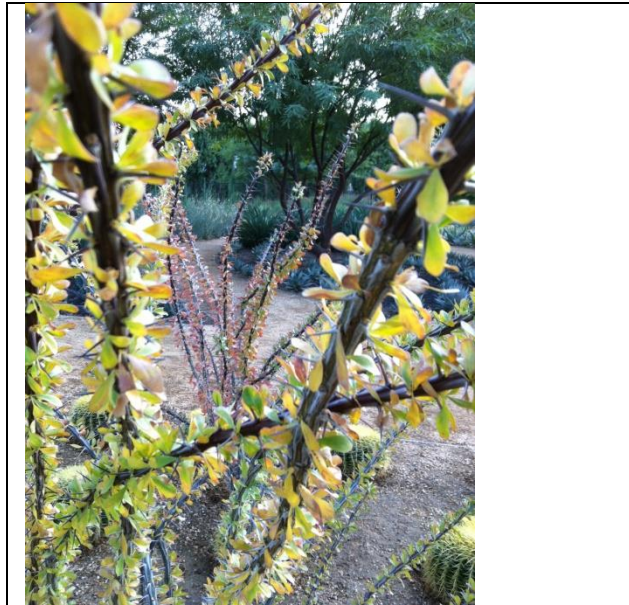


Ocotillo Coachwhip

Fouquieria splendens

Family: Fouquieriaceae/ Acanthaceae

Basic Description: A spiny shrub that grows up to 20 feet. Has whip-like stalks from its base which are un-branched green stems. Leafless most of the year, but bright green leaves appear within 24 hours of rain and shed in low water. It has a large, shallow, and spreading root mass.



Bloom & Fruit Description: Blooms March through July. Blooms are long, tight cluster of red flowers at the branch tips.

Cultural information/Uses/Human Interaction: Botanical name came from Pierre Fouquier, a French professor of medicine. The common name means little pine in Mexican Spanish. Named little pine because stalks produce resin like pine which is used by native populations. Gum resin is used for waxing leather, as an adhesive, water proofing and varnish. It's used as an accent ornamental. It's hardy to 10°F. The most well known of the Genus is the Boojum, named in the *Hunting of the Snark*, by Lewis Carroll.

Distribution/Range/Habitat : 11 species mostly in Mexico. Also native to west Texas, but grows in AZ, CA, NV, TX, and NM. Most abundant on slopes above 3,300 ft and upper edges of desert and adjacent hills.

Cultural Requirements: Survives in full sun, but does even better in partial shade. It is drought and cold tolerant, with low water needs. Grows in sandy, rocky, loam, limestone, and igneous soils. Can reproduce from cuttings taken anytime. Will sprout from untreated seeds sown in spring and summer. Collect seeds, air dry and store in refrigerated containers. No pre-treatment is needed before sowing.

Wildlife/Plant relationships: Attracts hummingbirds, orioles, finches and other nectar and seed eating birds. Also attracts nectar insects and small mammals.

Disease/Pathology/toxins: Susceptible to **agave snout weevil** and **ocotillo borer**. Signs of attack are ocotillo that don't leaf out after rain.

Status: X

Resources:

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center, University of Texas, Austin
Plant Science Center of Sierra Vista, AZ (salvage project)



Flower stalk

Blooms opening

Full bloom close-up