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Parkinsonia florida

[Synonyms : *Cercidium floridum*, *Cercidium torreyanum*, *Parkinsonia torreyana*]

BLUE PALO-VERDE is a deciduous shrub or tree. Native to south-western United States it has small, centrally red-blotched, yellow flowers.

It is also known as Blue green palo verde, Palo verde, and *Zugu-bai-tia* (Ghanaian).

The bark stands in for the leaves as a source of food for the plant. Leaflets only appear after rain and these fold at night and drop off after a few days..The flowers are pollinated by bees and other insects. Mature short fruit pods can float on water.

Blue palo verde is a protected species in Arizona (United States).

Florida means ‘flowering abundantly’.

The Spanish meaning of *palo-verde*, often used in common names for this plant, is ‘green stick’.

Several North American Indian tribes including the Tohono O’Odham, Yuma, Cocopa, Cahuilla and Mohave added the ground seeds, raw, dried or roasted to their diet.

The larger spiny, bluish- to greyish-green branches were used by the Tohono O’Odham Indians for making ladles.

This is the state tree for Arizona in the south-western United States.

In 1998 the United States issued a series of postage stamps on Flowering Trees and illustrated blue palo-verde on the 32c stamp. Then the following year (1999) it appeared again in an American series on plants of the desert only this time in a supporting role on a stamp that depicted the giant cactus (*Carnegiea gigantea*).