

# Living la Vida Flora on Arizona's West Coast



Arizona Botany Meeting 2020

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# Introduction to Arizona's West Coast Vida Flora

- This is western Arizona: the CliffsNotes version
- La Vida Flora tour of where to find and enjoy western AZ native plants in situ
- Local natives to welcome to your home
- Where to acquire them (good luck!)
- Want to learn more...





# Say Hello to Western AZ

- 3 counties: Mohave, La Paz and Yuma
  - 23,325 square miles (21% AZ land mass)
  - Population count of 447,076 (6% AZ population)
- Land of contrast and extremes
  - Basin and Range physiography
  - Desert -3 of the 4 North American deserts represented
    - Sonoran
    - Mohave
    - Great Basin
  - AND 'oasis': rivers, reservoirs, lakes and marshes
  - Elevation range: 72' at San Luis - 8,417' at Hualapai Peak (see arrows)
  - Precipitation average: 3'-11' annually



<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/yumacountyarizona,lapazcountyarizona,mohavecountyarizona,AZ/PST045219> per 07/01/2019\_ estimates as accessed 09/19/2020

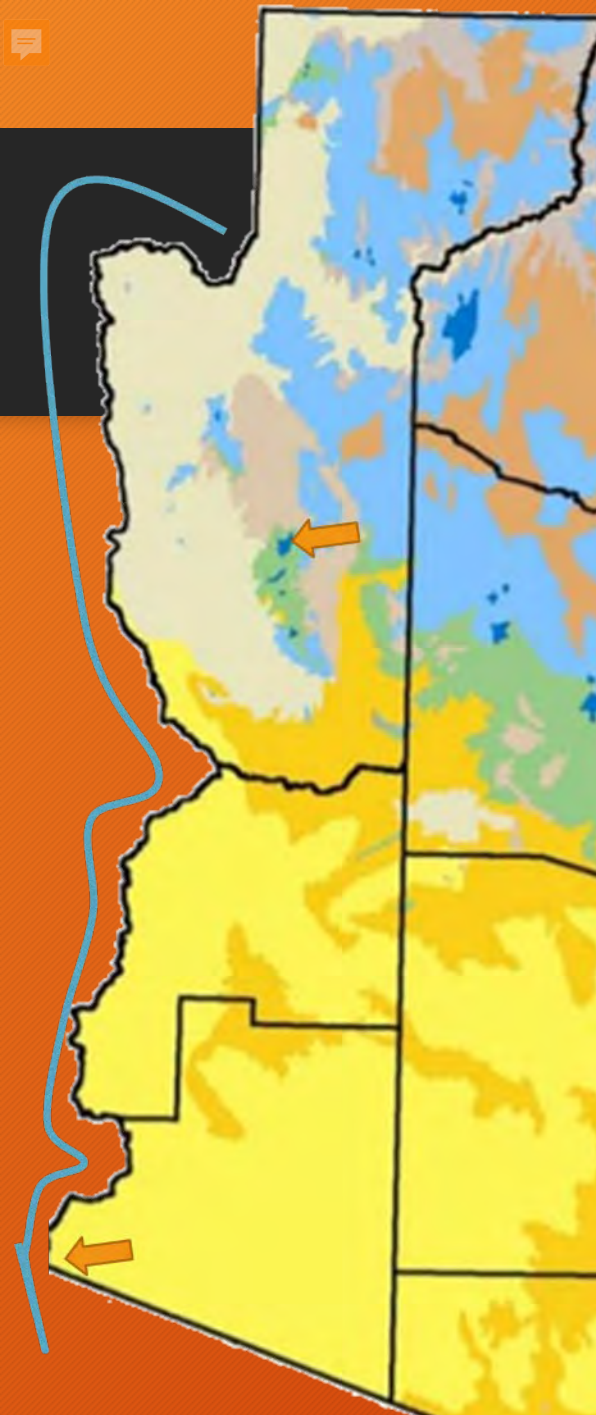


# Say Hello to Yuma

- Desert and 'Oasis'
- Junction of 2 major rivers - the Colorado and the Gila
- Year-round agriculture
  - Longest growing season in the US - 350 days of sunshine
  - The winter lettuce capital of the **WORLD**
