



# ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM

## PLANT CARE INFORMATION

### ‘Desert Museum’ Palo Verde *Parkinsonia X*

**DESCRIPTION:** This tree is a complex hybrid among Mexican, blue, and foothills palo verdes, selected from a batch of seedlings grown by Mark Dimmitt. The parentage is (Mexican Palo Verde: *Parkinsonia aculeata* X Foothill Palo Verde: *Parkinsonia microphylla*) X Blue Palo Verde: *Parkinsonia florida*. It combines the best traits of its parents: the very fast growth and large flowers of Mexican, the upright habit of Mexican and foothills, and the smaller and therefore less messy leaves of blue and foothills palo verdes. It has two additional desirable traits not found in any of the species: a very long flowering season (two months or more) and no thorns at all. 'Desert Museum' grows to about 30 feet high and wide, up to eight feet a year during the first couple of years. We grow this tree on its own roots, not grafted onto another species, so that there will be no rootstock suckering problems.

**RECOMMENDED USE:** 'Desert Museum' palo verde has sparse foliage and may cast too little shade for human comfort during summer's peak heat. On the other hand there is enough light to garden under it. Use it to shelter a cactus garden or sun-sensitive veggies such as tomatoes, peppers, or strawberries.

#### CULTURE:



**Hardiness:** Equal to other palo verdes. Saplings have frozen to the ground in the low teens, but plants with several inches of caliper have not been damaged at 15°F.



**Sun tolerance:** Full sun necessary.



**Watering and feeding:** The more water it gets, the faster it grows. When established and mature it does well on rainfall in Tucson in an average rainfall year. Fertilizing is probably not needed.



**Soil requirements:** Does well in most well-drained soils, even when caliche is near the surface. It may be severely stunted in very rocky foothill sites.



**Pruning:** Only minimal pruning needed to shape. Because of its upright habit, few low-hanging branches get in the way. Avoid weak-branching problems by watching

for

co-leaders; prune one to let the other dominate.