State Tree: Palo Verde

SCIENTIFIC NAME: *Cercidium floridum*

DESCRIPTION: Multi-trunked, fast-growing, deciduous tree reaching heights of 40 feet. Thought to live about 100 years in the wild. Bark is green to assist in photosynthesis. Small leaves, but the tree is bare most of the year. Produces numerous bright yellow flowers.

RANGE: Southern Arizona and California into northern Sinaloa and southern Baja California. Found throughout the Sonoran and Mojave Deserts. Can be found in elevations up to 4,000 feet.

HABITAT: Typically restricted to washes in dry riparian areas.

REPRODUCTION: Flowers bloom for two weeks in the spring, usually in April. Pollinated by as many as 20 species of bees at one time. Mature seed pods fall to the ground and are eaten by beetles, javelina and rock squirrels. Seeds must by cut open by floods or weather before they can germinate.

STATUS: Population is stable and quite common throughout its range.

Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum. *A Natural History of the Sonoran Desert*. Tucson: Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum Press, 2000.

SHG Resources. Arizona Symbols, Tree: Blue Paloverde. 22 April 2005. <http://www.shgresources.com/az/symbols/tree/>

Photo: G. Andrejko