  - The Medjool date capital of the **WORLD**
- Hottest and driest subdivision of the Sonoran Desert
  - #1 in the US in most 100°F days/year - 116.7 days
  - #1 in the US in least average annual precipitation- 3.3"
  - #1 in the **WORLD** in hours of sunshine/year- 4300 hours
  - Gran Desierto - the largest sand sea in North America



# Western AZ Biotic Communities



## 121 BOREAL AND SUBALPINE FORESTS AND WOODLANDS

121.3 Rocky Mountain and Great Basin Subalpine Conifer Forest

## 122 COLD TEMPERATE FORESTS AND WOODLANDS

122.6 Rocky Mountain Subalpine Conifer Forest

122.7 Great Basin Conifer Woodland

## 123 WARM TEMPERATE FORESTS AND WOODLANDS

123.3 Madiran Evergreen Forest and Woodland

## 133 WARM TEMPERATE SCRUBLANDS

133.3 Southwestern (Arizona) Interior Chaparral

## 142 COLD TEMPERATE GRASSLANDS

142.12 Plains and 142.13 Intermountain Grassland

## 143 WARM TEMPERATE GRASSLANDS

143.1 Semidesert Grassland

## 152 COLD TEMPERATE DESERTLANDS

152.1 Great Basin Desertscrub

## 153 WARM TEMPERATE DESERTLANDS

153.1 Mohave Desertscrub

153.2 Chihuahuan Desertscrub

## 3,000 NEOTROPICAL REALM

## 154 TROPICAL-SUBTROPICAL DESERTLANDS

154.1 Sonoran Desertscrub

154.11 Lower Colorado River Valley Subdivision

154.12 Arizona Uplands Subdivision

A Digitized Biotic Community Map. *CANOTIA* 3 (1): 1-12, 2007. ©2007 Dave E. Brown, Thomas C. Brennan, and Peter J. Unmack.

