

Desert broom (*Baccharis sarothroides*) — A shrub with many erect, grooved and angled branches which have few or no leaves at blooming time (September to February).

The flowers are small, numerous and whitish. As the achenes (seeds) mature, the pappus (found at the top of each achene) elongates and spreads out to form little sails by which the seeds are carried in the breeze.

This shrub is very common along streets and roads.

No common name (Hymenothrix loomisii) — This rather attractive plant is growing in the median opposite The Town Dump. The seed may have been scattered there, as this area is south of its normal range.

Its white flowers make it stand out among the predominantly yellow-flowered plants. The flowers are all disk flowers with protruding stamens. The numerous heads are at the tips of almost-leafless stalks. Leaves are dark green, compound and divided into several narrow divisions.

Paper-flower (*Psilostrophe cooperi*) — Paper-flower may bloom throughout the year. It is woody at the base and usually several stems are not over 1-foot high. The stems and leaves are gray-green and covered with matted hairs.

The yellow ray flowers are usually five or six in number and 1/2- to 3/4-inch long. The disk flowers are also yellow, but more numerous. The ray flowers remain on the stem and become papery, hence the name.

Stick-weed, desert straw, (*Stephanomeria tenuifolia*) — A perennial that forms a small bush or, if supported by a fence or other plant, may become several feet high. The leaves are narrow; those of the upper stem are so small that they are not noticeable, giving rise to the name "stick-weed".

The flowers are small, growing on short stalks in the axils. Since only a few are in bloom at one time, they are easily missed, but may be in bloom from May to October. The small heads are made up of five pink ray flowers and no disk flowers.

The protruding pistils and stamens are a darker shade. A similar annual species grows almost throughout Arizona.

Spurge, (*Euphorbia melandenia*) — This spurge is a perennial, but will bloom its first year. The small leaves are opposite and the two halves of the leaf are very peculiar and hard to describe. The tiny flowers of this species have four white petal-like structures, and at the base of

blooms throughout the year at someplace in its range.

If there is a little bag-like structure hanging from the flowers, that is a fertilized ovary or seed case containing seeds. This small spurge is quite noticeable because it is spread out on or near the ground; and all the flowers along



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the stems, with their shiny white petal-like parts, are facing upwards.

Plains blackfoot (*Melampodium leucanthum*) — This small perennial is herbaceous and forms roundish mounds of many stems with narrow gray-green opposite leaves, and flowers about 3/4- to 1-inch in diameter.

The ray flowers have broad white blades and the disk flowers are yellow. The flowers are delicately fragrant.

This attractive plant blooms from March to November in the Desert Foothills, but not out on the flat desert.

Twinberry (*Menodora scabra*) — This herbaceous plant is a member of the olive family, thus also related to the ash trees.

The common name tells us that the fruit or seedpod is twinned or two-lobed. The several stems are woody only at the base. The leaves are so small and much longer than wide.

The flower is a bright lemon-yellow, with a short tube enclosed by the seven or more lobes of the calyx — the usual five lobes of the flower are longer than the tube.

Golden-eye (*Viguiera deltoides*) — A small much-branched shrub with almost triangular leaves. The edges of the leaves have rounded teeth, and the surface feels rough to your touch. The medium-sized flowers have bright yellow rays, and the disk flowers are a more golden yellow — as the name golden-eye suggests.

Viguiera may be in bloom anytime from January to October.

Fairy duster (*Calliandra eriophylla*) — Fairy duster is a low spring-blooming shrub, but some plants are in bloom this fall. They may be seen in the median opposite the Cave Creek Post Office.

Calliandra means beautiful stamens, and well-describes the flowers which have many pink stamens close to an inch long. The leaves are compound with numerous small leaflets similar to other members of the mimosa family.

Anyone wishing to help identify blooming native plants may call or contact Gladys Nisbet at 488-3288.