

**Botanical Name:** *Acacia smallii* (also *Acacia farnesiana*)

**Common Name:** Sweet Acacia



**Family:** Fabaceae

**Habitat:** Washes, foothills, plains

**Native Distribution:** Southern United States, Mexico, South America

**Elevation:** 2,500 to 5,000 ft

**Hardiness:** 15°F

**Type:** Semi-evergreen

**Size:** 20' tall x 20' wide

**Shape:** Vase-shaped

**Growth Rate:** Moderately fast

**Flowers:** Fragrant 1/2" yellow, ball-shaped flowers

**Bloom Season:** Spring, sometimes fall

**Fruit:** 2-2 1/2" long, fat black seed pods

**Foliage:** 10-20 pairs of tiny green, fern-like oval leaflets

**Exposure:** Full sun

**Shade:** Somewhat dense

**Water Requirements:** Low

***Acacia smallii* (Sweet Acacia) in Phoenix**

**xeriscapes:** Because of its thorns, *Acacia smallii* can be used as a security barrier or screen in many Phoenix xeriscapes. Plant Sweet Acacia a safe distance from walkways or prune regularly. Sweet Acacia is also found around patios, courtyards, medians, and parking lots throughout Greater Phoenix due to its small size and hardiness as well as in more natural xeriscapes. Plant *Acacia smallii* upwind to take advantage of its fragrance during bloom season.

**Wildlife:** Attracts native birds.

**More about *Acacia smallii* (Sweet Acacia):**

- Sweet Acacia tolerates most soils.
- *Acacia smallii* Requires regular pruning for a more tree-like form.
- Unpruned *Acacia smallii* provide dense shade, but inhibit the growth of flowering plants underneath it.
- Species was split in 1969 with the hardier *Acacia smallii* from CA to FL, and *Acacia farnesiana* from FL through the Caribbean.