

## The South Texas Brush Country

Bounded on the west by the Rio Grande and Mexico, and on the north by the Balcones Escarpment, the South Texas Brush Country is vast, serene, and unpeopled (Winkler, 1982). Elevations range from sea level to 1,000 feet and rainfall varies from 30 inches in the east to 16 inches in the west. Soils are varied and highly complex. Generally extremely basic to slightly acidic, they range from deep sands to tight clays and clay loams. With average annual temperatures around 73 °F, the South Texas Plains boasts the longest growing season in Texas, lasting up to 365 days in some years at Brownsville (Simpson, 1988). This warm region is, however, a land of recurrent droughts, a factor which distinctly marks the landscape. Nearly everything that grows here is drought-tolerant, as rainfall is well below the amount needed for conventional forest trees (Wasowski, 1988). Sporadic rains, however, will trigger wildflowers to bloom unexpectedly at almost any time of year.

The South Texas region owes its diversity to the convergence of the Chihuahuan desert to the west, the Tamaulipan thornscrub and subtropical woodlands along the Rio Grande to the south and the coastal grasslands to the east. Essentially a gently rolling plain, the region is cut by arroyos and streams, and is blanketed with low-growing vegetation--mesquite, granjeno, huisache, catclaw, blackbrush, cenizo and guayacan. Wherever conditions are suitable, there is a dense understory of smaller trees and shrubs such as coyotillo, paloverde, Mexican olive, and various species of cacti. The woody vegetation of the South Texas Plains is so distinctive that the area is also referred to as the "brush country."

The Lower Rio Grande Valley is a highly distinctive subregion of the South Texas Plains. Usually defined as Cameron, Willacy, Hidalgo, and Starr counties, it contains the only subtropical area in Texas. Once supporting majestic groves of Texas palmetto, Montezuma cypress, tall ebony-anaqua woodlands, and jungle-like expanses of Tamaulipan thorny shrubs, today much of it has been bulldozed, plowed or paved. In fact, the once extensive groves of the native Sabal palm which used to flourish here are now reduced to only a few stands near Brownsville. Soils in this subtropical region range from sands to heavy clays. Clays and extremely poor drainage dominate the resaca areas (old meandering paths of the Rio Grande) (Wasowski, 1988).

Despite a history of land use that is the oldest in the state, the Rio Grande Plain harbors many rare species of plants and animals (Texas General Land Office, 1984). It is here that a few wild tropical cats--ocelots and jaguarundis--still take refuge. Other special animals include Ferruginous pygmy-owl, Green Jay, Elf owl, Texas tortoise, Indigo snake and Mexican burrowing toad. There are also a surprising number of plants that occur here and nowhere else, especially among the cactus family, like Albert's black lace cactus, star cactus, and Runyon's cory cactus.

**TEXAS WILDSAPES NATIVE PLANT TABLES  
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## Wildscapes Plant List -- South Texas Plains

SPECIES	FAMILY	HABIT/ HEIGHT	FLOWER COLOR	FRUIT	SUN EXPOSURE	HABITAT	SOILS	VEGETATION ZONE										ORNAMENTAL VALUE	WILDLIFE VALUE
								1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		
<i>Bumelia lanuginosa</i> Woolly-bucket bumelia	Sapotaceae - Sapodilla Family	40' - 80' Tree, large	White perfect flowers, fragrant June - July	Berries, blue-black, Sept. - Oct.	Full sun, Part shade	Mostly uplands, sometimes bottomlands, woodlands, edges and fencerows.	Sandy loams, loams, and clays. Tolerates gumbo. Well-drained, mesic.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Large shade tree with simple green leaves with white woolly undersurface. Persistent.	Several species of birds feed on the fruit, including cardinals, finches, robins, cedar waxwings, warblers, and vireos. Good cover and nesting tree due to protective thorns. Good substrate for insectivorous birds.
<i>Carya illinoensis</i> Pecan	Juglandaceae - Walnut Family	50' - 60' Tree, large	inconspicuous catkins, m & f, yellowish on same tree. March - May	Nut, Sept. - Oct.	Full sun, Part shade	Prefers rich bottomlands	Sands, loams, or clays. Well-drained, mesic.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Beautiful shade tree with elegant compound leaves. Prefers deep, rich soils but will grow in thinner soils. Sometimes turns yellow in fall. Deciduous.	Sweet edible nuts valuable for all kinds of wildlife, birds and mammals alike including woodpeckers, jays, sparrows, fox squirrel, gray squirrel, opossum, and raccoons. Good substrate for insectivorous birds. Larval host plant for Gray hairstreak.
<i>Celtis laevigata</i> Sugarberry	Ulmaceae - Elm Family	40' - 60' Tree, large	inconspicuous, small, greenish. May - June	Berry (drupe), orange-red to purplish-black, July-Aug.	Full sun, part shade	Rocky or alluvial soils along streams, in woodlands & thickets.	Sands, loams, and clays. Prefers rich soils, but will tolerate wide range. Well-drained, mesic to xeric; drought tolerant once established.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Fast-growing shade tree adapted to most soils. Very drought tolerant. Yellow autumn color. Deciduous.	Fruit eaten by bluebirds, robins, cardinals, mockingbirds, cedar waxwings, thrashers, & sparrows. Good nest & cover tree, esp. for neotropical migrants. Larval food plant for Question Mark, Mourning Cloak, Pale Emperor, Snout & Hackberry butterflies.
<i>Condalia hookeri</i> Brasil	Rhamnaceae - Buckthorn Family	12' - 30' Tree, large	inconspicuous yellowish flowers. March - April	Drupes, blue-black, sweet & fleshy, Sept. - Oct.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers dryish limestone hills, also locally found on Rio Grande plains	Sands, loams, & clays. Well-drained, mesic-xeric.	X					X	X				Can grow to be large shade tree in South Texas. Usually a small tree with spatulate lime green leaves. Flowers in spring, but fruits sporadically throughout late summer & fall. Has an attractive shape. Persistent to Evergreen.	Continuously bears fruit that is sought after by many kinds of birds: robins, bluebirds, cardinals, towhees, sparrows, mockingbirds, finches, & gamebirds. Thorns make it a good cover & nesting tree. Flowers attract many insects. LHP of Snout butterfly.