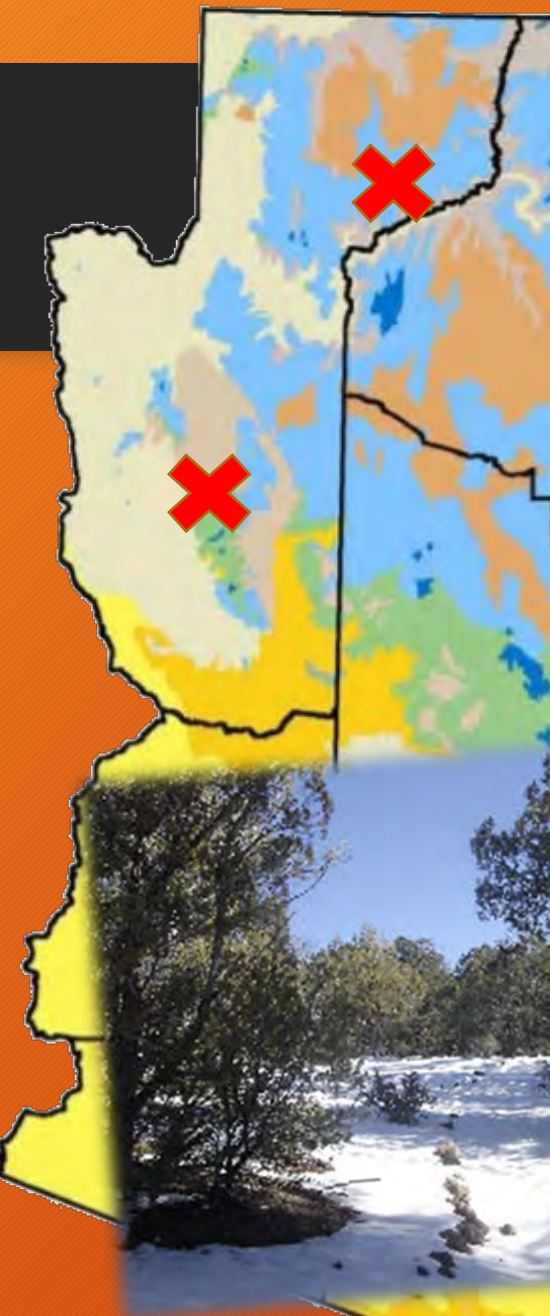


# La Vida Flora Oeste Sites and Native Plants Tour

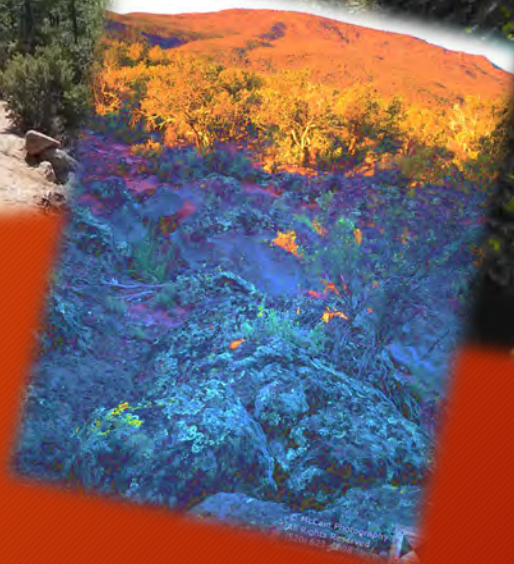
- Mount Trumbull, Hualapai Peak
- Arizona Strip
- Dolan Springs & Meadview
- Kofa National Wildlife Refuge
- Gila Mountains & Tinajas Altas
- Gran Desierto
- Rivers, lakes and marshes







