
- They are found mainly in semi-arid habitats.
- The word agave is Greek and means noble.
- Native Americans roast the hearts and eat them for food use the strands of stalk for needle and thread.

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ALEPPO PINE (PINUS HALEPENSIS)

- Scientific Name: *Pinus halepensis*
- Exotic pine tree.
- Planted for timber.
- Native to the Mediterranean area.
- Reaches heights of 15 -25 m tall.
- This tree was the inspiration for the painting of Paul Cézanne.

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ALOE SPECIES

- Family: Asphodelaceae
- Genus: Aloe
- Flowering succulent.
- Has large fleshy leaves.
- Most have a rosette of leaves.
- Some species are used for medicinal purposes especially for the skin.
- Used for consumption, in drinks or as a tea additive.

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ARGENTINEAN MESQUITE (PROSOPIS ALBA)

- Scientific Name: *Prosopis alba*
- Exotic semi-evergreen tree.
- Grows 20-40 ft.
- Small yellow-green flowers produced in spring.

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ARIZONA HONEYSUCKLE (LONICERA ARIZONICA)

- Scientific Name: *Lonicera arizonica*
- Native perennial vine shrub.
- Berries are eaten by birds and small mammals.
- Hummingbird pollinated.
- Flowers are red and tubular.

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BEAR GRASS (NOLINA MICROCARPA)

- Scientific Name: *Nolina microcarpa*
- Native shaggy clumping grass.
- Produces tall flower spikes from May to June which can grow up to 8 ft. high.
- Flowers are creamy white in color.
- Leaves are eaten by wildlife, during drought.
- Sheep and goats are occasionally poisoned.
- Mexicans used leaves for basketry.
- Native Americans use bud stalks for food.

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BERMUDA GRASS (CYNODON DACTYLON)

- Scientific Name: *Cynodon dactylon*
- Exotic grass.
- Forms a dense mat and has a deep root system.
- Used all over world within 30 degrees of the equator.
- Useful in sports fields.
- Native to North Africa and southern Europe.

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BIRD OF PARADISE (STRELITZIA REGINAE)

- Scientific Name: *Strelitzia reginae*
- Introduce naturalized deciduous shrub.
- Pollinated by sun birds.
- Flowers are large and yellow.
- Plant has an unpleasant odor.
- Seed pods are poisonous.
- Grows 6.5 ft tall.
- Official flower of the City of Los Angeles.
- Native to South America and Mexico.

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BLACK MESQUITE (PROSOPIS NIGRA)

- Scientific Name: *Prosopis nigra*
- Exotic evergreen tree.
- Grows to 30 ft. tall.

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BOTTLE TREE (BRACHYCHITON POPULNEUS)

- Scientific Name: *Brachychiton populneus*
- Exotic tree.
- Saplings grow from drought and fire resistant tubers.
- Named after the large swollen trunks of mature trees which it uses to store water.

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BOTTLEBRUSH (CALLISTEMON SPP.)

- Scientific Name: *Callistemon* spp.
- Flowers are bright red.
- Grow up to 15m.
- Named after cylindrical brush-like flowers.
- In Australia this is the host plant of the hepialid moths.

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BOUGAINVILLEA (BOUGAINVILLEA SPP.)

- Scientific Name: *Bougainvillea* spp.
- Exotic evergreen/deciduous vine or shrub.
- Flowers are pink, magenta, purple, red, orange, white or yellow.
- Grows rapidly in warm climates.
- Native to South America.
- Official flower of Laguna Niguel and San Clemente, California.

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BUTTERFLY BUSH (BUDDLEIA SPP.)

- Scientific Name: *Buddleia* spp.
- Exotic evergreen or deciduous shrub or tree.
- Pollinated by butterflies in spring and early summer.
- Grows no more than 5 m tall.
- Named after Botanist Reverend Adam Buddle.

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CANARY ISLAND PINE (PINUS CANARIENSIS)

- Scientific Name: *Pinus canariensis*
- Exotic evergreen subtropical pine.
- Native to the Canary Islands.
- The wood is some of the best from pine; it is hard, strong and durable.

