



ARIZONA-SONORA
DESERT
MUSEUM

ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM PLANT CARE INFORMATION

Garden Huckleberry or Chichiquelite *Solanum melanocerasum*

DESCRIPTION: This small shrub grows to a foot or two tall. An unusual crop for gardeners to try, garden huckleberry bears small jet-black berries that are edible. The berries are ready to harvest about two weeks after they first turn black, when their skin has changed from shiny to dull, and the flesh is very soft. They are usually cooked or boiled before eating; used as a flavoring for various desserts. Plants require virtually no care other than water. They are fairly short lived and make excellent annuals. **Caution:** Do not to confuse the fruits with those of nighthshade (a very close relative), as nightshade fruits are highly poisonous. The fruit of Garden Huckleberry are toxic if eaten unripe, and the raw fruit can be quite bitter.

RECOMMENDED USE: Grow in the ground or in pots. Ripe fruit can be combined with other fruits such as apples, lemons and grapes, to make jellies, preserves and pies.

CULTURE:



Hardiness: Not frost hardy, but will reseed readily.



Sun tolerance: Best in afternoon shade.



Watering and feeding: Moderate water use. Fertilize in early summer.



Soil requirements: Best in deep, loamy soil



Pruning: As needed.