# Mount Trumbull, Hualapai Peak





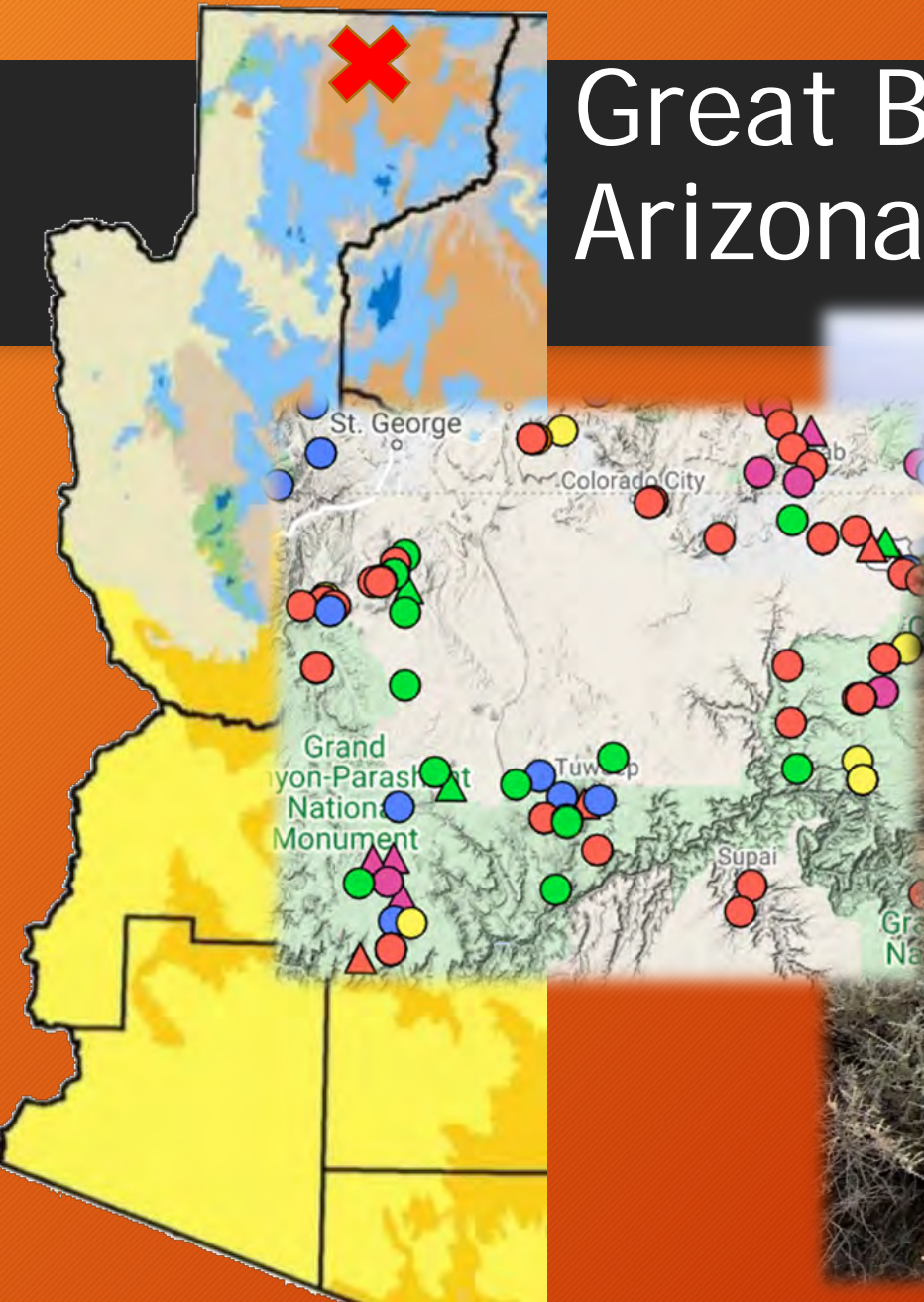
# Representative Montane Conifer Forest Native Plants

- Dark-red Onion
- Quaking Aspen
- White Fir
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Douglas Fir
- Ponderosa Pine





