

CAMPUS ARBORETUM



Focus on:
Senegalia occidentalis
"Sonoran catclaw"
Fabaceae



Senegalia occidentalis, the small tree, formerly known as *Acacia occidentalis*, grows 15-20 feet tall and 20-30 feet wide. It is a near identical twin to its relative *Senegalia greggii*. While both share curved, sharp spines and white flowers, the Sonoran catclaw grows larger and has finer foliage and branches. A key characteristic of this tree is the presence of a brown-grey gland on the leaf petiole which is usually between the base of the leaf and the first 2 pinnae (2 sets of leaflet groups in a pinnately compound leaf).

To learn more, visit this Campus Arboretum Species Description Page found at: <https://apps.cals.arizona.edu/arboretum/taxon.aspx?id=18>



(Above) A familiar looking "catclaw" thorn on the stem resembles those on the more commonly grown *Senegalia greggii*.



(Above) Flowers appear in mid-spring, are fragrant and globose ("pom poms" type) with creamy white filaments that extend beyond the tiny petals.
Photo Credit: Sue Canahan <https://swbiodiversity.org/seinet/taxa/index.php?taxon=26398&clid=3469>



(Above) Fruit is a dry dehiscent legume pod. Immature bean pods, shown here, will eventually dry, turn brown and split open.

Photo Credit: Sue Canahan <https://swbiodiversity.org/seinet/taxa/index.php?taxon=26398&clid=3469>

Cultivation:

The Sonoran catclaw grows natively in Mexico, from Sonora into Northern Sinaloa in desert or dry shrublands. Very little information is known about this plant beyond its distribution. However, it appears to grow primarily along ephemeral rivers (xeroriparian washes) in subtropical Mexico., and as such, it is considered very tolerant to drought, poor quality soils and full sun. Anecdotally, it is also reported to grow from Zone 7a-11, though its native range suggests it is likely best suited for USDA hardiness zone 9b - 10a.



(Above) Bark like this doesn't get enough time in the spotlight - as it should!

Thanks for joining me on my journey to see and understand trees! The health of the planet and our fellow humans depends on respectful and understanding tree selection choices. I hope you're inspired to deepen the connection by visiting the campus, and using the [interactive arboretum map](#) to find the tree featured in this spotlight for a more immersive education and sensory experience.



She sees trees

Enjoy!

Tanya

Tanya M. Quist, Ph.D.
Director, University of Arizona Campus Arboretum

UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA CAMPUS ARBORETUM

P.O. Box 210036 Tucson, AZ 85721-0036

PHONE: (520) 621-1582

E-MAIL: infoarboretum@ag.arizona.edu

WEBSITE: <http://arboretum.arizona.edu>



CLICK HERE TO DONATE

Promote stewardship and conservation of urban trees in Arizona.

University of Arizona Campus Arboretum | P.O. Box 210036 | Tucson, AZ 85721-0036 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!