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CAPE HONEYSUCKLE (TECOMARIA CAPENSIS)

- Scientific Name: *Tecomaria capensis*
- Exotic evergreen shrub.
- Flowers bloom all year and are bright orange and tubular.
- Attracts hummingbirds.
- Fast growing.

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CAROB TREE (CERATONIA SILIQUA)

- Scientific Name: *Ceratonia siliqua*
- Exotic evergreen shrub.
- Cultivated for its edible seed pods which were used as a sweetener, a snack or treat in Egypt, or to make a drink.
- Seeds are now processed for use in cosmetics, tobacco, and paper.
- Used as feed to livestock.
- Grows up to 19 m tall.
- Native to the Mediterranean region.

CAT'S-CLAW VINE (MACFADYENA UNGUIS-CATI)

- Scientific Name: *Macfadyena unguis-cati*
- Exotic evergreen vine.
- Blooms are bright yellow.
- Has 3 pronged claw-like climbing appendages.
- May be a noxious weed or invasive.
- Can climb to 25 ft.
- Native to Central America.

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CENTURY PLANT (AGAVE AMERICANA)

- Scientific Name: *Agave americana*
- Exotic agave.
- Named for its habit of flowering only occasionally.
- Flowers are large and yellow.
- The central flowering spike may reach a height of 25 ft., it will die after flowering.
- If the stem is cut without flowering, a sweet liquid which gathers in the heart of the plant, agua miel, can be fermented to produce the drink pulque, and then distilled to produce mescal.
- The leaves yield a fiber called pita, which can be used to make rope, matting, coarse cloth and embroidery for leather.
- This drink pulque and the maguey fiber were important to the economy of pre-Columbian Mexico.
- Agave syrup or nectar has been marketed as a sugar substitute.
- Life-span is an average of 25 years.
- Native to Mexico.
- Also known as the American aloe.

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CHASTE TREE (VITEX AGNUS-CASTUS)

- Scientific Name: *Vitex agnus-castus*
- Cultivated for its aromatic foliage and flowers.
- The berries, flowers, and leaves are used by herbalists and may be harvested for medicinal purposes.
- The berries are considered a tonic herb for both the male and female reproductive systems.
- It is used for the treatments of PMS and is believed to be an aphrodisiac.
- Grows between 1-5 meters tall.

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CHILEAN MESQUITE (PROSOPIS CHILENSIS)

- Scientific Name: *Prosopis chilensis*
- Exotic semi-evergreen tree.
- Flowers are small yellowish to cream to yellow colored catkin.
- Flowers are followed by edible beans.
- Native Americans make flour from the dried seed pods, use the wood for cooking and create disinfectant from mesquite plant parts.
- Seed pods are a protein-rich livestock feed.
- Grows to 30 ft. high.
- Native to South America.

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CHINESE EVERGREEN ELM (ULMUS PARVIFOLIA)

- Scientific Name: *Ulmus parvifolia*
- Exotic evergreen or deciduous tree.
- Fast growing 40-60 ft. tall and 50-70 ft. spread.
- Commonly called weeping Chinese elm or weeping lacebark elm.

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CLEISTOCACTUS (CLEISTOCACTUS SPP.)

- Scientific Name: *Cleistocactus sp.*
- Exotic cacti.
- Flowers are tubular and the tips hardly open.
- Its name comes from the Greek word kleistos meaning closed.
- Native to Peru, Uruguay, Bolivia and Argentina.

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DEER GRASS (MUHLENBERGIA RIGENS)

- Scientific Name: *Muhlenbergia rigens*
- Native perennial grass.
- Forms in a mound up to 4 ft tall and wide.
- Flowers are yellow above the foliage.
- Native Americans use flower stalks in basket foundations, grass was used as thread, ground seed was used to make bread.

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DWARF RUELLIA (RUELLIA BRITTONIANA)

- Scientific Name: *Ruellia brittoniana*
- Exotic perennial.
- Flowers are large, tubular, and blue.
- 1 ft. tall and wide.
- Attracts butterflies.