# Great Basin Scrub on the Arizona Strip





# Representative Great Basin Native Plant

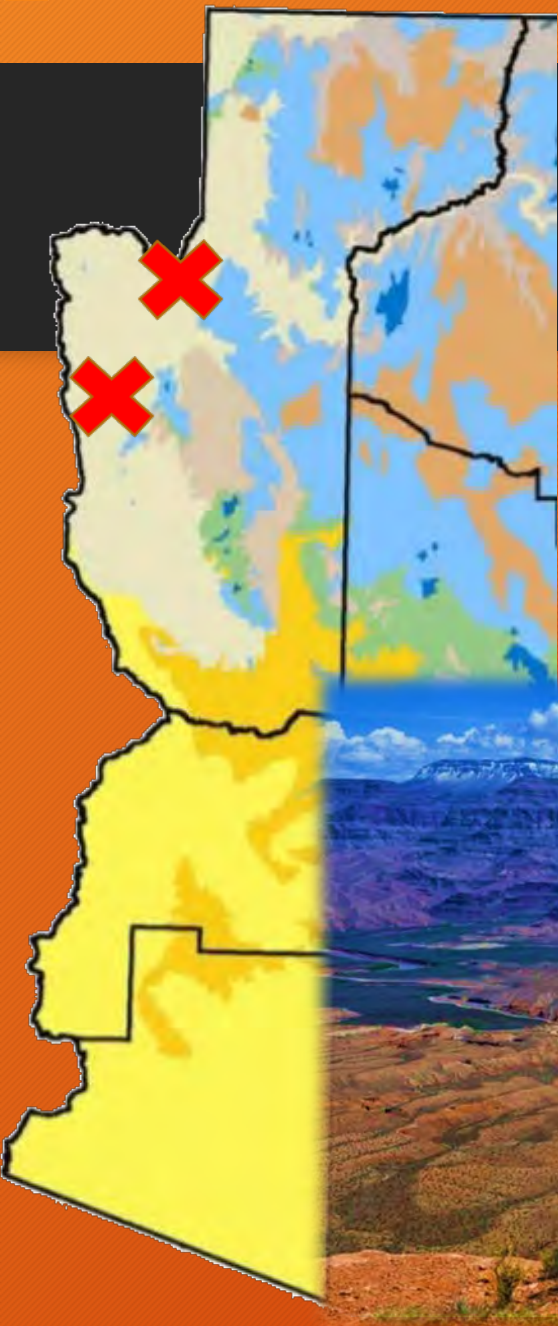
- Big Sage





# Mohave Desert Sites

- Meadview
- Dolan Springs/Gold Basin





# Mohave Desertscrub Representative Native Plants

- Fairy-duster
- Mohave Yucca
- Joshua Tree





# Kofa's Palm Canyon & More





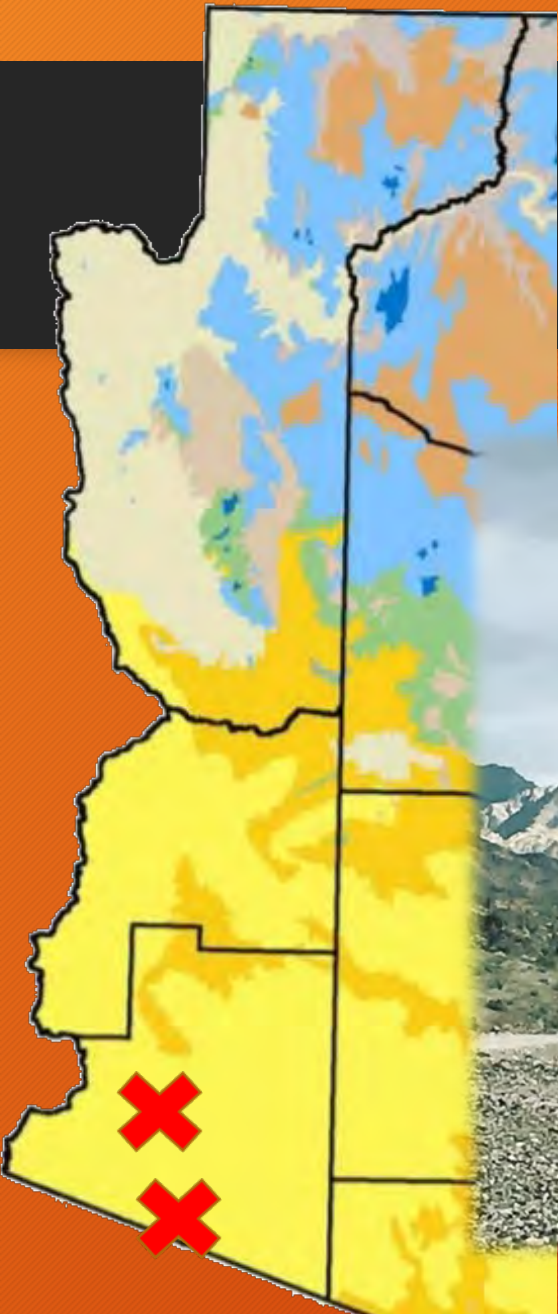
# Sonoran Desert Arizona Upland Unique Plants in the Kofa Mountains