<i>Ehretia anacua</i> Anaqua	Boraginaceae Borage Family	25' - 45' Tree, large	Showy white clusters of flowers, fragrant. March - Nov. with the rains	Drupes, orange, April - June	Full sun, part shade, dappled shade	Prefers thickets, forests, palm groves & open woodlands along fence rows & in brushlands.	Sands, loams & clays. Well-drained, mesic.	X						X	X			Attractive rough-leaved tree with fragrant white flowers & bright orange juicy fruit. Very drought tolerant once established. Has a very dense crown. Often planted as an ornamental. Can be sensitive to frost. Good honey tree. Evergreen.	All sorts of insects gather nectar from the fragrant nectar laden flowers. Fruits are eaten by numerous species of birds & small mammals.
<i>Fraxinus berlandierana</i> Fresno	Oleaceae - Olive Family	30' - 40' Tree, large	Panicles of m & f greenish purple & green. March - June	Samara, June - Aug.	Full sun, part shade	Grows along wooded streams, in canyons of the Edwards Plateau & Rio Grande Valley	Sands, loams, clays; likes limestone, caliche-like soils. Well-drained, but moist soils.	X						X	X			Spreading, round-topped tree. Fairly fast growing & long-lived. Deciduous.	Good cover and nesting tree. Cardinals, pyrrhuloxias, finches, red-winged blackbirds relish seeds. Foliage browsed by cottontails and white-tailed deer. Larval host plant for Two-tailed tiger swallowtail and Tiger swallow-tail.
<i>Leucaena pulverulenta</i> Great leadtree (Tepaguaje)	Leguminosae - Legume Family	30' -55' Tree, large	Showy, white balls, fragrant. March - July	Legume, strap-shaped with seeds transversely arranged, Sept. - Dec.	Full sun, part shade, dappled shade	Prefers rich soils along streams & resacas in extreme southern Rio Grande Plain	Sands, loams & clays. Moist soils, poor drainage O.K.	X						X				Small tree with smooth gray bark & rounded crown. Leaves appear light & feathery. Flowers are white and fragrant, shaped like small balls. Tree is often planted as a good yard tree. Very ornamental in appearance. Deciduous.	Myriads of insects are attracted to the fragrant flowers. Several species of birds use this tree as a protective cover & nesting tree.
<i>Parkinsonia aculeata</i> Retama	Leguminosae - Legume Family	9' - 30' Tree, large	Showy yellow flowers, fragrant. April - July	Leguminous, linear orange to brown, with greenish brown seeds, Aug. - Oct.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers low, poorly drained areas, also on a variety of other sites.	Sands, loams & clays. Mesic, poor drainage O.K.	X						X	X		X	A thorny, green-barked shrub with graceful drooping branches and rounded crown. Flowers are a fragrant bright yellow. Leaves are small & delicate, giving tree a light airy appearance. Almost always in bloom. Tolerates salt. Can become weedy. Deciduous.	Flower nectar attracts myriads of insects. Deer occasionally browse the leaves. Pods are also eaten. Seeds are relished by doves, bobwhite quail & other species of birds & small mammals. Good nesting site & cover tree for several bird species.
<i>Pithecellobium ebano</i> Texas ebony	Leguminosae - Legume Family	25' - 30' Tree, large	Showy white spikes, fragrant. May - Oct.	Leguminous pod, brown with red seeds persistent on tree, July - Dec.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers low woods in coastal part of Rio Grande Valley & Plains	Sands, loams & clays, grows in caliche-type soils. Well-drained, mesic.	X						X				A medium-sized tree with a rounded very dense dark crown & dark bark. Zig-zag branches are spiny. Very beautiful tree which is extremely drought-tolerant. Good canopy tree in Valley. Evergreen.	Many species of birds use the tree as a nest site, esp. white-winged doves, due to dense foliage & thorns. Several kinds of insects are attracted to the flowers. Good substrate for insectivorous birds. LHP for Cassius Blue, Coyote & Orange giant skippers.

<i>Quercus fusiformis</i> Plateau liveoak	Fagaceae - Beech Family	30' - 50' Tree, large	inconspicuous m & f catkins, red & greenish. March - June	Acorns, Sept. - Oct.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers calcareous substrate, rocky limestone soils of the Hill Country.	Sands, loams, clays. Prefers limestone & caliche type soils. Will grow on any alkaline to slightly acid soil. Well-drained, mesic-xeric.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Plateau liveoak is an excellent evergreen shade tree often found growing in mottes. Adapts to a variety of sites, but not extremely wet or dry ones. Evergreen.	Excellent cover & nesting tree. Acorns have high energy value & eaten by almost all forms of wildlife: deer, squirrels, fox, raccoons, gamebirds, woodpeckers, & jays. Fine substrate for insectivorous birds. LHP of 3 hairstreak species and duskywing.
<i>Quercus virginiana</i> Southern live oak	Fagaceae - Beech Family	40' - 60' Tree, large	inconspicuous m & f reddish green catkins on same tree. April - May	Acorns, Sept. - Oct.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers timberlands east of the Brazos in Gulf Coastal Prairies and south central Texas	Sands, loams & clays. Prefers clay loams & gravelly clay loams. Well-drained, mesic.	X	X	X			X						Gracious yet powerful shade tree usually festooned with Spanish moss. Long-lived & resistant to salt spray. Often planted as ornamental outside of natural range. May be susceptible to oak wilt. Evergreen.	Excellent cover & nest tree. Good substrate for insectivorous birds. Acorns relished by many species of small mammals (squirrels & raccoons), gamebirds & songbirds (woodpeckers & jays). LHP of Horace's duskywing & Northern white M hairstreak.
<i>Sabal texana</i> Sabal palm	Arecaceae - Palm Family	30' - 50' Tree, large	Showy white & fragrant, 7' - 8' stalks. March - April	Berry, dark purple to black with one seed, May - June	Full sun, part shade	Last native remnants on the flatlands of the Lower Rio Grande Valley	Sands, loams & clays. Moist soils, poor drainage O.K.				X								Majestic native palm with dramatic fan-shaped leaves forming a dense rounded crown. Slow-growing, but cold-hardy to Lake Livingstone. Has an enormous root system. There are no thorns on leaves. Very ornamental. Evergreen.	Excellent cover & nesting site for birds. Insects are attracted to the flowers. Many species of South Texas birds forage on the ripe fruit.
<i>Salix nigra</i> Black willow	Salicaceae - Willow family	35' - 80' Tree, large	m & f creamy yellow catkins, on separate trees. April - May	Capsules, light brown, May - June	Full sun, part shade	Prefers alluvial soils along streams	Sand, loams & clays. Hydric-mesic, poor drainage O.K.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Occurs throughout Texas where there's standing water. A rapid-grower that is often multitrunked & has irregular crown. Airy, graceful light green leaves & brown-black fissured bark. Not a strong tree, sometimes subject to breakage. Fall color. Deciduous.	Young shoots browsed by white-tailed deer. Catkins eaten by several species of birds. Comose seeds used as nesting material. Larval host plant of Mourning cloak & Viceroy.
<i>Ulmus crassifolia</i> Cedar elm	Ulmaceae - Elm Family	30' - 60' Tree, large	inconspicuous greenish flowers. July.-Sept.	Samara, Aug. - Oct.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers woodlands, ravines & open slopes	Sands, loams & clays. Seasonal poor drainage O.K.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Good shade tree, each with a unique shape. Fast growing & long lived. Excellent yellow fall color. LHP for Mourning Cloak & Question Mark. Deciduous.	Seeds & buds eaten by gamebirds, woodpeckers, chickadees, finches, sparrows & warblers. Good nesting and cover tree with lots of insects for insectivorous birds. Deer browse leaves; squirrels, foxes & rabbits eat seeds & buds.





