



ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM

PLANT CARE INFORMATION

Mexican Elder or Sauco *Sambucus mexicana*

DESCRIPTION: Mexican Elder is a large shrub or small tree with a moderate growth rate to 15' tall or more. It is often deciduous during parts of the warm season and may suffer some stem die-back. Flowers are white and in large clusters from April until June, followed by small edible purple berries. Many animals are attracted to the plant. Butterflies such as Hairstreaks and Blues use it as a nectar source. Mexican Elder can be found along streams and drainages from low to middle elevations in Arizona, as well as southern California, New Mexico, Texas, and northern Mexico.

RECOMMENDED USE: Wildlife habitat garden.

CULTURE:



Hardiness: Quite hardy in Tucson except for summer stress.



Sun tolerance: Full sun to light shade.



Watering and feeding: A winter grower, so do not neglect water in the cool season. However, it does need regular summer water, too. Feed twice yearly.



Soil requirements: May prefer heavier flood-plain soils.



Pruning: Clean out dead branches in the fall, as it is leafing out.