- Parish's Wild Onion
- Kofa Mountain Barberry
- California Fan Palm





# Tinajas Altas & Gila Mountains' Telegraph Pass





# Subtropical Native Plants: Elephant Tree





# Gila Mountains' Notable Natives

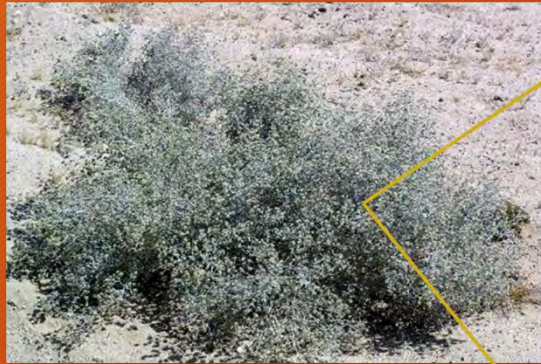
- Many-headed Barrel
- Beavertail Cactus
- Sonoran Silverbush





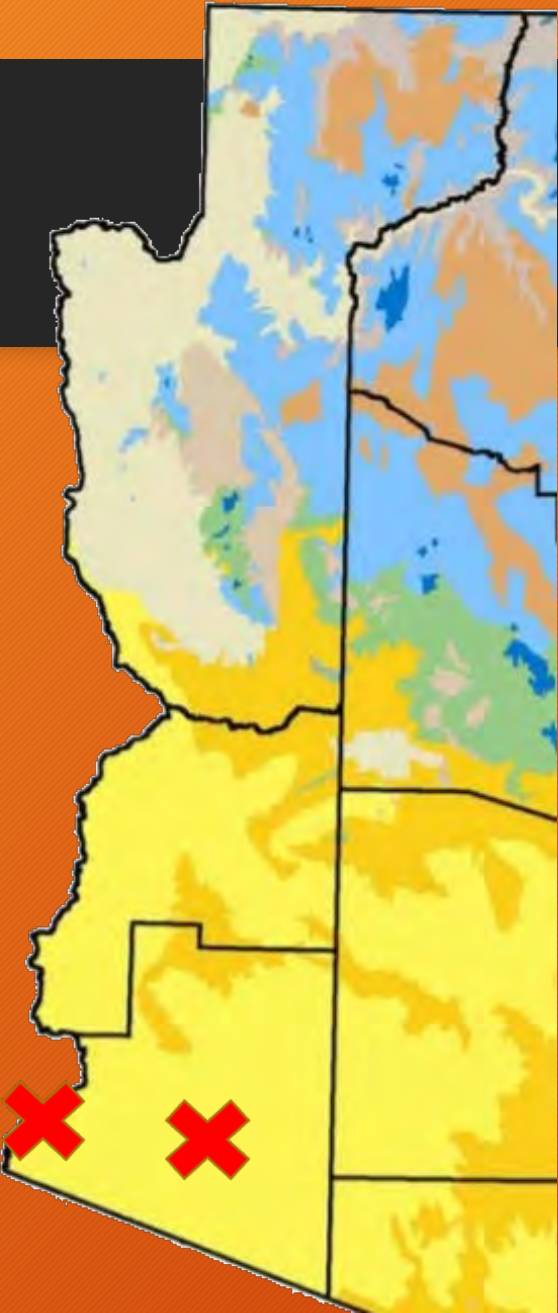
# More Gila and Tinajas Altas Mountains' Natives

