

Desert-Willow

Chilopsis linearis

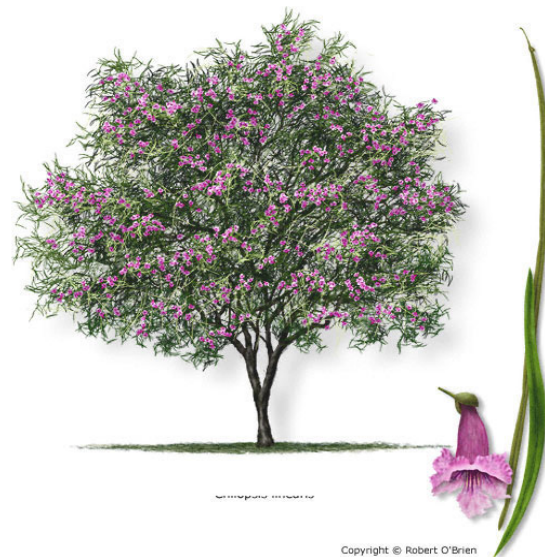
Secondary Names:

Desert Willow

Leaf Type: Deciduous

Texas Native: Yes No

Firewise: Yes No



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Tree Description:

A small tree to 25 feet tall and a trunk to 12" in diameter, with a curving, irregular branching habit and an open, airy crown of foliage.

Range/Site Description:

Occurs in West Texas, on dry, gravelly, porous soils and dry stream channels. Also planted as a landscape specimen, but does poorly if overwatered.

Leaf:

Simple, alternate (or sometimes opposite), linear, 4" to 12" long and just 0.5" wide, light green, pointed at the tip, with a smooth leaf margin.

Flower:

Showy, tubular flowers 1" to 1.5" long, usually lavender or white, blooming at the end of the twigs in summer or after a rainstorm, opening successively toward the end of the flower stalk.

Fruit:

A long "pod" or capsule, 7" to 12" long, woody, very slender, and containing many small seeds. Fruit pods are similar to those of catalpa.

Bark:

Smooth, brown on branches and young trunks, turning darker with age and developing scales and deeper fissures on old trunks.

Wood:

Soft, weak, and close-grained; brown, streaked with yellow. The wood is used for fenceposts, fuel, and baskets; the flowers produce an excellent honey.

Similar Species:

Black willow (*Salix nigra*) has shorter leaves with finely-toothed margins.

Interesting Facts:

Dried flowers are sold in local Mexican markets as remedy for coughs and other respiratory ailments.