



## Mesquite Tree

*Prosopis glandulosa*, *Prosopis velutina*,  
*Prosopis pubescens*

Honey Mesquite, Velvet Mesquite, Screwbean

### Description:

**Height:** 30-50' tall

**Flowers:** bloom on catkins,  
yellow

**Pods:** yellow-green

**Fruit:** edible seeds inside pods

**Flowering:** Spring

### Uses:

Mesquite is best known for its  
hardwood and pods.

Pods have been used for  
decades for food making. The  
pods' inner seeds are ground  
in a stone or hardwood mortar  
and can be used for sweet  
meals, such as breads and  
cakes. These seeds are also  
sometimes dried out and  
ground into a meal for an extra  
taste. The leaves, bark, and  
roots can be collected at any  
time of year, while fruit pods  
are only collected during the



spring and summer months  
when they are green and  
sweet.

Mesquite's leaves were used for  
medicinal purposes in the  
Pima tribe. Leaves were boiled  
with water and then applied to  
the sore fingers or lips. They  
would also eat them raw for  
gut health benefits. Leaves  
were boiled with water and  
used as a treatment against  
the pinkeye.

Mesquite's hardwood is used in  
furniture making.

### Native Cultures:

Mesquite trees have provided  
resources for many tribes such  
as Pima, Navajo, Apache, and  
Maricopa.

### Habitats:

Mesquite trees have adapted  
to withstand long periods of  
drought, thus they require  
minimal water to grow. Mes-  
quites tend to grow in or near  
washes and ravines. They can  
be found within deserts in  
Arizona, Texas, and Mexico.

### Flowering:

Flowers bloom on spike-like  
catkins from mid-March to  
the end of May. Flowers have  
a yellow color and they grow  
all throughout the tree  
making it appear glowy.



### Folklore/Notes:

The people of Pima tribe  
named the mesquite tree a  
"Tree of Life" because of its  
ability to provide essential  
supplies such as food, bark,  
leaves during long periods of  
drought.

### Resources:

Illustration: Kilgore, G. (8 May 2023). 77 Mesquite Tree Types: Benefits, Growing Locations, Care Tips. Forestry, Trees, and Tree Planting.  
Photographs: Shaddi Kaltayev