

Recommended Valley Trees Part 2

Retama or Lluvia de Oro (*Parkinsonia aculeata*)

- Growth: Fast, 15 to 30 ft., with equally wide spread.
Flowers: Bright yellow with red centers, very showy throughout year.
Leaves: Deciduous leaflets, branches armed with weakly curved spines.
Sun: Full, to partial shade.
Soil: Any, good to poor drainage, low water use, drought tolerant.
Note: Leaves and pods are food for wildlife. Pod can be ground and used for tea. This small tree with ever-blooming showy flowers makes a great tree for mass plantings or in a patio area.

Texas Paloverde (*Cercidium texanum*)

- Growth: Moderate, 12 to 20 ft., with equally wide spread.
Flowers: Very showy, bright yellow, spotted with red in spring, yielding pods.
Leaves: Dense, dark-green deciduous during drought. Short curved spines.
Sun: Full to partial shade.
Soil: Any, well drained, low water use, drought tolerant.
Note: Similar to retama, but trunk is green like branches.

Texas Mt. Laurel or Mescal bean (*Sophora secundiflora*)

- Growth: Slow to moderate, 25 to 35 ft.
Flowers: Very fragrant, very showy, bluish-purple in early spring, resulting in pods with bright red beans.
Leaves: Evergreen, dark-green, glossy leaves, no spines.
Sun: Full sun, to partial shade.
Soil: Any, does poorly in wet areas, drought tolerant, low water use.
Note: Attractive to bees, butterflies and humans. Perfect patio tree or in mass plantings. Webworms are a problem and fungal canker can cause dieback. Very freeze tolerant. Silvery pods are attractive contrast to dark-green leaves.

Guayacan or Soapbush (*Guaiacum angustifolium*)

- Growth: Slow, 8 to 10 ft, rarely to 20 ft.
Flowers: Showy, fragrant, blue to purple bloom in March.
Leaves: Evergreen, dark-green, fold at night and heat of day, no spines.
Sun: Full sun to partial shade.
Soil: Any, well drained; low water use, drought tolerant.
Notes: Root bark used as soap. Plant cover and nest sites for birds. Flowers attract butterflies and foliage is a browse for wildlife.

Runyon's Esenbeckia or Runyon's tree (*Esenbeckia runyonii*)

- Growth: Slow, to 15 to 25 ft.
Flowers: Small creamy white clusters.
Leaves: Evergreen, citrus-like, glossy, no spine or claws.
Sun: Shade, to part sun.

Soil: River bank or resaca bank.
Note: Rarest tree in Texas, bark is very attractive, makes a perfect, clean, attractive tree for small areas or near a patio. Highly recommended you plant this one.

Colima or Lime prickly-ash or Una de Gato (*Zanthoxylum fagara*)

Growth: Medium to slow, up to 15 ft.
Fruit: Showy magenta, turning black.
Leaves: Nearly evergreen leaflets, twigs have many claws.
Sun: Full sun to partial shade.
Soil: Any, moderate to well-drained; low water use, drought tolerant.
Note: Need a plant that will keep out animals and humans? This is it.

Western Soapberry or Jaboncillo (*Sapindus drummondii*)

Growth: Medium to fast, 10 to 50 ft.
Flowers: Very showy, large white clusters in April - May, long lasting.
Fruit: Amber, round fleshy berry. No spines or claws.
Sun: Full sun to partial shade.
Soil: Any, well-drained; low water use, drought tolerant.
Note: Fruit eaten by birds. Excellent shade tree. Provides best fall color.

Brasil or Bluewood (*Condalia hookeri*)

Growth: Moderate to slow, to 15 ft.
Fruit: Greenish to reddish to black flesh, edible berry.
Leaves: Evergreen, bright lime-green leaves; no spines or claws, extension of small twigs quite sharp.
Sun: Full sun to partial shade.
Soil: Any, well-drained; low water use, drought tolerant.
Note: Key source of food for all kinds of wildlife. Little used, very attractive small tree, planted next to a Ebony (*Pithecellobium ebano*) makes a beautiful contrast.

Coma del Sur or Saffron-plum (*Bumelia celastrina*)

Growth: Slow to medium, 15 to 20 ft.
Flowers: Fragrant, small, greenish-white clusters, late fall or after rain.
Fruit: Sweet, edible purple, plum-like berry; no spine or claws, extension of small twigs quite sharp.
Sun: Full sun to partial shade.
Soil: Any, well-drained; low water use, drought tolerant.
Note: Growth tends to produce an artistic weeping canopy; very attractive to butterflies and birds. Fruit is a chewing gum substitute.

Chapote or Texas Persimmon (*Diospyros texana*)

Growth: Slow, 10 to 15 ft.
Flowers: Small white flowers, bell-like, hanging in clusters.
Fruit: One-inch, black edible fruit on female trees; no spines.

Sun: Full sun to full shade.
Soil: Any, well to moderately drained soil; low water use, drought tolerant.
Note: Beautiful small tree, attractive peeling-bark. Wonderful for patio area. Tree will drop fruit that will stain cement or brick plant 15ft. away from these areas.

Rio Grande Ash or Fresno (*Fraxinum berlandieriana*)

Growth: Rapid, to 30 ft. up to 60 ft., with equally wide spread.
Fruit: Elongated winged seed.
Leaves: Deciduous, grayish-green to bright-green; no spines.
Sun: Full sun to partial shade.
Soil: Loamy, poor to moderate drainage; moderate water use.
Note: Good for bird nest sites, fuel and medicinal uses, marketed under the name of Arizona ash.

Anacahuite, anacahuita or Mexican Olive (*Cordia boissieri*)

Growth: Moderate, to 10 - 20 ft., equally wide spread.
Flowers: Large, very showy white with yellow throats, trumpet-shaped, all year.
Fruit: Fleshy, white berry resembling olive, edible.
Sun: Full to partial shade.
Soil: Any, moderate well drained; moderate water use.
Note: Edible fruit, jelly used as a cough remedy. Leaves used to treat rheumatism and bronchial disorders. Flowers and velvet leaves are a beautiful contrast. Very attractive showy tree. Use this one in your landscape.

Anacua or Sugarberry or Sandpaper tree (*Ehretia anacua*)

Growth: Moderate, 15 to 40 ft., equally wide spread.
Flowers: Fragrant, white clusters over entire tree early spring or after rains.
Fruit: Edible, showy clusters of yellow to red berries; no spines.
Sun: Full to shade.
Soil: Any, well drained; low water use, drought tolerant.
Note: You want birds and butterflies, plant this tree. Provides deep shade.

(Information source: *Native Trees of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, Texas Landscape Uses and Identification*, Native Plant Project, P.O. Box 1433, Edinburg, TX 78540)

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