- Kearney Sumac
- Thurber's Stemsucker
- Smoketree





# Mohawk Dunes & Imperial Sand Dunes





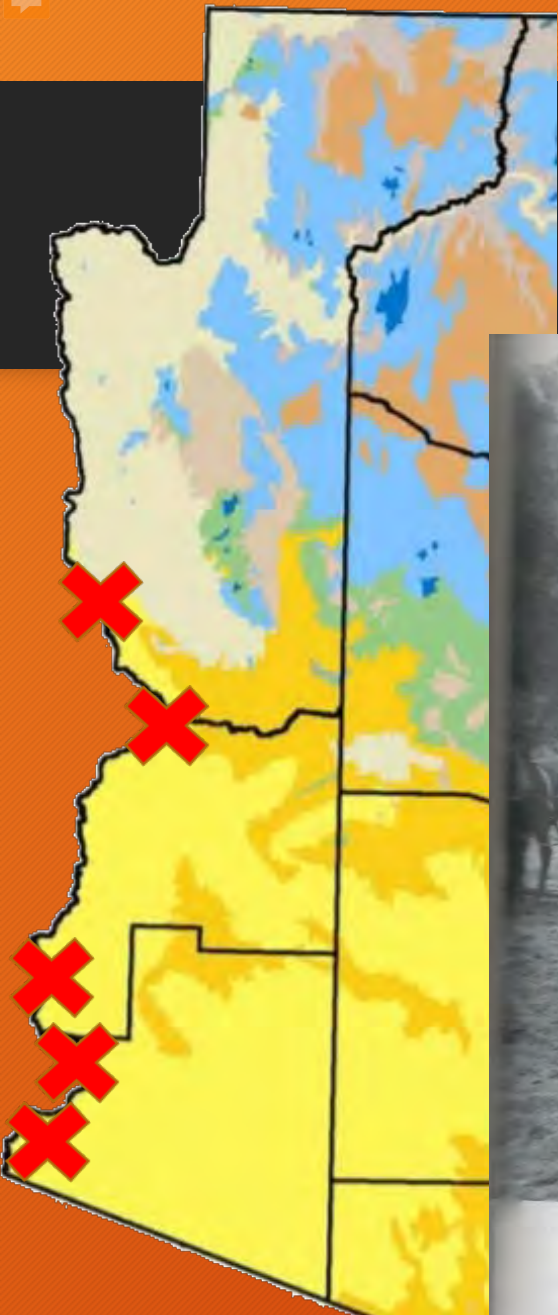
# Sonoran Desert Sand-loving Native Plants

- Dune Sunflower
- Ajo lily
- Blue Sand Lily
- Sand Food





# Colorado River Habitats



**Figure 183.** Riparian deciduous forest of cottonwood (*Populus fremontii* var. *macdougalii*) along the Colorado River near Yuma, Yuma County, Arizona, near the turn of this century. The river and its magnificent riparian ecosystem are still "untamed" as construction of the Imperial Canal is underway. Elevation ca. 100 m. Photograph courtesy of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and Robert D. Ohmart.





# Freshwater Marshlands: The River Refuge System

- Topock Marsh/Havasu National Wildlife Refuge (NWR)
- Bill Williams NWR
- Cibola & Imperial NWRs





# Riparian Deciduous Forest (Restoration)

- Mittry Lake
- Yuma East and West Wetlands
- Hunter's Hole & the Limotrophe





# Notable Riparian Natives

- Sharp Rush
- Screwbean Mesquite
- Yerba Mansa





Local natives to welcome to your home

Wolfberries!





# More Local Natives to invite home

- Desert marigold
- Rush milkweed (aka ajomete)
- Chuparosa (aka hummingbird plant)





# Where to Acquire Natives in the AZ West

- Forever Ranch and Gardens, Yucca, AZ
- Classy Cactus & Yuma Nurseries, Yuma, AZ
- Yuma Home & Garden Show
- Yuma Master Gardeners' Projects



