### Sources of Native Plants for the Rio Grande Valley

- **Bayview**
  - River’s End Nursery (956) 233-4792

- **Brownsville**
  - Gentry’s Garden Center (956) 350-9805
  - Palm Gardens Nursery (956) 546-1348
  - Tony’s Nursery (956) 541-5322

- **Edinburg**
  - Reyes Nursery (956) 380-1528

- **Harlingen**
  - Grimsell Seed Co. (956) 423-0370
  - Heep’s Nursery (956) 457-6834
  - Mother Nature’s Creations (956) 428-4897
  - Stuart Place Nursery (956) 428-4439

- **McAllen**
  - C.S. Waugh’s Nursery (956) 686-5591
  - Grand Oak Junction Garden & Gifts (956) 631-6670
  - Valley Garden Center (956) 682-9411

- **Mission**
  - Shady Acres Nursery (956) 581-7783

- **Rio Grande City**
  - Rancho Lomitas Nursery (956) 487-2576

- **Raymondville**
  - Caldwell’s Jungle Nursery (956) 689-3432

- **San Benito**
  - River Oaks Nursery (956) 399-4078

- **Weslaco**
  - Mid-Valley Garden & Pond (956) 973-1998
  - Valley Nature Center (956) 969-2475

### Information on Native Wildscape Certification for Residential and Commercial Property Is Available From:

1. **TEXAS WILDSCAPES BACKYARD HABITAT PROGRAM**
   - www.tpwd.state.tx.us/wildscape
   - Nongame and Urban Program
   - Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
   - 4200 Smith School Road
   - Austin, TX 78744

2. **BACKYARD WILDLIFE HABITAT PROGRAM**
   - www.nwf.org/backyardwildlifecertification
   - National Wildlife Federation
   - 11100 Wildlife Center Drive
   - Reston, VA 20190-5362
   - (703) 438-6000 / 1-800-822-9919

The Native Plant Project has published five handbooks on Native Trees, Plants, Shrubs and Wetland Plants and Butterfly Gardening. Information from these handbooks has been included in this Guide. The Native Plant Project is located at:

- **NATIVE PLANT PROJECT**
  - www.nativeplantproject.org
  - P. O. Box 2742
  - San Juan, TX 78589

### Handbooks are available from:

- **VALLEY NATURE CENTER**
  - 301 South Border Avenue
  - Weslaco, TX 78599
  - (956) 969-2475

(Price per handbook is $5.00 plus $1.00 for postage and handling. A discount is available for an order of multiple copies.)

The Valley Nature Center will rescue native plants to be destroyed by construction companies, developers or if they are no longer wanted by homeowners.

For advice on revegetating private land holdings, contact:

- Ms. Lisa Williams
  - The Nature Conservancy of Texas Private Land Initiative
  - 10000 Southmost Road
  - P. O. Box 6281, McAllen, TX 78502-6281
  - (956) 580-4241

- Maxwell Pons, Jr.
  - The Nature Conservancy of Texas
  - 11100 Wildlife Center Drive
  - Reston, VA 20190-5362
  - (703) 438-6000 / 1-800-822-9919

### Other Native Plant Guides available from Valley Proud

- "A Guide to Growing Healthy Trees in the Lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas"
- "A Guide for Selecting and Planting Native Ground Cover, Wildflowers, Shrubs and Trees on South Padre Island and in the Laguna Madre Area"

Available at:

- Valley Proud Environmental Council
  - 513 E. Jackson, Harlingen, TX 78550
  - www.valleyproud.org

Prepared by: James R. Matz
Chair, Valley Proud Environmental Council

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**A Guide For Selecting and Planting Native Cacti, Groundcovers, Shrubs, Trees, Vines and Wildflowers In The Rio Grande Valley of Texas and Mexico**

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**THIRD EDITION 2008**
SELECTING NATIVE SHRUBS AND TREES

The choice of a native shrub or tree, like any other plant, should be dictated by landscaping need and the trees/shrubs planted on top of the mound. It is difficult to fulfill every requirement is no problem. Once a choice is made, there remain only a few location and planning tips to be observed.

Obtaining Plants
First, buy your plant from a reputable, reliable nurseryman. DO NOT transplant from the wild. Not only is this rarely successful, but it diminishes our threatened natural plant and animal habitats. A transplant from the wild is richer, should be kept separated from the subsoil. Discard the subsoil and replace with the top soil or improve the subsoil by mixing at least 1:1 subsoil to moist peatmoss or excess media from the pot in which the shrub was growing.

Setting the Shrub or Tree
The top of the root system or ball should NOT be lower than the top of the hole. The shrub or tree usually dies when planted too deep. Remove the shrub or tree from the container. If roots are so numerous they are encircling the soil ball, cut the root ball vertically to a depth of two inches with a sharp knife to encourage the roots to grow outward. After setting the shrub or tree in the hole, soil should be added gradually by working the first lot of soil in firmly at the base of the root ball, then filling the hole with more soil. The shrub or tree may be raised and lowered during the filling process to eliminate air pockets, thus bringing the roots in closer contact with the soil. When the hole is filled, tamp the area firmly with your feet.

