

# Desert shrubs can save water for homeowners

See Mt. View News 15 April 82

Last week this column carried the first part of a two-part article on plants that can be used in landscaping in this area that require little water once established. The first part covered herbaceous perennials, ground covers and vines. Following is a description of shrubs that can similarly be used. Next week will be the conclusion of this series of articles.

## Shrubs for desert gardens

- White thorn acacia (*Acacia constricta*) — 10-15 foot; balls of fragrant yellow flowers in summer; use as background screen or barrier plant; may be pruned into multi-trunked tree; finely divided leaves; deciduous.
- Desert Milkweed (*Asclepias subulata*) — 2-4 foot; clusters of cream-colored flowers in summer used as accent plant or for contrasting texture of a leafless, erect, gray-stemmed plant.
- Atriplex or salt bushes (*Atriplex lentiformis*, *A. hymenelytra*, *A. canescens*) — 2-10 foot; flowers inconspicuous but leaves are gray to silver gray; used as background, informal hedge to accent plant; fast to moderate growth; *A. hymenelytra* usually striking for a 2-3 foot plant with silvery, holly-like foliage and compact growth; also referred to as desert holly.
- Desert broom (*Baccharis sarothroides*) — 5-8 foot; bright green foliage; used as fast growing background or screen plant; choose plants from male plant cuttings to prevent seed litter.
- Chuparosa (*Beloperone californica*) — 5 foot;



tubular red flowers in winter which hummingbirds love, use as accent or specimen plant; moderately fast growth; deciduous.

- Fairy duster (*Callitriche eriophylla*) — 2-5 foot; pink powder puff flowers in spring; delicate accent plant; use full sun location; slow growth; fine textured foliage, drought-hardy, deciduous.
- Feathery cassia (*Cassia artemesioides*, *C. chalcidiana*, *C. nemophila*, *C. sturtii*, *C. biflora*) — 4-6 foot; masses of yellow flowers in spring; specimen plant, informal hedge or barrier plant, also contrasting textures; *C. artemesioides* earliest blooming in March; *C. sturtii* blooms both spring and fall; moderate growth.
- Indigo bush (*Dalea wislizeni*) — 2-3 foot; many small purple flowers in spring; fast growth; accent plant, large scale ground cover; root suckers freeze; *D. bicolor* is similar but has silvery or bluish foliage.
- Trailing indigo bush (*Dalea greggii*) — Tiny blue lavender flowers; dense, grayish foliage with rapid

growth; ground, hill or bank cover, erosion control plant.

- Hop bush (*Dodonaea viscosa*) — 6-8 inch; fan fruits are attractive; background or hedge plant with moderate growth; *D. microzyga* has a fine textured foliage and small maroon fruits.
- Orange hummingbird plant (*Jacobinia giesbreghiana*) — 3 foot; tubular orange flowers spring and fall; fast growth; lush foliage; mounding habit; does best with regular deep watering; some shade.
- Creosote bush (*Larrea divaricata*) — 3-8 foot; small yellow flowers after rains, fuzzy white fruits; open-air shrub with fast growth; interesting multi-stemmed plant with small dark green waxy leaves that are drought deciduous.
- Sugar sumac (*Rhus ovata*) — 5-8 foot; small pink flowers in spring; background or screen plant of moderate growth; attractive tall shrub, similar to privet.
- Ruellia (*Ruellia peninsularis*) — 3 foot; blue

(Corrections from last week's Desert Place)

- Hop bush: 6-8 foot.
- Yellow trumpet bush: 5-15 foot.
- Gazania: 1 foot.
- Blackfoot daisy: 1 foot.
- Evening primrose: 1 foot.
- Beard tongue: 2-3 foot.
- Elephant plant food: 1-3 foot.
- Desert marigold: 1-2 foot.

□ **Wildflower identification walk:** On Wednesday, April 21, the Conservation Committee of CCIA will sponsor a wildflower identification walk in the direction of Bartlett Lake. Meet in the gravel parking lot in front of the Carefree Pharmacy at 9 a.m. and carpool from there. Wear rough shoes and clothing. Everyone interested in this subject is welcome. The walk will be short and easy.

Flowers most of year; accent plant; fast growth; compact growth habit; frost tender in coldest areas of Valley.

- Jojoba (*Simmondsia chinensis*) — 5-8 foot; inconspicuous flowers; background or hedge; slow to establish then moderate growth; dense; mounding habit; nuts on female plants.
- Yellow trumpet bush (*Tecoma stans*) — 5 foot; yellow trumpet-shaped flowers on clusters; background or hedge; slow to establish, then moderate growth; lush foliage with regular watering; may frost but grows back quickly.
- Arizona rosewood (*Vauzuelinia californica*) — 8-20 foot; attractive white flowers; background or accent plant; slow to establish then moderate growth; rich leathery foliage.
- Desert fern bush (*Lysiloma thomberi*) — 5-20 foot; specimen plant of moderate growth; deciduous; delicate textured plant; with proper pruning will form small tree in time.
- Mexican bird of paradise (*Caesalpinia pulcherrima*) — 3-6 foot; exotic red flowers, April-September; green feathery foliage.
- Lemonade sumac, skunk bush (*Rhus trilobata*) — 8 foot; inconspicuous flowers but red fruit decorative and attracts birds; also makes tasty lemonade-like drink; good hedge or space definer; rapid growth with watering; dark green, deciduous shrub; leaf litter.
- Yellow orchid vine (*Mascagnia macrophylla*) — vine, bright yellow blossoms; fast growth; sprawling evergreen; severe cold freezes back but recovers fast.