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FEATHERY CASSIA (CASSIA ARTEMISIOIDES)

- Scientific Name: *Cassia artemisioides*
- Exotic evergreen shrub.
- Flowers are fragrant, small, yellow and pea-like and bloom from December to May.
- Pods are papery and 2-4 inches long.
- Grows fast to 4-6 ft rounded.
- Native to Australia.

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FILAREE (ERODIUM CICUTARIUM)

- Scientific Name: *Erodium cicutarium*
- Invasive winter annual.
- Filaree is an exotic that occupies empty niches left by disturbances.
- Used by the larvae of some Lepidoptera species for food.
- Harvester ants store seeds.
- Livestock eat foliage.
- Flowers are small and pink to violet in color.
- Native to southern Europe; brought to southwest by early Spanish settlers.
- Also known as Heron's bill; ripening seed pod resembles bill.

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FOUNTAIN GRASS (PENNISETUM SETACEUM)

- Scientific Name: *Pennisetum setaceum*
- Exotic perennial bunch grass.
- An grow up to a meter high.
- It has purple, plumose flower spikes.
- Has been introduced and threatens many native species.
- Tends to increase the risk of fires.

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FOXTAIL AGAVE (AGAVE ATTENUATE)

- Scientific Name: *Agave attenuate*
- Exotic succulent.
- Bloom is chartruse (yellow-green) in color.
- Grows 4-6 ft tall.

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FOXTAIL FERN

- Scientific Name: *A. densiflorus Meyersii*
- Exotic perennial.
- Plumes of soft needles resemble foxtails.
- Grows to 1.5 to 2 ft. tall.

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GOLDEN BARREL CACTUS (ECHINOCACTUS GRUSONII)

- Scientific Name: *Echinocactus grusonii*
- Exotic cactus.
- After about 20 years small yellow flowers grow from the crown.
- Grows in a globe shape.
- May grow to a meter in height.
- Used as an architectural plant.
- Very popular in cultivation, but is rare and critically endangered in the wild.

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GOLDEN SHRUB DAISY (EURYOPS PECTINATUS)

- Scientific Name: *Euryops pectinatus Viridus*
- Exotic evergreen perennial shrub.
- Flowers are bright yellow and leaves are a gray-green color.
- Grows to 1.5 meters tall.
- Also named bush daisy.
- Native to South Africa.

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GRAMMA GRASS (BOUTELOUA SPP.)

- Scientific Name: *Bouteloua* spp.
- Perennial grass.

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GUM TREE SPECIES (EUCALYPTUS SPP.)

- Scientific Name: *Eucalyptus* spp.
- Exotic evergreen or tropical shrub or tree.
- Flowers produce a large amount of nectar which provides food for many pollinators, including insects, birds, bats, and possums.
- Both the Eucalyptus Long-horn Borer Beetle and bells lerps are established wherever this plant is cultivated.
- Essential oil from the leaves is a natural disinfectant and can be toxic in large quantities.
- Both koalas and possums have adapted to be relatively tolerant of this toxicity.
- The oil is used in food supplements, sweets and cough drops.
- Called gum tree because sap will come out of any break in the bark.
- Hazardous because of its falling branches which it may shed to conserve water during droughts.
- Well adapted for periodic fires.
- The oil is highly flammable; trees have been known to explode.
- Fast growing, used for timber, firewood, and pulpwood.
- They have been planted to lower the water table and reduce soil salination.
- Planted as a way to reduce malaria by draining the soil.
- One of the tallest trees in the world, it grows up to 92 meters tall.
- Native to Australia.

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HIBISCUS (HIBISCUS SPP.)

- Scientific Name: *Hibiscus* spp.
- Exotic shrub.
- Used as food plants by the larvae of some Lepidoptera species.
- Some species may have some health benefits.
- Grown for showy flowers and used as landscape flowers.
- Used in paper making.
- The state flower of Hawaii and Malaysia national flower.

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HOLLY (ILEX SPP.)