<i>Ziziphus obtusifolia</i> Lotebush	Rutaceae - Citrus Family	6' - 10' Tree, small	inconspic- uous greenish yellow flowers. March - April	Drupe, black & fleshy, July - Sept.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers upland brushy areas & stream banks	Sands, loams & clays. Well- drained, mesic- xeric.	X						X	X			X	Rounded stout thorny shrub or small tree with grayish green leaves and black fleshy fruits. Becomes leafless during drought. Tolerates a variety of soil types. Deciduous.	Leaves are occasionally browsed by white-tailed deer. Flowers, though small, are very attractive to nectar-loving insects. Fruits are eaten by a number of small mammals and birds. Because of protective thorns, this is a good cover & nesting tree.
<i>Acacia berlandieri</i> Guajillo	Leguminosae Legume Family	9' - 15' Ornament al small tree	Showy creamy - white globose flowers, fragrant. Feb. - April, also Nov. to March in Valley	Legume, large, curved with 5-10 seeds, April - June	Full sun, part shade	Prefers limestone & caliche cuestas on dry brushy hillsides.	Sands, loams & clays, gravelly limestone & caliche-type soils. Xeric, well-drained.							X	X			X	Spreading small ornamental tree or shrub with gray to whitish branches & delicate fern-like leaves. When in bloom, tree is covered with deliciously fragrant creamy-white puffs of flowers. Spines are small. Deciduous to Persistent.	Fragrant flowers attract myriads of nectar-loving insects. Leaves & branches browsed by white-tailed der. This makes an excellent honey plant. Also serves well as a good protective cover & nesting site for the birds.
<i>Acacia farnesiana</i> Huisache	Leguminosae Legume Family	15' - 30' Ornament al small tree	Showy, yellow round heads, fragrant. Feb. - March	Legume, brownish- black, August - Sept.	Full sun	Prefers open areas, fields, pastures & fence rows	Sands, loams & clays. Moderately well-drained. Seasonal poor drainage O.K.	X	X	X				X	X			X	Medium-sized tree to shrub; densely branched & armed with long paired, straight spines. Rapid growth rate. Profusely flowering in early spring. In southern Texas starts flowering in late Dec. Very fragrant. Fairly drought tolerant. Deciduous.	Provides quick shade in spring. Good cover & nesting tree esp. for White-winged doves. Good nurse tree to other plants. Small mammals eat the pods. Excellent pollen & nectar source for bees & other insects. Larval host plant for Marine Blue.
<i>Acacia rigidula</i> Black- brush acacia	Leguminosae Legume Family	10' - 15' Ornament al small tree	Showy creamy - white racemes, fragrant. April - May	Leguminou s pod, reddish brown, with dark green seeds, August - Sept.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers open or brushy areas, roadsides & pastures	Sands, loams & clays. Xeric, well- drained.	X						X	X			X	Attractive, stiff thorny shrub that is gorgeous when in bloom. Relatively slow -growing, but worth the wait. Longer lived than many other acacias. Can form thickets. If you prune the trunks, it will become a graceful tree. Good erosion control. Deciduous.	Flowers attract myriads of bees, butterflies, diurnal moths & other insects in the spring. Excellent honey plant. Seeds are eaten by bobwhite quail. Leaves & beans are browsed by white-tailed deer.
<i>Acacia wrightii</i> Wright acacia	Leguminosae Legume Family	20' - 30' Ornament al small tree	Showy creamy - yellow flowers in fuzzy cylindrical spikes. March - May, and after rains	Legume, broad, light brownish green with dark brown seeds, May - August	Full sun, part shade	Prefers chaparral & woodlands along creeks & canyons	Sands, loams & clays, likes limestone, caliche-type soils. Xeric, well-drained.	X	X	X				X	X	X		X	Spiny shrub or small tree with wide spreading branches & irregular crown. Attractive light yellow bottlebrush-like flowers. Delicate foliage gives light shade, allowing other wildflowers to grow underneath. Fairly cold hardy for an acacia. Evergreen.	Pollen produced by flowers an important food source for bees. Makes an excellent honey tree. Good protective cover & nesting site for birds. Larval host plant for the Marine blue butterfly.







