

## Plants found in Maricopa County, AZ

Maricopa County is located within the Sonoran Desert, an arid region covering 120,000 sq. miles in southwestern Arizona, southeastern/Baja California, and western half of Sonora, Mexico.

### Cactus

AZ queen-of-the-night  
Barrel  
Buckhorn/Staghorn Cholla  
Cane Cholla  
Chain Fruit Cholla  
Desert Christmas Cholla  
Diamond Cholla  
Fishhook Barrel  
Fishhook Pincushion  
Hedgehog  
Many-headed Barrel  
Pencil Cholla  
Prickly Pear  
Saguaro  
Sprawling Prickly Pear  
Teddybear Cholla

### Grass

Arizona Cottontop  
Bush Muhly  
Cane Beards  
Curly Mesquite  
Deer  
Galleta  
Needle Grama  
Plains Bristle  
Plains Love  
Rothrock Grama  
Sideoats Grama  
Sixweeks Fescue  
Tangle Head  
Three-awn  
Tobosa

### NON-NATIVE

Bermuda  
Bromes  
Buffle  
Fountain  
Johnson  
Mediterranean  
Rabbit-foot  
Wild Oats

### Shrub

Brittlebush  
Bush Penstemon  
Canyon Ragweed  
Chuparosa  
Creosote Bush  
Crucifixion-thorn  
Desert Broom  
Desert Hackberry  
Desert Lavender  
Desert Poinsettia

Desert Senna  
Desert Tobacco  
Dyssodia  
Fairy Duster  
Flat-top Buckwheat  
Fourwing Saltbush  
Graythorn  
Hopbush  
Jojoba  
Morman Tea/Ephedra  
Ocotillo  
Odora  
Range Ratany  
Seep Willow  
Shrub Live Oak  
Triangle-leaf Bursage  
Trixis  
Wait-a-minute Bush  
White Bursage  
White Ratany  
Wiry or Hairy Lotus  
Wolfberry  
Yellow Menodora

### Tree

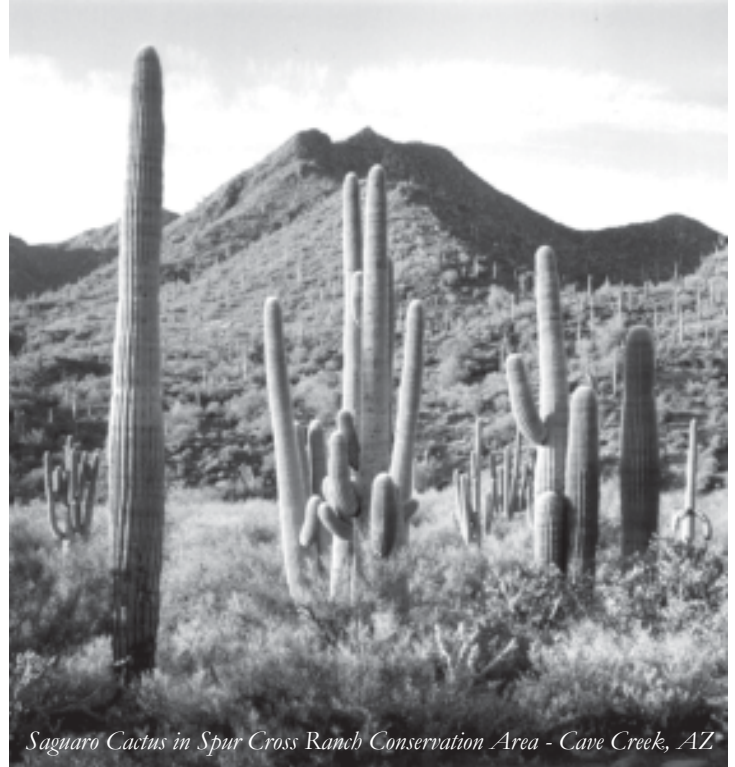
Arizona Ash  
Arizona Black Walnut  
Arizona Sycamore  
Blue Palo Verde  
Catclaw Acacia  
Desert Ironwood  
Desert Willow  
Foothill Palo Verde  
Fremont Cottonwood  
Gooding Willow  
Honey Mesquite  
Juniper  
Velvet Mesquite  
Whitethorn Acacia  
NON-NATIVE  
Eucalyptus  
Tamarisk

### Wildflower

AZ Bladderpod  
Asters  
Barestem Larkspur  
Blue Gila  
Broad-leaved Gilia  
Broomrape  
Buckley's Centaury  
Bush Penstemon  
Cheeseweed  
Chia  
Common Monkey Flower