- Scientific Name: *Ilex spp.*
- Exotic shrub or tree deciduous or evergreen.
- Pollinated by bees and other insects.
- Berries are an important food for many bird species as well as other animals.
- Berries are hard in the early winter but become edible after being frozen or frosted several times.
- Provide birds with refuge from predators.
- Holly berries are mildly toxic when digested by people.
- Grow from 2- 25 meters high.

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HONEY LOCUST (GLEDITSIA TRIACANTHOS)

- Scientific Name: *Gleditsia triacanthos*
- Exotic deciduous tree.
- Flowers bloom in late spring, are strongly scented and cream colored.
- Fruit is a legume pod, it is edible and sweet.
- Seed dispersal is done by grazing herbivores such as cattle and horses which eat the pod pulp then excrete the seeds in their droppings.
- The animals digestive system helps break down the hard coating making germination easier
- Commonly have thorns growing out of the branches.
- Leaves turn yellow in the fall.
- Prone to losing large branches in windstorms.
- Fast growing; reaching heights of 66-100 ft.
- Native to eastern and North America.

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HUACHUCA WATER UMBEL (LILAEOPSIS SCHAFFNERIANA)

- Scientific Name: *Lilaeopsis schaffneriana*
- Semi-aquatic perennial plant.
- Leaves are hollow, cylindrical and bright green.
- Found in water 2-6 inches deep.
- Endangered.
- Threatened by destruction or modification of its habitat, groundwater pumping and demand, livestock grazing and trampling and invasive species such as Bermuda grass and water-cress.

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INDIAN HAWTHORNE (RHAPHIOLEPIS INDICA)

- Scientific Name: *Rhaphiolepis indica*
- Exotic broadleaf evergreen shrub.
- Attracts bees, butterflies and birds.
- Grows 4-5 ft. in height.
- Native to China.

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JACARANDA (JACARANDA MIMOSIFOLIA)

- Scientific Name: *Jacaranda mimosifolia*
- Exotic deciduous tree.
- Flowers are blue and appear in spring and early summer.
- Flowers are followed by woody pods which contain winged seeds.
- Grows 25 to 40 ft high.
- Native to South America.

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LANTANA (LANTANA CAMARA)

- Scientific Name: *Lantana camara*
- Non-native perennial flowering shrub.
- Berries are eaten by insects and birds.

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MEDITERRANEAN FAN PALM (CHAMAEROPS HUMILIS)

- Scientific Name: *Chamaerops humilis*
- Non-native perennial evergreen flowering tree.
- Used as an ornamental tree.
- Has the most northern natural range of any palm species occurring as far north as southern France.

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MEXICAN FAN PALM (WASHINGTONIA ROBUSTA)

- Scientific Name: *Washingtonia robusta*
- Non-native perennial evergreen flowering tree.
- Fruits are eaten by coyotes and were harvested by Native Americans.
- The dead leaves that hang around the trunk provide homes for birds, lizards, rodents, and invertebrates.
- Commonly used as an ornamental tree in the southwestern U.S.

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MEXICAN HONEYSUCKLE (JUSTICIA SPICIGERA)

- Scientific Name: *Justicia spicigera*
- Non-native perennial evergreen shrub.
- The red tubular flowers are attractive to hummingbirds.

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MOSS VERBENA (VERBENA PULCHELLA)

- Scientific Name: *Verbena pulchella*
- Non-native freely branching annual.
- Flowers are attractive to butterflies.

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MULBERRY (MORUS ALBA)

- Scientific Name: *Morus alba*
- Non-native perennial deciduous flowering tree.
- In parts of North America it is considered to be invasive.
- Seeds are dispersed by birds.
- The berries and bark are used in Chinese medicine as treatments for premature gray hair, diabetes, and edema among other things.

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MYRTLE (MYRTUS COMMUNIS)

- Scientific Name: *Myrtus communis*
- Non-native perennial evergreen flowering shrub.
- Insect pollinated.
- Seeds are dispersed by birds.
- On the islands of Sardinia and Corsica the berries or leaves are used to flavor a liqueur called Mirto.
- Myrtle is sacred to Aphrodite.

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NANDINA (NANDINA DOMESTICA)

- Scientific Name: *Nandina domestica*
- Non-native primarily evergreen shrub.
- Used as an ornamental plant.