<i>Berberis trifoliolata</i> Agarita	Berberidaceae Barberry Family	3' - 8' Shrub	Showy yellow flowers. Feb. - March	Berries, red, May - July	Full sun, part shade	Prefers rocky slopes & flats of pastures, thickets & open woods	Sands, loams or clays. Xeric, well-drained.	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	Well-know striking evergreen shrub with the spiny blue-green trifoliolate leaves. This plant makes a good hedge. Flowers bloom very early in the spring. Evergreen.	Early blooming golden yellow flowers offer very early nectar for all kinds of insects. Excellent cover & nesting place due to spiny leaves. Deer rarely browse this plant unless they are hungry. Birds & mammals of several species gorge on the ripe fruit.
<i>Buddleja sessiliflora</i> Tepozan	Buddleiaceae Buddleya Family	3' - 7' Shrub	Pretty greenish-yellow flowers borne in glomerules, fragrant. April - July	Capsules, small, June - Sept.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers sandbars & banks along resacas & in palm groves. Found only in Lower Rio Grande Valley.	Sand, sandy loams, clays. Prefers sand. Moist.				X						Attractive unarmed shrub with stems & young leaves covered with dense white pubescence (short fuzzy hairs). Leaves are entire with fine teeth on edges. Evergreen.	Several kinds of insects, especially butterflies, sip nectar from the nectar-laden flowers. White-tailed deer will browse on the leaves. For attracting butterflies, this plant is fantastic.
<i>Calliandra conferta</i> Fairy duster	Leguminosae Legume Family	1/2' - 3' Shrub	Showy reddish-purple globes with long stamens. March - May	Legumes, small gray to black in color, June - Aug.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers caliche & limestone hills & cuestas in Brush Country, also dry gravelly slopes & mesas.	Sands, loams & clays; likes limestone & caliche-type soils. Xeric, well-drained.				X	X				X	Low, densely-branched shrub with mimosa-like leaves & unusual reddish-purple flowers. Persistent.	Flowers attract several kinds of insects, especially bees & butterflies. Hummingbirds are also attracted to these flowers, glean small insects along with the nectar. Good cover & nesting site. Foliage browsed by deer. Seeds eaten by quail.
<i>Callicarpa americana</i> American beauty-berry	Verbenaceae Vervain Family	3' - 9' Shrub	Small clusters of white or pink flowers at nodes. May - July	Berries, magenta, in clusters at nodes, Aug. - Nov.	Part shade, dappled shade.	Prefers moist soils of canyons and bottomlands, woods & thickets.	Sands, loams & clays. Likes rich soils. Well-drained, mesic.	X	X	X	X	X	X				Open, much branched shrub with showy magenta berries. Has mounding form. Likes to be watered during dry periods. Deciduous.	Fruits are favored by several species of birds, i.e., bobwhite, mockingbirds, cardinals, thrashers, robins, finches & towhees. Raccoons, opossum & gray fox also relish berries.
<i>Capsicum annuum</i> Chile pequin	Solanaceae - Nightshade Family	1' - 2' Shrub	Small white perfect flowers with yellow anthers. March - Nov., sometimes year-round	Chili peppers, small & red, April - Dec.	Dappled shade, full shade	Prefers ledges along rivers, thickets & groves along arroyos	Sands, loams & clays likes limestone soils. Well-drained, mesic.	X	X	X	X	X	X				Perky little shrub with electric red hot chili pepper berries. A pleasant airy understory shrub. Prefers moist soils. People use fruit as a very hot flavoring for foods. Deciduous.	Birds of several species are highly fond of the peppers. Plants are dispersed by birds.

<i>Castela texana</i> Goat-bush	Simarubaceae Quassia Family	3' - 10' Shrub	Showy red to orange axillary flowers. March - May	Drupes, bright red with one seed, June - Aug.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers gravelly hills, chaparral thickets, gulf shores & mesquite prairies	Sands, loams & clays. Xeric, well-drained.	X					X	X				X	Densely-branched spinose shrub with shiny green leaves, red-orange flowers & flashy red fruit. It has a very bitter bark. Persistent to Evergreen.	Several kinds of insects are attracted to the flowers. White-tailed deer browse leaves & fruit. Several species of game & song birds also eat the fruits. It is frequently used as a nesting site by birds due to its protective thorns & dense branches.
<i>Celtis pallida</i> Granjeno	Ulmaceae - Elm Family	10' - 18' Shrub	inconspicuous greenish white flowers. Feb. - May	Drupes, yellow to orange, rounded, May - July	Full sun, part shade	Prefers mesas, foothills & thickets & brushlands	Sands, loams & clays. Xeric, well-drained.	X					X	X				X	Spiny, spreading, densely-branched shrub with deep green leaves having slightly scalloped edges. Very drought tolerant. Evergreen.	Flowers attract myriads of insects: bees, butterflies & diurnal moths. Fruits relished by all kind of critters: wrens, cardinals, pyrrhuloxias, mockingbirds, quail, raccoons, coyotes, rabbits. Leaves & stems browsed by deer. LHP of Snout butterflies.
<i>Erythrina herbacea</i> Coralbean	Leguminosae - Legume Family	3' - 6' Shrubby perennial (Shrub in South TX)	Showy coral red tubular flowers. May - Dec.	Pods with poisonous red seeds, Oct. to Dec.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers sandy woods on coastal plain, but will grow elsewhere.	Sands, loams & clays. Well-drained, mesic.	X	X	X	X								Striking shrub dies back in winter like a perennial in all areas but south Texas. Flamboyant summer flowers are highly ornamental. Seeds are also attractive, though extremely poisonous. Persistent.	Elegant tubular flowers have copious nectar & are highly attractive to the Ruby-throated hummingbird. Seeds, though highly appealing visually, are poisonous and not eaten by wildlife.
<i>Eupatorium odoratum</i> Fragrant boneset	Asteraceae - Sunflower Family	2' - 6' Shrub	Showy flower heads, lilac to purple. Aug. - Oct.	Achenes, Sept. - Dec.	Part shade, dappled shade, shade	Prefers rocky clay soils along coast & in valley	Sands, loams or clays. Mesic, poor drainage O.K.	X					X						Subshrubby plant with erect or reclining branches. Can be used as a ground cover. Lilac flowers are very showy. Deciduous to Persistent.	Lilac flowers provide abundant nectar to butterflies, bees & other insects when a lot of other plants are not in bloom. Leaves are frequently browsed by white-tailed deer. Ripe achenes are eaten by sparrows & finches.
<i>Lantana horrida</i> Lantana	Verbenaceae Vervain Family	3' - 6' Shrub	Showy yellow & orange heads made up of tiny florets. May to December (first frost)	Berries, green then dark blue-black, Sept. - Nov.	Full sun, part shade	Occurs in fields, thickets, swamps, rich sandy woods, scrub & gravelly hills.	Sands, loams & clays. Well-drained, xeric to mesic.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X					This showy shrub is planted has a long, profuse blooming season. Though not a native of Texas, it is planted almost throughout the state. It loves the hot weather. It's good to prune it back to the ground each winter. Deciduous.	Colorful, long-blooming flowers attract both butterflies and hummingbirds throughout the season. Northern cardinals and other species of birds eat the ripe fruit. Fairly deer resistant. Larval host plant of the Painted Lady.

