



ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM

PLANT CARE INFORMATION

Brittlebush or Rama Blanca *Encelia farinosa*

DESCRIPTION: Brittlebush is a common shrub of the Sonoran Desert. In Arizona and Baja California, it grows on gravelly bajadas or rocky slopes. In Sonora, it appears in sandy soil on valley floors. It is 'evergreen' except after severe drought or frost. The Mexican name means white bush, and indeed, the foliage is a chalky blue-green in color, especially if grown with minimal water in full sun. Flowers are born in clusters in late winter to early spring. They are bright yellow and an inch across. A form from Sonora and Baja has a ruby center to the flowers, and is more frost tender.

RECOMMENDED USE: Brittlebush is quite adaptable, and can be used for spring color, for its foliage color, or in a desert landscape or xeriscape.

CULTURE:



Hardiness: Brittlebush is hardy to around 24°F and takes the upper 20's with no damage or diminished flowering.



Sun tolerance: Looks, blooms, and grows best in full sun to light shade.



Watering and feeding: At least weekly watering when first planted. Minimal watering is needed after establishment. No feeding is necessary.



Soil requirements: Most soils will do.



Pruning: Prune dried flower stalks in late spring. Can take branch pruning, but not during winter or the flowering will be affected.