

New and Worthy Plants[®]

Douglas Justice

UBC Botanical Garden & Centre for Plant Research, 6 804 Southwest Marine Drive, BC V6T 124 Canada

Grevillea victoriae. Evergreen shrub to 2 m red-orange flowers in summer and fall, or year-round if mild from eastern Australia. Zone 8 with heat and perfect drainage (UBC clone appears hardier—i.e., Zone 7—than what is reported in the literature). Propagate from cuttings.

***Clematis* ‘Paul Farges’ (*C. potaninii* × *C. vitalba*) syn. *C.* ‘Summer Snow’**. Vigorous climber with fragrant white flowers from July to September or October; followed by silvery seedheads (seeds are sterile). Zone 6 or possibly hardier. Propagated from layers and cuttings.

Aconitum vilmorinianum. Stems start erect, then twine and scramble up to 2 or 3 m. From western and central China. Zone 6 or hardier. Grown from seed or division of the tuberous roots in autumn. All plant parts are poisonous.

Ken Coppola

Boyce Thompson Southwest Arboretum, 37615 E. Highway 60, Superior, Arizona 85273-5100 U.S.A.

Acacia aroma

Common name(s): Aromo, Tusca.

Origin: Chaco region of Argentina, Bolivia, and Paraguay.

Plant characteristics: Large shrubs or small, low-branched trees to 5 m (16 ft) height and spread. Twigs with paired spines at nodes. Foliage is drought and cold deciduous. Leaves are bipinnate with numerous tiny leaflets, and have a soft appearance. Small yellow flower heads appear in the spring and summer. Pods are flattened, constricted between the seeds, and turn brown at maturity.

Cultural requirements: Full sun. Not particular about soil. Occasional deep irrigation during hot, dry weather. Rainfall over much of its habitat averages 250 to 750 mm (10 to 30 inches) per year.

Hardiness: -8°C (ca. 18°F).

Propagation methods: Seed (scarified).

Comments: An attractive plant that can be used in transitional areas in the landscape. The feathery, finely divided leaves provides a tropical effect. Flowers are fragrant. Spines and low branching habit are limiting factors.

***Acacia murrayana* (syn. *A. jennerae*)**

Common name: Coonavitra wattle

Origin: Dry regions in central Australia.

Plant characteristics: Large shrubs or small, upright trees to 5 m (16 ft) height; usually taller than wide and often with drooping twigs. The bark is reddish orange on some plants and yellowish on others. The plants are unarmed. Foliage is evergreen and is blue-green or light green in color. Leaves are lance-shaped phyllodes resem-

bling leaves of some species of *Eucalyptus*. Small yellow flower heads appear in the winter and early spring. Pods are elongated and brown at maturity.

Cultural requirements: Full sun. Not particular about soil. Occasional deep irrigation during hot, dry weather.

Hardiness: -9°C (ca. 15°F).

Propagation methods: Seed (scarified).

Comments: An attractive plant that gives a lush appearance and remains compatible with desert plantings. The contrasting bark and foliage are especially attractive features. Fast growth rate when young. A limiting factor is a tendency of at least some plants to profusely root-sucker under some conditions. Longevity for this species has not been determined, but many Australian acacias are short-lived. A potential animal food crop? (My cat used to devour the leaves from a 1-gal specimen).

Psorothamnus spinosus

Common name: Desert smoke tree.

Origin: Arid regions of southwest Arizona, southeast California, northern Baja California, and northwest Sonora, Mexico, growing in sandy soil along normally dry watercourses.

Plant characteristics: Densely branched shrubs or small trees to 6 m (20 ft) tall and wide. The bark is gray. Twigs end in a sharp point. These plants produce highly reduced leaves only under favorable moisture conditions and are otherwise leafless, with photosynthesis taken over by the blue gray twigs. Tiny, indigo colored, pea-like flowers appear in dense masses in June or July. Pods are small and contain a single seed.

Cultural requirements: Full sun. Not particular about soil. Occasional deep irrigation during hot, dry weather once established. Has tolerated waterlogged soil conditions for several weeks during the summer growing in a heavy clay soil.

Hardiness: -9°C (ca. 15°F).

Propagation methods: Seed (scarified). Sow in sandy soil, mounded in the center of the container, and avoid watering the seedling until it is approximately 15 cm (6 inches) tall in order to minimize problems with damping off. Older seedlings may receive overhead watering without problems.

Comments: A distinctive desert plant that has proven to be adaptable to a range of growing conditions including heavy soils. The plant has a unique appearance and is an excellent addition to desert landscapes. When in flower the plants are extremely showy. The herbage has a pleasing aroma when bruised or rubbed. A limiting factor is a tendency for many of the twigs and smaller limbs to die back every few years, though plants usually sprout vigorously.

Richie Steffen

Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden, P.O. Box 7377, Seattle, Washington 98177 U.S.A.

***Mahonia × media* 'Lionel Fortescue'**

Origin: Garden house, Buckland Monachorum, Devon, England

Plant Characteristics: A slow-growing medium to large evergreen shrub, 8 to 10 ft in 10 years. Thick, leathery, pinnate leaves. Terminal clusters of long, upright racemes of lightly fragrant bright yellow flowers. Blooms November to early January.

Flowers seem to tolerate light frosts without damage. Upright growth habit.

Cultural requirements: Rich to average well-drained soil, partial shade, protect from hot locations and drying winds.

Hardiness: USDA Zone 7 (probably around 5°F.)

Propagation methods: Stem cuttings in early to mid winter.

Comments: Rated as a top performer in the Great Plant Picks evaluations.

Blechnum cordatum

Origin: Southern South America

Plant characteristics: Dark-green, bold, upright, once-pinnate fronds. Forms a slowly spreading colony. Up to 4 to 5 ft tall, but more often 2 to 2½ ft tall.

Cultural requirements: Best in protected site with rich moist soil. Full shade to ¾ day sun. Will tolerate drier soil but is much slower growing.

Hardiness: USDA Zones 7-9.

Propagation methods: division, spores.

Comments: Has been grown under several names, *B. chilense*, *B. megellanicum*, and *B. tabulare*

Hepatica 'Cremar Stain'

Origin: Eastern Europe

Plant characteristics: Rich mauve-pink flowers born profusely in mid to late winter. Undulating, crenate, dark-green leaf, heavily marked and slashed with silver. 6 inches tall, 8 to 10 inches wide, evergreen foliage.

Cultural requirements: Rich well-drained soil, full to partial shade.

Hardiness: -10°F maybe lower, the full extent of hardiness has not been tested.

Propagation methods: division, seed.