<i>Leucophyllum frutescens</i> Cenizo	Scrophulariaceae Figwort Family	4' - 8' Shrub	Showy lavender to light purple flowers, almost bell-shaped. May - Oct.	Capsules, Sept. - Dec.	Full sun, a little shade O.K.	Prefers rocky limestone hills, bluffs, ravines, arroyos & brushlands	Sands, loams & clays, likes limestone soils. Xeric, well-drained.	X	X					X	Drought-hardy shrub with pretty gray leaves & long-blooming magenta to lavender flowers. The silvery-gray leaves lend a highly ornamental flair to this shrub. Evergreen.	The showy lavender flowers attract several kinds of insects. This dense shrub offers good cover and safe nesting site for birds. The leaves are not readily browsed by white-tailed deer. Larval host plant of the Theona Checkerspot.	
<i>Lippia alba</i> Bushy lippia	Verbenaceae - Vervain Family	5' - 7' Shrub	Showy purple to violet flowers, sometimes pink & white. March - Oct.	Dry drupes with 2 nutlets, May - Nov.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers woods, river banks & resacas in southern Rio Grande Valley, Cameron & Hildago counties. Also on lower coast plains.	Sands, silts, loams & clays. Moist soils.	X					X		Much-branched aromatic shrub with opposite leaves & purple-violet flowers. This is a very ornamental plant & is widely cultivated. Deciduous to Persistent.	Both butterflies & hummingbirds are attracted to these flowers. The ripe seeds eaten by a number of bird species.	
<i>Lippia graveolens</i> Redbrush lippia	Verbenaceae - Vervain Family	5' - 7' Shrub	Showy yellowish white flowers with yellow centers. March - Dec.	Drupes, small 7 dry with 2 nutlets, May - Dec.	Full sun	Prefers dry, rocky hills, valleys, arroyos, chaparral & open desert scrub.	Sands, loams, gravelly clays; likes limestone caliche-like soils. Xeric, well-drained.						X		X	Slender, aromatic pubescent shrub with yellowish-white flowers & opposite leaves. Very drought tolerant, once established. Persistent.	Redbrush lippia is an excellent honey shrub. Myriads of insects are attracted to the nectar-laden flowers, especially bees & butterflies. Seeds are eaten by a number of species of birds.
<i>Lycium berlandieri</i> Wolfberry	Solanaceae - Nightshade Family	5' - 7' Shrub	Showy blue to lavender flowers. Feb. - Oct.	Berries, bright red & many seeded, April - Dec.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers gravelly, rocky hills, limestone & alkali flats, arroyos & scrubland.	Sands, loams or clays. Xeric, well-drained.	X					X		X	Spiny, sparingly-branched shrub with semi-succulent leaves. Shrub is very attractive when in bloom & in fruit. Persistent to Evergreen.	Flowers attract many insects while the leaves are browsed by white-tailed deer. Several species of birds & small mammals eat the fruit including chachalacas in South Texas. Raccoon also love the fruit.
<i>Lycium carolinianum</i> Carolina wolfberry	Solanaceae - Nightshade Family	3' - 6' Shrub	Showy purple, egg-plant shaped flowers. April - Oct.	Red tomato-shaped fruit, 1/4-1/2" in diameter, June - Nov.	Full sun, part shade	Occurs near ponds, ditches, marshes, on clay flats, salt flats or in gravelly soils on chaparral-covered hills in the Rio Grande Plains & on lower coastal marshes.	Sands, loams, clays of gravelly texture. Moist soils, poor drainage O.K.	X					X			Medium-sized spiny erect to somewhat trailing shrub with thick fleshy grayish leaves & purple flowers. Attractive red fruit. Can be used as ground cover. Highly salt tolerant. Evergreen with summer watering.	Flowers attract several kinds of insects. Red fruits are not only attractive to the eye they are relished by several species of birds, including Whooping cranes. White-tailed deer browse on the succulent leaves.