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NATAL PLUM (CARISSA GRANDIFLORA)

- Scientific Name: *Carissa grandiflora*
- Non-native perennial evergreen shrub.

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OCTOPUS AGAVE (AGAVE VILMORINIANA)

- Scientific Name: *Agave vilmoriniana*
- Non-native perennial evergreen flowering succulent.
- Seeds are dispersed by wind.
- Named after its long twisting and flexible leaves.
- Flowers after 8 years, then dies.
- The leaves can be cut, dried, and then the fibers are crushed to create a brush containing a soap-like substance.

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OLEANDER (NERIUM OLEANDER)

- Scientific Name: *Nerium oleander*
- Non-native perennial flowering shrub.
- Common ornamental plant.
- Highly toxic to humans and other animals, toxins are present in all parts of the plant but most concentrated in the sap.
- If prepared properly parts of the plant are used in folk medicine, records of medicinal use date back 3500 years.

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OLIVE (OLEA EUROPAEA)

- Scientific Name: *Olea europaea*
- Non-native perennial evergreen flowering tree or shrub.
- Olives have been cultivated since ancient times the fruits are used for oil or are fermented to be eaten.
- Olive is the most extensively cultivated crop in the world.

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ORANGE (CITRUS AURANTIUM)

- Scientific Name: *Citrus aurantium*
- Non-native perennial small flowering tree.
- Oranges developed in Southeast Asia.
- The word orange comes from the Sanskrit word narang or the Tamil word orangu.
- Citrus aurantium is the bitter orange variety.

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PASSION VINE (PASSIFLORA ALATOCAERULEA)

- Scientific Name: *Passiflora alatoaerulea*
- Evergreen vine.
- Flowers are fragrant, white, and bowl-shaped.
- Attracts butterflies and is a host plant for the Gulf Fritillary butterfly.

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PENCIL CACTUS (EUPHORBIA TIRUCALLI)

- Scientific Name: *Euphorbia tirucalli*
- Non-native perennial shrub.
- The latex produced by the plant can be used to produce a gasoline like substance.
- The plant is considered toxic but is still used in some folk remedies to treat various ailments.

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PENDULOUS YUCCA (YUCCA RECURVIFOLIA)

- Scientific Name: *Yucca recurvifolia*
- Non-native perennial evergreen succulent.

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PERUVIAN CACTUS (CEREUS PERUVIANUS)

- Scientific Name: *Cereus peruvianus*
- Native cactus.
- Attracts bee, butterflies, and birds.
- Also called hedge cactus, Peruvian torch, or Peruvian apple.
- Blooms are white and open at night.

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PINK FLOWER (EURYOPS SPP.)

- Scientific Name: *Euryops*

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PITAYA (STENOCEREUS PRUINOSUS)

- Scientific Name: *Stenocereus pruinosus*
- Exotic columnar cactus.
- Stalks are bluish-green in color and have a white bloom when the plant is young.
- Important food source for Native Americans.
- Can grow up to 7 meters tall.
- Also called gray ghost organ pipe.
- Native to South-central Mexico.

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PITTOSPORUM (PITTOSPORUM TOBIRA)

- Scientific Name: *Pittosporum tobira*
- Non-native perennial shrub.
- Commonly used in landscaping.

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PODOCARPUS (PODOCARPUS MACROPHYLLUS)

- Scientific Name: *Podocarpus macrophyllus*
- Non-native perennial evergreen conifer tree.
- Berry like cone is consumed and seeds are spread by birds.

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PROSTRATE ACACIA (ACACIA REDOLENS)

- Scientific Name: *Acacia redolens*
- Non-native perennial evergreen shrub.

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PURPLE HEART TRAILING PLANT (SETCREASA PALLIDA)

- Scientific Name: *Setcreasa pallida*
- Non-native perennial flowering creeping herb.

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PURPLE-LEAF PLUM (PRUNUS CERASIFERA)

- Scientific Name: *Prunus cerasifera*
- Non-native perennial flowering tree/shrub.
- Popular ornamental tree.

