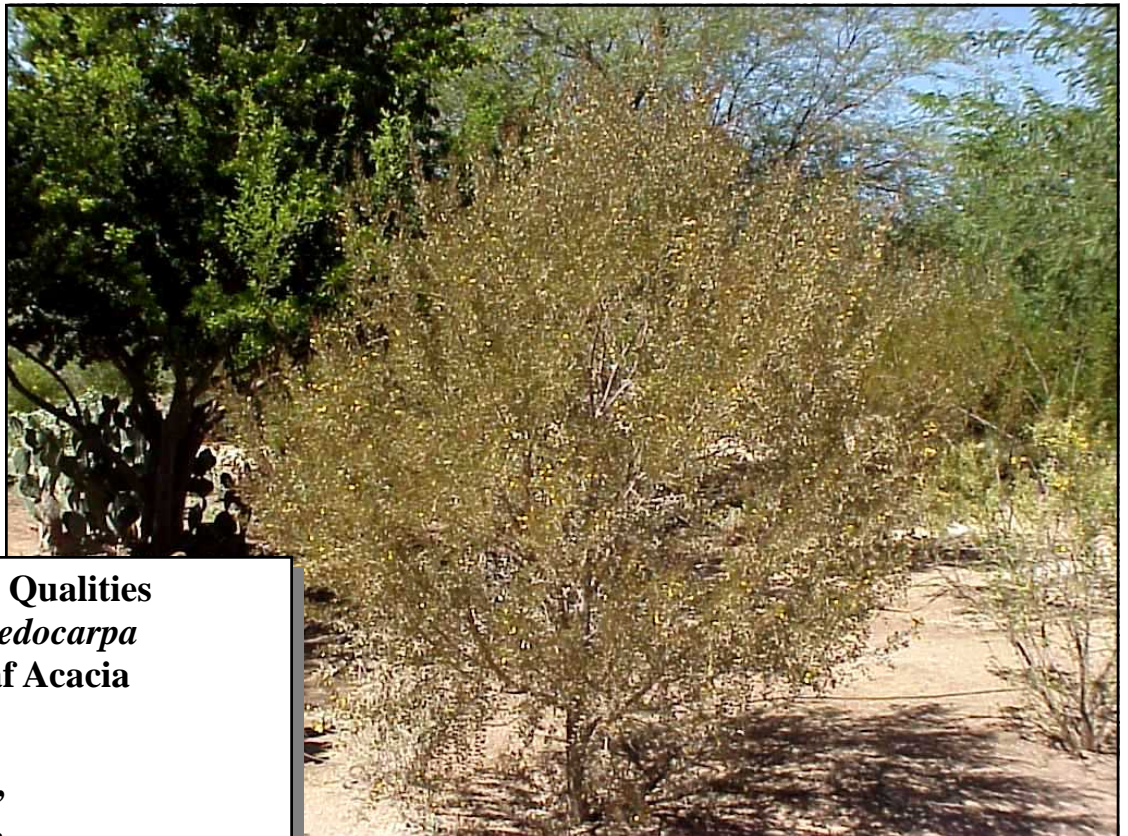


Arid Zone Trees



Acacia craspedocarpa Leather Leaf Acacia



Horticultural Qualities *Acacia craspedocarpa* Leather Leaf Acacia

Foliage: Evergreen
Mature Height: 9'-12'
Mature Width: 6' - 8'
Growth Rate: Moderate
Hardiness: 18 degrees F
Exposure: Full Sun
Leaf Color: Grey-Green
Shade: Filtered
Flower Color: Yellow
Flower Shape: Rod Shape
Flower Season: Spring
Thorns: None
Box Sizes Produced: 24"
Propagation Method: Seed

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Acacia craspedocarpa Leather Leaf Acacia

Leather Leaf Acacia, (*A. craspedocarpa*) is an excellent, descriptive name for this Australian native. Its common name is an accurate description on the leaves, which are oval shapes, thick and fairly stiff with a webbed network of raised veins. To the touch the leaves are course and brittle. In its native Australian habitat it is an understory plant along with Cassias and *Acacia aneuras*. In landscape settings its dense, upright branches form an erect, compact head that make it an ideal privacy screen or windbreak shrub. It can also be used as a background or foundation plant or as individual specimens. Mature plants may reach 9' to 12' and be 6' to 8' wide. It is used primarily as a large shrub or small tree in southwestern landscape designs where it can be planted closely to form a dense hedge or as individual specimens or small groupings. Tree forms can be achieved with proper pruning that exposes the branching pattern beneath the otherwise dense foliar canopy.

In spring individual, small, bright yellow, elongated rod flowers are produced. Tan-colored, flat, 2" long pods develop from the flowers. The botanical name probably is drawn from a description of these pods since *crasped* translates to broad in latin and *carp* refers to fruit. Leather Leaf Acacia is moderately cold hardy (15 to 20 F) and grows well in full and partial sun. It will tolerate a variety of soils but does best in well-draining soils.

Established plants are highly adapted to harsh summer conditions and can survive without supplemental irrigation. Watering once a month will ensure limited growth but more frequent irrigation is needed to achieve optimal growth, appearance and flowering. This plant grows slowly and in some landscape applications it may be desirable to install larger container sizes (15 gallon to 36" box) to get more immediate impact.

Specimens pruned into tree form can be used as individual specimens or in small groupings. Leather Leaf are most commonly uses an as informal hedge planting or as part of a landscape screen. Because the growth of established specimens can be easily regulated by irrigation practices, *A. craspedocarpa* offers a low maintenance alternative to Oleanders or other non-desert species used as landscape screens.

Cultural Practices

Foster the development of a more dispersed root system and reduce the risk of wind throw by arranging irrigation emitters at varying distances from the trunk to encourage roots to "seek out" water and nutrients. Irrigation emitter arrangement along with other information on irrigations practices for desert trees can be found at www.aridzonetrees.com and click on the FAQ link.

Prune as needed to reinforce the structure and form of the tree. Periodic thinning is the most desirable method of pruning. Avoid hedging or heading back desert species, as this will only stimulate excessive branching. Do not remove more than 30% of the canopy during the summer as this can lead to sunburn injuries that can later be invaded by wood boring insects. Always use clean, sharp tools that are cleaned regularly in a 10% solution of bleach. For detail pruning guide see www.aridzonetrees.com and click on the FAQ interactive button.

Periodically insect pests can be a problem on some desert trees. On young trees, insect infestation can slow typical seasonal growth. Inspect trees during the growing season for common garden sucking insects such as aphids, thrip, whiteflies or psyllids. During dry months, (May and June) in dusty conditions, spider mites can appear. Monitor for infestation and apply controls as needed. Spray applications of water or water and Safer Soap give short-term control (3 to 7 days) for small insect population. For heavy infestation or longer control use federally registered insecticides. A contact insecticide application will kill existing adults. An application with a systemic soil drench will provide 8 to 12 weeks control for any post application insect hatchings or migration of insects. Before using pesticide for the first time or on new plants or cultivar, treat a few plants and check for phytotoxicity. **Always read label and follow label instruction before using pesticides. For pesticide control recommendations contact a licensed pest control advisor.**

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