

DESERT SHAPES

The desert has an amazing diversity of shapes, colors and forms. Explore the Garden's trails to find each of the items below—and learn why they are important for survival in the desert.

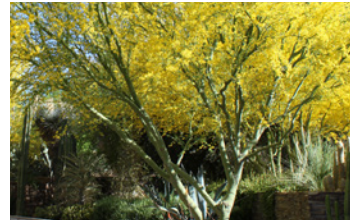
SMALL LEAVES

- Look up at the trees and observe the size of their leaves. Are they small, medium or big?
- Many desert plants have small leaves, which helps the plant use less water.



GREEN BARK

- Palo Verde trees are the state tree of Arizona. Its name means 'green stick' in Spanish.
- This tree drops small leaves to conserve water during dry times. The green bark helps the tree to survive by producing food.



HEART-SHAPED PADS

- Prickly pear cactus can be found throughout the Garden. Their pads come in many different shapes and sizes and help the plant store water.
- **ACTION:** *Can you find one that looks like a heart?*



CACTUS RIBS

- Plants like the large saguaro cactus have ribs that can expand like an accordion. This helps the plant expand and store more water.
- Saguaros can more than double in size after a rainstorm.
- Ribs are the 'skeleton' of the cactus.



ROSETTE SHAPE

- Find this spiral shape in plants like the agave.
- This shape helps the plant survive by capturing more water and funneling it to its roots.

SPINES

- Spines can be found on many different plants and can be different shapes, sizes and colors.
- They protect a plant from predators.

THICK, FLESHY LEAVES

- Some desert plants, like aloes and agaves, store water in their thick, fleshy leaves.
- You can find these plants throughout the Garden, especially in the *Sybil B. Harrington* Succulent Gallery.