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QUEEN PALM (SYAGRUS ROMANSOFFIANA)

- Scientific Name: *Syagrus romansoffiana*
- Non-native perennial evergreen tree.

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RAIN LILY (ZEPHRANTHES CANDIDA)

- Scientific Name: *Zephranthes candida*
- Exotic bulb flower.
- Flowers are white.
- Native to South America.
- Also called rain lily or fairy lily.

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RED BIRD OF PARADISE (CAESALPINIA PULCHERRIMA)

- Scientific Name: *Caesalpinia pulcherrima*
- Non-native perennial flowering shrub.
- Amazonian medicine men use different parts of the plant to treat ailments such as fever, cough, and chest pain.

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ROSE (ROSA HYBRIDS)

- Scientific Name: *Rosa hybrids*
- Non-native perennial deciduous flowering shrub.
- The flowers are pollinated by bees and other insects.
- Birds such as finches consume the rose hips and distribute the seeds.
- Deer will browse on rose leaves.
- Rose hips are used in teas and preserves and are desired for their high vitamin C content.
- Oils derived from rose petals are commonly used in perfumes.
- The image of a rose is frequently used to symbolize love and beauty among other things.

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RUBBER TREE (FICUS ELASTICA)

- Scientific Name: *Ficus elastica*
- Non-native perennial flowering evergreen tree.
- The flowers of the tree can only be pollinated by a specific species of fig wasp.
- The milky white sap can be used to make rubber.

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SAGO PALM (CYCUS REVOLUTE)

- Scientific Name: *Cycus revolute*
- Non-native perennial evergreen tree
- The starchy pith is used to make sago, but must be treated properly to remove toxins.

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SISAL AGAVE (AGAVE SISALANA)

- Scientific Name: *Agave sisalana*
- Non-native perennial evergreen succulent.
- Extensively used in the fiber industry.

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SPANISH DAGGER (YUCCA GLORIOSA)

- Scientific Name: *Yucca gloriosa*
- Non-native perennial evergreen shrub.

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SPRENGER ASPARAGUS FERN (ASPARAGUS DENSIFLORUS "SPRENGERI")

- Scientific Name: *Asparagus densiflorus Sprengeri*
- Non-native perennial evergreen shrub.

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STAR JASMINE (TRACHELOSPERMUM JASMINOIDES)

- Scientific Name: *Trachelospermum jasminoides*
- Exotic evergreen vine.
- Produces fragrant white flowers in springtime.
- Perfume is made with flowers and stems.
- Grown as an ornamental plant in the southeastern United States.
- Native to China.
- Also called confederate jasmine.

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SYCAMORE (PLATANUS SPP.)

- Scientific Name: *Platanus* spp.
- Non-native perennial deciduous tree.
- Wind pollinated.

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TREE PHILODENDRON (PHILODENDROM SELLOUM)

- Scientific Name: *Philodendrom selloum*
- Non-native perennial evergreen large shrub.
- It is unknown why but the large flowers of the plant produce heat by metabolizing fat.

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WATER LILY (NYMPHEA SPP.)

- Scientific Name: *Nymphaea* spp.
- Exotic.
- Flowers are showy and fragrant.
- Leaves cling to the top of the water by surface tension.
- Can cause problem if introduced in water systems.

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WEeping FIG (FICUS BENJAMINA)

- Scientific Name: *Ficus benjamina*
- Non-native perennial evergreen tree.
- The small fruit is eaten by some birds.

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WILLOW ACACIA (ACACIA SALICINA)

- Scientific Name: *Acacia salicina*
- Non-native perennial evergreen large shrub/small tree.
- In its native Australia the bark has been used by aborigines as a toxin for fishing.

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WILLOW PITTOSPORUM (PITTOSPORUM PHILLYRAOIDES)

- Scientific Name: *Pittosporum phillyraoides*
- Non-native perennial evergreen small tree.

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XYLOSMA (XYLOSMA CONGESTUM)

- Scientific Name: *Xylosma congestum*
- Non-native perennial evergreen large shrub/small tree.
- Common hedge plant.

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