Blue Palo Verde

Cercidium floridum



Blue Palo Verde stems
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 20 feet

Spread: 30 feet

Sunlight:

Hardiness Zone: 8

Other Names: California Hedgenettle, syn. Parkinsonia florida

Description:

A fast growing large shrub or small tree presenting an upright habit with a rounded crown; long lasting, large yellow flowers provide a stunning spring color display; drought tolerant once established

Ornamental Features

Blue Palo Verde features showy panicles of yellow orchid-like flowers with red spots at the ends of the branches from early spring to early summer. It has attractive grayish green foliage with hints of powder blue. The tiny oval pinnately compound leaves are highly ornamental and remain grayish green throughout the winter. The fruits are showy brown pods displayed from mid summer to early fall. The fruit can be messy if allowed to drop on the lawn or walkways, and may require occasional clean-up. The smooth bluish-green bark and dark green branches are extremely showy and add significant winter interest.

Landscape Attributes

Blue Palo Verde is a multi-stemmed evergreen tree with an upright spreading habit of growth. It lends an extremely fine and delicate texture to the landscape composition which can make it a great accent feature on this basis alone.

This tree will require occasional maintenance and upkeep, and should only be pruned after flowering to avoid removing any of the current season's flowers. It is a good choice for attracting birds and butterflies to your yard. Gardeners should be aware of the following characteristic(s) that may warrant special consideration;

- Spiny
- Self-Seeding

Blue Palo Verde is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade
- General Garden Use

Planting & Growing

Blue Palo Verde will grow to be about 20 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 30 feet. It has a low canopy with a typical clearance of 4 feet from the ground, and is suitable for planting under power lines. It grows at a fast rate, and under ideal conditions can be expected to live for approximately 30 years.

This tree should only be grown in full sunlight. It is very adaptable to both dry and moist growing conditions, but will not tolerate any standing water. It is considered to be drought-tolerant, and thus makes an ideal choice for xeriscaping or the moisture-conserving landscape. It is particular about its soil conditions, with a strong preference for clay, alkaline soils, and is able to handle environmental salt. It is highly tolerant of urban pollution and will even thrive in inner city environments. This species is native to parts of North America.