<i>Agave scabra</i> Rough agave	Agavaceae - Agave Family	Leaves 1'-2', flower stalk 4'. Succulent	Showy yellow flowers on tall bloom stalk. April - June	Capsule, brown, many-seeded. Flowers only once in its lifetime.	Full sun	Occurs on sandy & calcareous soils in extreme southwest Rio Grande Plains in Starr, Webb & Zapata counties.	Sands & clays, likes calcareous soils. Xeric, well-drained.	X							Medium to large stemless plant with an open basal rosette of large grayish leaves with a rough surface. Evergreen.	Many species of insects are attracted to flower pollen & nectar. Hummingbirds also sip nectar from flowers. Many birds & small mammals dine on the ripe seeds.
<i>Hechtia glomerata</i> Guapilla	Bromeliaceae Pineapple Family	1/3' - 1/2' Succulent	Showy creamy white m & f flowers on separate plants. May - Aug	Capsule, brown, many-seeded, July - Aug.	Full sun	Occurs on gravelly sites, sandstone formations & saline clays in Starr Co.	Sands, sandy loams & clays. Xeric, well-drained.	X							Sharply serrate linear basal rosette leaves with the habit of a yucca or agave, but in the pineapple family. Often forms dense colonies. Evergreen.	Flowers attract myriads of insects of all varieties. Spiny plant provides excellent for small mammals. Seeds eaten by small mammals & birds.
<i>Manfreda huaco</i>	Agavaceae - Agave Family	Leaves 2' - 4' Flower stalk 4' - 12'. Succulent	Showy yellow to coral orange flowers, spicy fragrance. April - July	Capsules, July - Oct.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers prairies & chaparrals	Sands, loams & clays, acid or calcareous. Well-drained, mesic-xeric.	X				X			Green succulent rosette leaves with purplish-brown spots -- very eye-catching. Makes an excellent accent plant for any garden. Spicy perfumed flowers are especially fragrant in the evening. Evergreen.	Fragrant flowers emit their perfume in the evening thus attracting many moths as pollinators. Finches, sparrows & other seed eating birds eat the ripe seeds as do several species of small rodents & other small mammals.
<i>Yucca constricta</i> Buckley yucca	Agavaceae - Agave Family	2' leaves 3' - 6' flower stalk. Succulent	Showy panicles of creamy-white flowers. April - June	Capsules. Sept. - Oct.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers brushy woods & grasslands.	Sands, loams & clays; likes limestone soils. Xeric, well-drained.	X	X			X		X	Very striking accent plant, lovely when in bloom. This plant is the most flower-like of all the yuccas. Leaves are dark green with white edges. Older leaves get threads. Tips are armed with healthy spines. Evergreen.	Elegant waxy flowers emit their fragrance at night attracting moths which pollinate them. Flowers are edible and popular with white-tailed deer. Larval host plant to Yucca giant skipper.
<i>Yucca treculeana</i> Spanish dagger	Agavaceae - Agave Family	5' - 15' Succulent	Showy, white & waxy flowers on tall flower stalk, fragrant at night. Feb. - April	Capsules, Sept. - Oct.	Full sun, part shade, dappled shade	Prefers tall chaparral or brushland	Sands, loams, & clays. Well-drained, mesic.	X				X	X		Dramatic accent plant with lush tropical-looking flowers. Hard to transplant old ones. Evergreen.	Moths pollinate fragrant white flowers by night. Good nesting shrub, well-protected. Flowers eaten by many specie of mammals. Larval host plant for Strecker's giant skipper, Ursine giant skipper & Yucca giant skipper.
<i>Aristolochia marshii</i> Marsh's pipevine	Aristolochiaceae Pipevine Family	Climber. Vine	Bizarre reddish-purple pipe-shaped flowers. Feb. - June	Capsules, May - Aug.	Part shade, dappled shade	Prefers alluvial soils along rivers & resacas in the Rio Grande Valley	Sands, silts & clays. Mesic, poor drainage O.K.	X							Herbaceous twining vine with slender stems & triangular lobed leaves & unusual pipe-shaped flowers. Persistent, but dies back.	This unusual vine is the larval host plant for the Polydamus swallowtail.



<i>Bothriochloa barbinodis</i> Cane bluestem	Poaceae Grass Family	2' - 4' Grass	Flowering spikelets greenish gray to silvery. May - Oct.	Seeds, Aug. - Nov.	Full sun, a little shade O.K.	Prefers open grassy areas throughout western 2/3rds of state.	Loose limey soils. Xeric, well-drained.	X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	A very attractive coarse perennial bunch grass with lovely seed heads. Silvery seed heads catch the rays of the sun making the plant appear to glisten. Warm-season perennial.	Cane bluestem is a good forage grass for wildlife especially before stems become mature & fibrous. Sparrows & other granivorous birds forage on ripe seeds. Grass parts used as nesting & denning material.
<i>Bothriochloa saccharoides</i> v. <i>longipaniculata</i> Longspike silver bluestem	Poaceae Grass Family	2' - 4' Grass	Flowering spikelets green to silver. May - Oct.	Seeds. Sets seed shortly after flowering.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers dryish open areas, woodland edges, along roadsides	Sands, sandy loams, loams & clays. Xeric-mesic.	X	X	X	X			X				This grass becomes increasingly beautiful as its seed head ripens and catches the sun light, glowing silvery. This bunchgrass has a conspicuous basal cluster of leaves & stems. Warm-season perennial.	This bunch grass is a fairly good forage grass for white-tailed deer. Parts of the grass are used as nesting & denning material by birds & small mammals. Many species of seed-eating birds eat the ripe seeds.
<i>Bouteloua curtipendula</i> Sideoats grama	Poaceae Grass Family	2' - 6' Grass	Spikelets, yellowish, arranged down along stem. May - Oct.	Seeds, June - Nov.	Full sun, part shade, dappled shade	Tolerates a variety of open places throughout state. Does well in disturbed areas. Not as common in eastern forests.	Sands, loams & clays, both limestone & igneous soils. Well-drained, mesic-xeric.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Our state grass is a strong perennial and works well as a garden accent. Competes well with short grasses but not tall-grass prairie grasses. Great choice for wildflower meadow garden. Warm-season perennial bunch grass. Dormant in winter.	Provides good grazing for wildlife and an abundance of bird seed for seed-eating birds of several varieties. Food available spring, summer & fall. Grass parts used as nesting & denning material. Larval host plant for Dotted skipper & green skipper.
<i>Bouteloua repens</i> Slender grama	Poaceae Grass Family	1/2' - 2' Grass	Flowering spikelets greenish to yellowish. April - Dec.	Seeds, May - Dec.	Full sun	Prefers open or brushy pastures & road rights-of-way, often found along streams & banks.	Sands, loams & clays. Well-drained, mesic-xeric.				X							Tufted perennial grass with slender stems & perky seed heads. Good grass to mix with South Texas wildflowers. Perennial.	Ripe seeds are eaten by several species of birds. Various parts of grass are used as nesting & denning material. Provides forage to a fair extent to grazers.
<i>Bouteloua rigidisetata</i> Texas grama	Poaceae Grass Family	1/2' - 1 1/2' Grass	Flowering spikelets, perky & star-shaped, turns from green to silvery gold. April - Nov.	Seeds, May - Nov.	Full sun	Prefers grasslands, grassy woods openings, road rights-of way & moist slopes	Sands, loams & clays. Well-drained, mesic-xeric.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				Short, highly attractive tufted perennial grass with slender weak stems & very eye-catching flowering spikelets. When backlit, they catch the rays of the sun & glisten like little shooting stars. Warm-season perennial.	A number of small birds will eat the ripe seeds. Perhaps not ever enough of it to provide much forage for the larger grazers.