Dalea  
Desert Bell  
Desert Chicory  
Desert Globemallow  
Desert Hyacinth  
Desert Marigold  
Desert Mariposa  
Desert Phlox  
Desert Rose Mallow  
Desert Wishbone Bush  
Fiddleneck  
Fleabane  
Herissantia  
Lupine  
Mexican Gold Poppy  
Miniature Wool Star  
Mock-pennyroyal  
Popcorn Flower  
Owl Clover  
Paintbrush  
Paleface Delphinium  
Parry Dalea  
Penstemon  
Perezia  
Phacelia  
Primrose  
Scorpionweed  
Silver Puffs  
Small-flowered Eucrypta  
Tidytips  
White Tackstem  
Wild Heliotrope  
**Other**  
Agave  
Arizona Grape  
Bull Thistle  
Cattail  
Desert Mistletoe  
Desert Trumpet  
Devil's Claw  
Janusia Gracilis  
Mara Gilensis  
Phragmites Australis  
Pretty Dodder  
Pursh Plantain  
Rambling Milkweed  
Rattlesnake Weed  
Rock Echeveria  
Sacred Datura  
Skeleton Weed  
Twining Snapdragon  
Yellow Star Thistle  
Yucca

# Plants



*Saguaro Cactus in Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area - Cave Creek, AZ*

## Wildlife of Maricopa County Parks

### Notes:



**Maricopa County**  
Parks & Recreation Department



Buckhorn/Staghorn Cholla *Opuntia acanthocarpa*/*Opuntia versicolor* Two similar cactus; difficult to tell apart. The fruits following the spring bloom are the easiest way to differentiate: staghorn are spineless and buckhorn have long, barbed spines.



Cactus, Barrel *Ferocactus wislizeni*  
The compass barrel, or fishhook barrel cactus generally grows from 2' to 4'.



Cactus, Hedgehog *Echinocereus engelmannii*  
Small, many-stemmed and grows to about 1'. Early spring bloomers; prolific cactus blossoms showy, bright magenta flowers.



Cactus, Prickly Pear *Opuntia engelmannii*  
Large, sprawling plant with round pads. Blooms large yellow flowers in late spring followed with lime-sized red fruit.



Cactus, Saguaro *Carnegiea gigantea*  
Signature plant of the Sonoran Desert and grows typically to 40'. Largest cactus in the U.S.; blooms stiff white flowers in late spring and produces red fruit.



Chain Fruit Cholla *Opuntia fulgida*  
Cactus known also as "jumping cholla," considered a tree cholla that typically grows to 8'. Summer bloomer; small pink flowers, followed by green fruits that hang from past season fruits to create hanging "chain."



Fishhook Pincushion *Mammillaria microcarpa*  
Cactus usually found under desert shrubs and generally 6" tall. Blooms a crown of brilliant pink flowers in early spring and at times with summer rains.



Teddybear Cholla *Opuntia bigelovii*  
Cactus known for its nasty, pain-inducing spines, grows vertically to 5'. In the spring, blooms green flowers then spineless fruits.



Brittlebush *Encelia farinosa* Small, drought-tolerant shrub that typically grows to 3'. Common to Sonoran Desert, blooms daisy-like yellow flowers in early spring.



Bush, Creosote *Larrea tridentata* Evergreen grows to 6' and most common in Sonoran Desert. Can live for 2 years without rain. Blooms yellow flowers and follows with a fuzzy ball that holds the seeds.



Canyon Ragweed *Ambrosia ambrosioides*  
Shrub found throughout Sonoran Desert washes and impacted areas. Blooms in early spring and follows with a bur.

Desert Broom *Baccharis sarothroides*  
Evergreen shrub grows easily in impacted soils usually to 6'. Blooms in the fall; female plants follow with seeds dispersed by wind.



Jojoba *Simmondsia chinensis* Evergreen, woody shrub can grow to 10'. The male plant blooms pale yellow clusters on a separate plant than the female's green single bloom; both bloom in winter and female follows with an almond-sized seed.



Ocotillo *Fouquieria splendens* Common Sonoran Desert woody shrub can grow to 20'. Blooms tubular red flowers in spring; a major food for hummingbirds.



Triangle-leaf Bursage *Ambrosia deltoidea*  
Small, understory grows to 2' and can live 50 years. Drought-deciduous shrub, easily mistaken for brittlebush; flowers in spring and follows with a bur.



Blue Palo Verde *Cercidium floridum*  
Tree found throughout most of the Sonoran Desert. Many-trunked, deciduous and grows to around 40'. The bluish-green branches droop with larger leaves. In spring, blooms many yellow flowers followed by soft seed pods.



Catclaw *Acacia greggii* Small tree or deciduous shrub that can grow to 20' in some Sonoran Desert regions. Has small, annoying thorns; blooms yellow, bottlebrush-like blooms in late spring.



Desert Ironwood *Olneya tesota* Tree can grow up to 35' tall with gray bark, grayish-green leaves and lavender, pea-like flowers. Scientists think this very dense, slow growing tree can live to about 300 years.



Foothill Palo Verde *Cercidium microphyllum*  
Many-trunked, deciduous, small tree grows to around 15-30'. The yellow-green branches are stiff with tiny leaves. In spring, blooms yellow flowers followed by soft seed pods.



Velvet Mesquite *Prosopis velutina*  
Shaggy-barked tree, deciduous; can grow to 55'. Blooms yellow flowers in the spring followed by flat, sweet seed pods

