Palo Brea

Cercidium praecox



Palo Brea
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Height: 20 feet

Spread: 20 feet

Sunlight: ○

Hardiness Zone: 8

Other Names: Sonoran Palo Verde, syn. Parkinsonia praecox

Description:

A majestic, semi-evergreen small tree presenting an open, spreading, umbrella shaped canopy of turning, twisting branches; long lasting, large yellow flowers provide a stunning spring color display; drought tolerant once established



Palo Brea flowers
Photo courtesy of NetPS Plant Finder

Ornamental Features

Palo Brea features showy panicles of yellow orchid-like flowers with a red blotch at the ends of the branches from mid to late spring. It has attractive bluish-green evergreen foliage. The tiny oval pinnately compound leaves are highly ornamental and remain bluish-green throughout the winter. The fruits are showy brown pods displayed from mid summer to early fall. The smooth bluish-green bark and dark green branches are extremely showy and add significant winter interest.

Landscape Attributes

Palo Brea 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

Palo Brea is recommended for the following landscape applications;

- Accent
- Shade
- General Garden Use

Planting & Growing

Palo Brea will grow to be about 20 feet tall at maturity, with a spread of 20 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 50 years or more.

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.