<i>Buchloe dactyloides</i> Buffalograss	Poaceae Grass Family	3' - 12" Grass	Flowering spikelets yellowish green. June - Nov. or whenever not dormant	Seeds. Sets seed shortly after flowering.	Full sun	Prefers open areas in many kinds of soils, short-grass prairies of Central & North Central Texas	Sands, loams & clays. Xeric, well-drained.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	This is a wonderful turf grass. It takes a little longer to establish in caliche soils. Once established, it is very drought tolerant. It turns a soft golden brown when it goes dormant. Perennial turf grass.	Buffalograss provides fine nesting & denning materials, especially for lining bird's nests. Seeds of male flowers are eaten by small granivorous birds. Is the larval host plant of the Green skipper.
<i>Chasmantium latifolium</i> Inland sea-oats	Poaceae Grass Family	2' - 4' Grass	Flowering spikelets green to buffy tan. June - Oct.	Seeds. Sets seed shortly after flowering.	Part shade, dappled shade, full shade	Prefers moist woodland soils, often along creek bottoms & near streambanks.	Sands, loams & clays. Mesic, seasonal poor drainage O.K.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	In moist soils in shaded areas, this beautiful grass makes a solid mat. Big drooping spikelets are especially fetching, esp. when turned to whitish gold in the fall. Great garden accent plant. Warm-season perennial, dies back in winter.	Serves as excellent forage for wildlife esp. birds & mammals. Many parts of the grass used as nesting & denning material. Larval host plant for Northern pearly eye, Pepper & salt skipper, Bell's roadside skipper & Bronzed roadside skipper.
<i>Digitaria californica</i> California cottontop	Poaceae Grass Family	1' - 3' Grass	Flowering spikelets greenish to whitish silver. July - Nov.	Seeds. Sets seed shortly after flowering.	Full sun, part shade	Grows on wide variety of soil types in open grassy areas.	Sands, loams & clays. Well-drained, mesic-xeric.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	An attractive tufted, leafy perennial grass with very pretty seed heads. This pretty grass can be a wonderful accent to the garden. Warm-season perennial.	California cottontop provides good forage for wildlife. Many birds & small mammals eat the ripe seeds. Grass parts are used as nesting & denning material.
<i>Elyonurus tripsacoides</i> Pan American balsamgrass	Poaceae Grass Family	1' - 3' Grass	Flowering spikelets greenish turning yellowish. May - Nov.	Seeds. Sets seed shortly after flowering.	Full sun	Prefers coastal grasslands & woods openings	Sands & sandy loams. Well-drained, mesic-xeric.	X				X						When the flower head appears, this is a very attractive grass. Warm-season, tufted perennial.	When found in abundance, this tufted perennial grass can provide good forage for wildlife. Ripe seeds eaten by a few species of birds. Grass parts used as nesting & denning material.
<i>Eragrostis intermedia</i> Plains lovegrass	Poaceae Grass Family	1 1/2' - 3' Grass	Flowering spikelets grayish-green turning reddish purple. June - Nov.	Seeds. Sets seed shortly after flowering.	Full sun	Prefers sandy, clayey, rocky ground in open areas, also grows well in disturbed areas.	Sands & clays. Xeric, well-drained.	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	This beautiful bunch grass has very elegant, delicate seed heads suffused with a reddish purple color when ripe. Grows well with other grasses & wildflowers in a prairie association or small pocket prairie. Warm-season, tufted perennial.	Plains lovegrass provides fair grazing for wildlife. Small seed eating birds forage on the ripe seeds. Grass parts are used for denning & nesting material.
<i>Eragrostis palmeri</i> Rio Grande lovegrass	Poaceae Grass Family	1' - 2 1/2' Grass	Flowering spikelets grayish-green turning purplish. Sept.- Nov.	Seeds. Sets seed shortly after flowering.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers open grassy areas in far south Texas.	Sands, loams & clays. Well-drained, mesic-xeric.	X										Attractive tufted perennial grass that grows only in the Rio Grande Valley. This species has a very pretty seed head. Warm-season, tufted perennial.	Rio Grande lovegrass provides fair forage for wildlife. Some seed-eating birds dine on the ripe seeds. Grass parts are used as nesting & denning material.



<i>Setaria texana</i> Texas bristlegrasses	Poaceae Grass Family	1 1/2' - 3' Grass	Flowering spikelets greenish to yellow. May.	Seeds, June	Full sun, part shade	Prefers open grassy areas in South Texas & southern part of Edwards Plateau.	Sands, loams & clays. Well-drained, mesic-xeric.	X	X											Tufted perennial with erect stem & smaller flower head than plains bristlegrass. Leaves are dark green, spikelets are lime-green. Perennial.	Texas bristlegrass provides only fair forage for grazing wildlife, but sparrows, finches & buntings forage on the ripe seeds.
<i>Trichloris pluriflora</i> Showy chloris (Multi-flowered false-rhodesgrasses)	Poaceae Grass Family	2' - 3' Grass	Flowering spikelets tawny turning silvery white. July - Sept.	Seeds, Aug. - Oct.	Full sun	Prefers low areas	Silts or clays. Mesic, seasonal poor drainage O.K.	X					X							Highly ornamental grass with a very showy flower head. Especially striking when backlit by the sun. Makes an excellent accent plant for any garden. Warm-season perennial.	Provides cover for small animals. Ripe seeds eaten by granivorous birds & small rodents. Grass parts used as nesting & denning material.
<i>Tridens albescens</i> White tridens	Poaceae Grass Family	1 1/2' - 3' Grass	Flowering spikelets greenish turning silvery white. March - Nov.	Seeds, April - Nov.	Full sun, part shade	Prefers clayey soils along ditches, in swales & areas that get abundance of drainage water.	Clay loams & clays. Mesic.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Tufted perennial grass with attractive whitish seed heads with purplish tips. This pretty grass is good mixed in with other grasses & wildflowers. Perennial.	White tridens provides fair grazing for wildlife. Seed-eating birds forage on the ripe seeds. Grass parts used as nesting & denning material.
<i>Paspalum monostachyum</i> Gulfdune paspalum	Poaceae Grass Family	1' - 2 1/2' Seaside grass	Flowering spikelets greenish to straw then brown. May - Nov.	Seeds, June - Nov.	Full sun	Frequently on coastal dune formations, backshore dunes & dune ridges.	Sands, loose. Xeric, well-drained.	X				X								This seaside paspale grass with smooth leaves & densely-flowered single branch prefers the backshore dunes & ridges. It tolerates salt air, loose soils & high winds. Perennial, stout.	This grass provides protective cover & forage for small seaside creatures.
<i>Spartina spartinae</i> Gulf cordgrass	Poaceae Grass Family	4' - 7' Seaside grass	Flowering spikelets greenish to straw-colored then tan. June - Sept.	Seeds, July - Nov.	Full sun	Prefers marshy areas, also coastal flats & brackish marshlands.	Sands, silts, muds. Hydric, tolerates wet soils.	X	X			X	X							This stout perennial with densely clumped stems has a stout spike-like flower head. It will form extensive meadows along coastal flats & other lowland areas. Can grow in soils that are submerged in salt water periodically. Perennial, stout.	This distinctive grass provides excellent food & cover for all sorts of marine & seashore critter, especially rails, shorebirds & beach rodents.
<i>Abronia ameliae</i> Heart's delight	Nyctaginaceae Four o'clock Family	8" - 24" Wildflower	Showy deep pink flowers in 3" heads, very fragrant. March - June	Anthocarp with seeds. March - June	Full sun, part shade	Grows in sandy areas in live oak woods, along roadsides from the Rio Grande Plains north to the Panhandle	Sands, deep. Xeric, well-drained.	X				X								Highly ornamental wildflower that does well in a garden or planned landscape. Perennial.	Heart's delight is highly attractive to butterflies and especially moths. Insects are attracted by the highly fragrant perfume.

