

# Arid Zone Trees

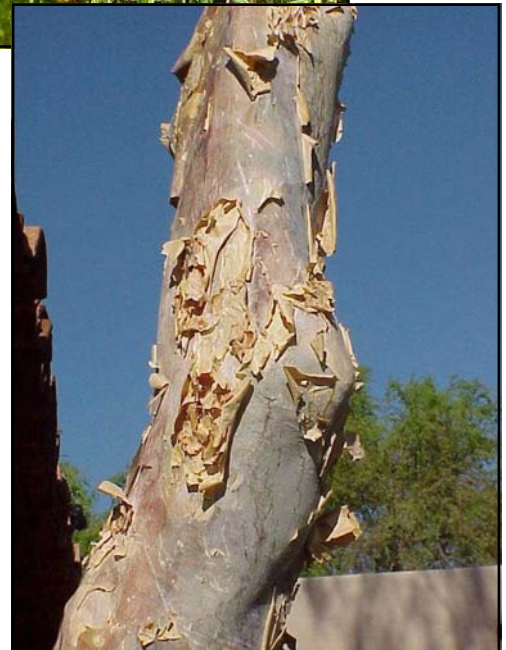


## **Acacia willardiana** *Palo Blanco*



### **Horticultural Qualities** **Acacia willardiana** *Palo Blanco*

**Foliage:** Deciduous  
**Mature Height:** 10' - 20'  
**Mature Width:** 5' - 10'  
**Growth Rate:** Moderate  
**Hardiness:** 25 degrees F  
**Exposure:** Full Sun  
**Leaf Color:** Green  
**Shade:** Filtered  
**Flower Color:** White to Cream  
**Flower Shape:** Rod Shape  
**Flower Season:** Spring  
**Thorns:** None  
**Box Sizes Produced:** 24"  
**Propagation Method:** Seed



[www.aridzonetrees.com](http://www.aridzonetrees.com)

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# **Acacia willardiana**

## ***Palo Blanco***

**White Barked Acacia** and **Palo Blanco** are the two common names associated with **Acacia willardiana**. Palo Blanco has a slender, upright form that matures to about 20 feet tall and 10 feet wide. Because of its relatively small size, this delicate, weepy desert tree is used as an accent, in entry areas and patios or to cast shadows against a wall or building. It is found on rocky hillsides in Sonora Mexico and was recently introduced into southwest landscapes. Leaves are made up of a thin 4" midrib that divides to form two leaflets about 1" long. Each leaflet then bears ten tiny leaflets. The canopy on even fairly mature specimens is almost transparent providing only very modest shade. White to cream colored, rod shape flowers appear in spring and mature into dark brown, 3" to 8" long seed pods over the summer. Trees are deciduous and grows best in full sun and well drained soils. Palo Blancos grow slowly and require little or no pruning once mature shape is established. They are reported to be cold hardy to temperatures in the mid 20's but can be severely damaged by temperatures in this range in lower desert locations. Beside the lacy form of this tree, its other distinguishing feature is the peeling, papery, silver-white bark. The form and texture can be enhanced by up lighting at night or when planted against a contrasting background. Its peeling bark and beautiful silhouette and small statue make Palo Blanco an ideal accent tree in arid landscape designs.

## **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](http://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](http://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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