Watering
The soil around the shrub or tree must be watered thoroughly after the plant is set in place. A ring of soil at the perimeter of the filled hole, four inches high, should be made for holding water. The frequency of watering depends on the type of soil, the size of the shrub or tree and the amount of rainfall. The soil ball around a newly planted shrub or tree can dry out rapidly and Valley showers cannot be depended upon to supply sufficient moisture during the critical first year of growth. During mid-spring, summer and mid-fall months water all newly planted shrubs or trees for the first 4 to 6 weeks as often as three times a week by filling to the top of the soil ring. Every two weeks thereafter for the first year, you should provide ample moisture for your shrub or tree to survive and grow. Then let nature do the watering.

PLANTING NATIVE SHRUBS AND TREES
When to Plant
The best times to plant in the Lower Rio Grande Valley are late summer (to allow for root establishment and dormancy before any freeze) and mid-February after danger of freezing has passed.

Planting during the hotter months can be done but requires much more water, care and maintenance and is equally more stressful on the plant and you than during the cooler late autumn through early spring months. The one exception is palm trees which do best when planted late Spring through early Fall while the soil is warm.

Preparing the Site
A hole should be dug sufficiently deep and wide enough to hold the full root system. In very poor soils the hole should be wider and deeper. As the hole is dug, the soil from the top 4 to 6 inches, which is richer, should be kept separated from the subsoil. Discard the subsoil and replace with the top soil or improve the subsoil by mixing at least 1:1 subsoil to moist peatmoss or excess media from the pot in which the shrub was growing.

Site Location
Poorly drained areas should be avoided or mounded for drainage and the trees/shrubs planted on top of the mound. It is difficult to fulfill every requirement is no problem. Once a choice is made, there remain only a few location and planning tips to be observed.

Obtaining Plants
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NATIVE TREES
1. Anacahuita (Wild Olive)
2. Anaua (Sugarberry)
3. Baldcypress, Montezuma (Ahuehuete, Sabino)
4. Barreta
5. Black Willow (Sauz)
6. Brasil (Bluewood)
7. Cedar Elm (Olmo)
8. Chapote (Texas Persimmon)
9. Colima (Lime Prickly-ash)
10. Coma del Sur (Saffron-plum)
11. Coyote Willow (Sauz)
12. Granjeno (Spiny Hackberry)
13. Guajillo (Berlander’s Acacia)
14. Guayacán (Soapbush)
15. Honey Mesquite
16. Live Oak
17. Mescal Bean (Texas Mountain Laurel)
18. Retama (Llueva de Oro)
19. Rio Grande Ash
20. Runyon’s Tree
21. Soapberry, Western (Jaboncillo)
22. Sugar Hackberry (Palo Blanco)
23. Tenaza
24. Tepeguajé
25. Texas Ebony (Ebanó)
26. Texas Huisache
27. Texas Palo Verde
28. Texas Sabal Palm
29. Wright’s Catclaw (Uña de Gato)

NATIVE SHRUBS
1. Alfílhen (Junco)
2. Amargosa
3. Berlander Wolfberry
4. Black Brush (Chaparro Prieto)
5. Cenizo (Texas Ranger, Purple Sage)
6. Chapotillo (Texas Torchwood)
7. Chilipiquin (Bird Pepper)
8. Coral Bean (Colorín)
9. Coyoteillo
10. Desert Lantana
11. Desert Yaupon
12. Drummond’s Turk’s Cap
13. Elbowbush
14. Fern Acacia
15. Hachinal
16. Heart-leafed Hibiscus
17. Huasachillo
18. Joint-ir
19. Lotebush
20. Low Creton

AGAVE-FORMS SHRUBS AND CACTI
1. Barbedwir Cactus
2. Buckley’s Yucca
3. Guapilla
4. Rough Agave
5. Runyon’s Huaco
6. Siler’s Huaco
7. Tasajillo
8. Thorn-crested Agave
9. Variegated Huaco
10. Nopal Prickly Pear

SHORT SHRUBS
1. Calderonita Ratany
2. Climbing Plumbago
3. Coldenia
4. Dutchman’s Breeches
5. Flor de San Juan
6. Hairy Tubetongue
7. Leatherstem
8. Palillo
9. Pigeonberry
10. Prostrate Bundeflower
11. Taper-leafed Heliotrope
12. Texas Nightshade
13. Tropical Sage

21. Manzanita
22. Mariola
23. Mexican Causaphina
24. Mexican Títa
25. Mission Fiddlewood
26. Orange Zexmenia
27. Oregano
28. Oreja de Ratón
29. Rio Grande Aloysia
30. Short-horned Zexmenia
31. Shrubby Blue Sage
32. Sierra Madre Torchwood
33. Skeletonbush
34. Snake-eyes
35. Tamaulipan Fiddlewood
36. Texas Baby-bonnets
37. Texas Columbina
38. Texas Kidneywood
39. Texas Lantana
40. Torrey’s Croton
41. Trecul’s Yucca
42. Vasey’s Adelia
43. Velvet Lantana
44. Wherry Mimosa
45. White Brush (Chaparro Blanco)
46. Yellow Sophora

2. Anaqua (Sugarberry)
3. Baldcypress, Montezuma (Ahuehuete, Sabino)
4. Barreta
5. Black Willow (Sauz)
6. Brasil (Bluewood)
7. Cedar Elm (Olmo)
8. Chapote (Texas Persimmon)
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