<i>Anthericum chandleri</i> Lila de los llanos	Liliaceae Lily Family	1' - 3' Wildflower	Pretty pale orange flowers. May - Nov.	Capsule with seeds, July - Dec.	Full sun, part shade, dappled shade	Grows in prairies and chaparral in the Lower Rio Grande Valley & along the southern coast.	Sands, loams & clays. Well-drained.	X													Anthericum sports yellow to pale orange flowers on slender elegant stems. Plant does well in slightly shady conditions & can bloom for a long period of time. Perennial.	Flowers attract an assortment of insects.
<i>Englemannia pinnatifida</i> Engelmann daisy	Asteraceae Sunflower Family	1' - 3' Wildflower	Showy yellow daisy-like flowers. Feb. - Nov.	Achenes, April - Dec.	Full sun, part shade, dappled shade	Grows in open fields, meadows, along roadsides throughout much of the state.	Sands, loams & clays; neutral to calcareous soils. Well-drained, mesic-xeric.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	Lemon-yellow flowers blanket the fields & roadsides especially in the spring. With a little extra water in your garden, these flowers will prolong bloom-time through the summer. Perennial.	Englemann daisy attracts a multitude of bees, butterflies & other insects which forage on the nectar. Seed-eating birds such as sparrows, buntings & finches dine on the ripe achenes in the fall.
<i>Gutierrezia sarothrae</i> Texas snakeweed	Asteraceae Sunflower Family	1' - 3' Wildflower	Showy tiny yellow flowers. Sept. - Nov.	Achenes, Oct. - Dec.	Full sun, part shade	Grows in open areas, prairies, fields, meadows on poor, dry soils; also along roadsides.	Sands, loams & clays, limestone-based & caliche type soils. Xeric, well-drained.						X	X	X	X					This golden bushy plant does very well in poor dry soils & requires very little water. Looks great in a rock garden. Fields are covered in the fall with solid balls of rich golden yellow which last until it freezes. Perennial.	Many small insects, including syrphid flies, small bees & butterflies are attracted by the nectar. These clumps provide great cover for small animals. Seed-eating birds such as finches & sparrows eat the ripe achenes.
<i>Hibiscus cardiophyllus</i> Heartleaf hibiscus	Malvaceae Mallow Family	3' - 8' Wildflower	Showy red flowers. Dec.	Capsule, multivalved, with seeds, Dec.	Full sun, part shade, dappled shade	Grows in chaparral & brush country, also in canyons in Corpus Christi, south to Rio Grande Plains west to Val Verde County.	Sands, loams, clays & caliche-type soils. Xeric, well-drained.	X					X	X							Highly ornamental hibiscus that is quite drought-tolerant. If you plant it on clay, it must be well-drained. The color of the flower varies from deep red to rose to orangy-red. Not cold-hardy. Perennial.	Pollen attracts many kinds of bees, beetles & other small insects.
<i>Salvia coccinea</i> Scarlet sage	Lamiaceae Mint Family	2' - 4' Wildflower	Showy red tubular flowers. May - Dec.	Calyx with nutlets, June - Dec.	Full sun, part shade, dappled shade	Prefers sandy soils in thickets, chaparral, on edges of open woods from East to South Texas.	Sands, loams, clays & caliche-type soils. Mesic, seasonal poor drainage O.K.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X							Scarlet sage can thrive in any part of the state. It is not very cold-hardy, however. Oddly, it looks better if planted in dry, shady areas with poor soil. In rich soils with lots of water it gets very tall, coarse & slightly unattractive. Perennial.	Scarlet sage is another excellent hummingbird plant & will draw in the hummingbirds of your area, including any migrants passing through in spring & fall. Bees & other insects are also attracted to the nectar, despite the red flower color.
<i>Tephrosia lindheimeri</i> Hoary pea	Leguminosae Legume Family	9" - 10" Wildflower	Showy magenta flowers in 4"- inch clusters. April - Oct.	Leguminous pod with seeds, June - Nov.	Full sun, part shade	Grows in open areas, prairies, plains, brushlands & chaparral.	Sands & loams. Xeric, well-drained.	X					X	X							Lindheimer tephrosia makes an excellent showy ground cover. It will also climb a trellis. Once established it's an easy plant to care for. The gray-green leaves are especially attractive. Perennial.	Insects such as bees & small butterflies are attracted to the flowers. The ripe seeds are eaten by several species of birds & small mammals. The plant's leaves are poisonous to livestock however.