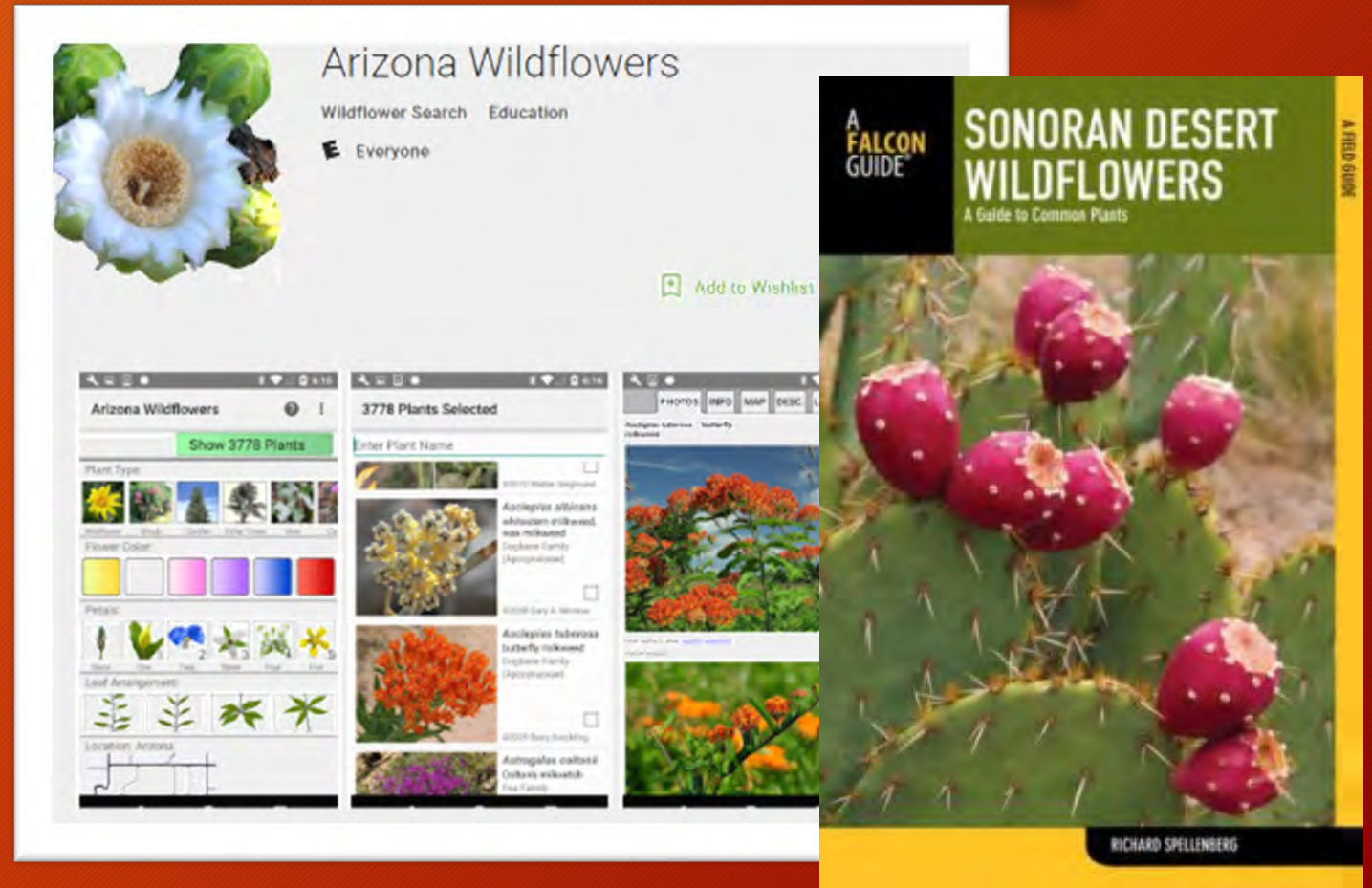


# Resources

- SEINet (swbiodiversity.org)
- AZ Wildflowers mobile (Android) app
- AZ Native Plant Society (aznps.com)
- Master Gardeners (<https://extension.arizona.edu/yuma>)
- Elpel, Thomas. Botany in a Day
- Spellenberg, Richard. Sonoran Desert Wildflowers.
- University of Arizona Herbarium (<https://cals.arizona.edu/herbarium/>) - home of Flora of SW Arizona.

## VASCULAR PLANTS OF THE NORTHERN HUALAPAI MOUNTAINS, ARIZONA

MARY BUTTERWICK<sup>1</sup>, BRUCE D. PARFITT<sup>2</sup>, and DEBORAH HILLYARD<sup>3</sup>





# Western Arizona

- Thank you for your virtual journey with us.
- Join us in person some day
- Questions?
- Adios & Thanks again!

