



# Common Desert Plants

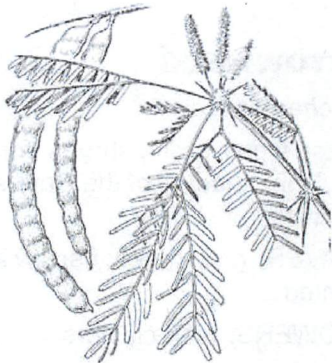


## Death Valley National Park

The low desert of Death Valley is a harsh place for plants to survive. The combination of high summer temperatures, an average annual

rainfall of less than 2 inches, and concentrations of salts in the soil all account for the sparse vegetation found here. These

plants have been successful at enduring the hardships and are the most common in the low elevations of Death Valley National Park.



### Honey Mesquite

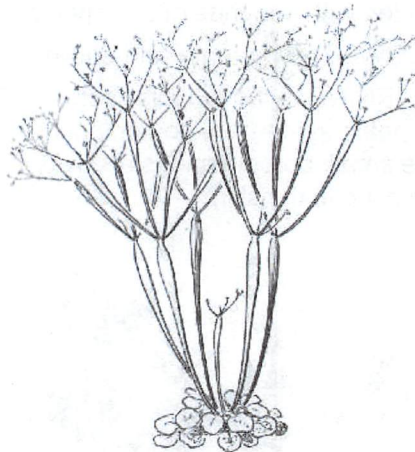
*Prosopis glandulosa torreyana*

Small native tree of watered areas.

LEAVES: divided and fern-like; deciduous

BRANCHES: knobby; long spines

FRUIT: straw-colored, edible pod



### Desert Trumpet

*Eriogonum inflatum*

Odd plant 1 to 3 feet tall of roadsides and washes.

LEAVES: silver-green; at base of plant

FLOWERS: yellow and tiny

STEMS: flower stalks have hollow bulge just below branches



### Sprucebush

*Peucephyllum schottii*

Dark green shrub of washes or canyons.

LEAVES: needle shaped leaves resemble conifer; pine scented

FLOWERS: yellow clusters

BRANCHES: twisted "trunk" like a juniper



### Desert Holly

*Atriplex hymenelytra*

Stout shrub of alluvial fans, foothills, and washes.

LEAVES: whitish, smooth leaves are holly-shaped; turns pink in summer when dormant

FLOWERS: pink bud clusters are berry-like; wind pollinated



### Creosotebush

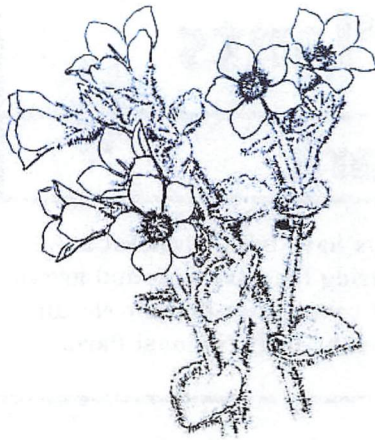
*Larrea tridentata*

Delicate-looking yet hardy shrub with strong odor of creosote.

LEAVES: olive-green, tiny and "cleft" into 2 segments

FLOWERS: yellow with 5 petals

BRANCHES: thin and flexible with dark bands



## Rocknettle

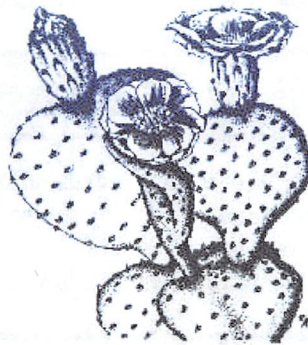
*Eucnide urens*

Bristly, broad-leaved shrub of canyons and washes.

LEAVES: large for a desert plant; bright green color almost hidden by stiff bristles

FLOWERS: pale yellow and showy

WARNING: avoid touching this plant, the bristles will cling to clothing and are irritating to the skin



## Beavertail Cactus

*Opuntia basilaris*

A low growing pricklypear cactus lacking long spines.

STEMS: flat gray-green pads dotted with bunches of tiny spines

FLOWERS: magenta and showy

WARNING: although this cactus appears spine-free, do not touch; the small, barbed spines are very irritating to the skin



## Arrowweed

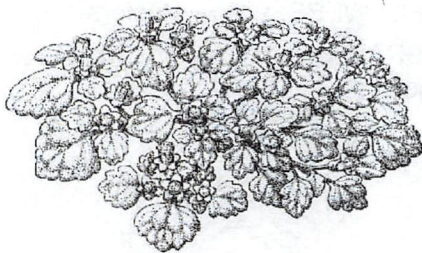
*Pluchea sericea*

These water-loving shrubs form the "corn shocks" of the Devil's Cornfield.

LEAVES: gray-green; narrow and pointed

FLOWERS: pink clusters

STEMS: long and straight like arrow shafts; grow in thick clumps



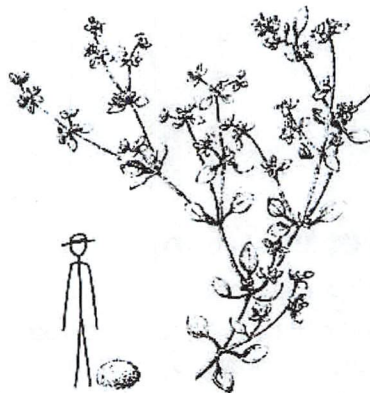
## Turtleback

*Psathyrotes ramosissima*

Low, compact plant of dry washes.

LEAVES: gray, wrinkled, and furry; very aromatic.

FLOWERS: yellow clusters at any season



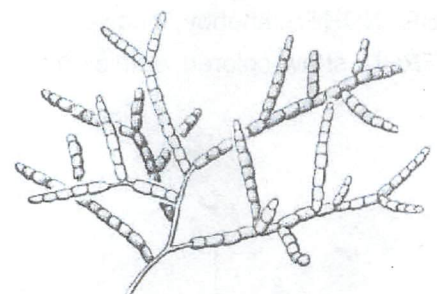
## Honeysweet

*Tidestromia oblongifolia*

Rounded, low shrub, often found with desert holly.

LEAVES: gray-green, tiny and covered with fuzz; turns pink, then tan, in winter when dormant

STEMS: abundant, pink tinged branches make plant compact and rounded



## Pickleweed

*Allenrolfea occidentalis*

Succulent shrub of salty springs. Our most salt tolerant plant.

STEMS: fleshy and green; numerous joints like pearls on a string; turn rusty-red in winter when dormant.