



wants **YOU** to grow
a native mesquite!

Which is taller?

Ponderosa pine?
or velvet mesquite?



Southwestern Ponderosa

- 138' (Tallest in NM)
- 36' taproot

Total height: 174'

Photo by [Amy Morse](#)



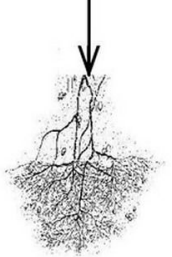
Velvet Mesquite

- 30'+
- 175'+ taproot

Total height: 205'+



150+
Feet



Mesquite tap roots grow deep

Why does this matter?





Mesquites thrive in our desert climate.

How is our urban forest doing?



Not great.

Each year, we
lose 1% of our
tree canopy.



Trees need more
water in hotter
temperatures.

Even as less water is
available.



We can do better!





**Guerilla-planted, irrigation-free median planted in 1998, thriving 25 years later.
Design and photo by David Christiani.**

Mesquites are keystone species



Native mesquites support wildlife

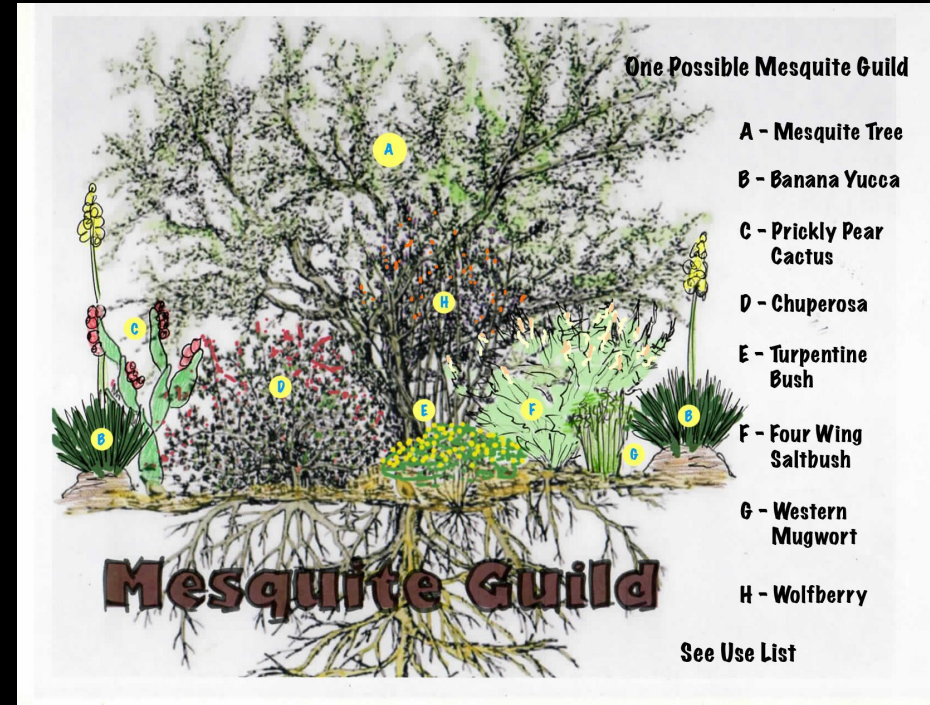
- Flowers
 - 23 specialist bees
- Pods
 - (rabbits, quail, coyotes, deer, javelinas, and domestic animals)



From Sue in az~commonswiki on Wikipedia

Native mesquites support other plants

- Nurse plant.
- Fix nitrogen
 - Leave the leaves and pods!
- Deep roots avoid competition with shallow-rooted plants.



From katrineball on Pinterest

Native mesquites support people

- Nutritious and delicious
- Staple food for Tohono O'odham and other native peoples.
- Tortillas, pancakes, cookies, breading, chili, ice cream, etc.



Photo by [The Marmot](#)

Many other uses

- Honey
- Wood
 - Cooking (or add a pod in the fire instead)
 - Crafts
- Shade
- Beauty



There are four mesquite
species native to New Mexico





New Mexico (Western) Honey Mesquite

Neltuma odorata

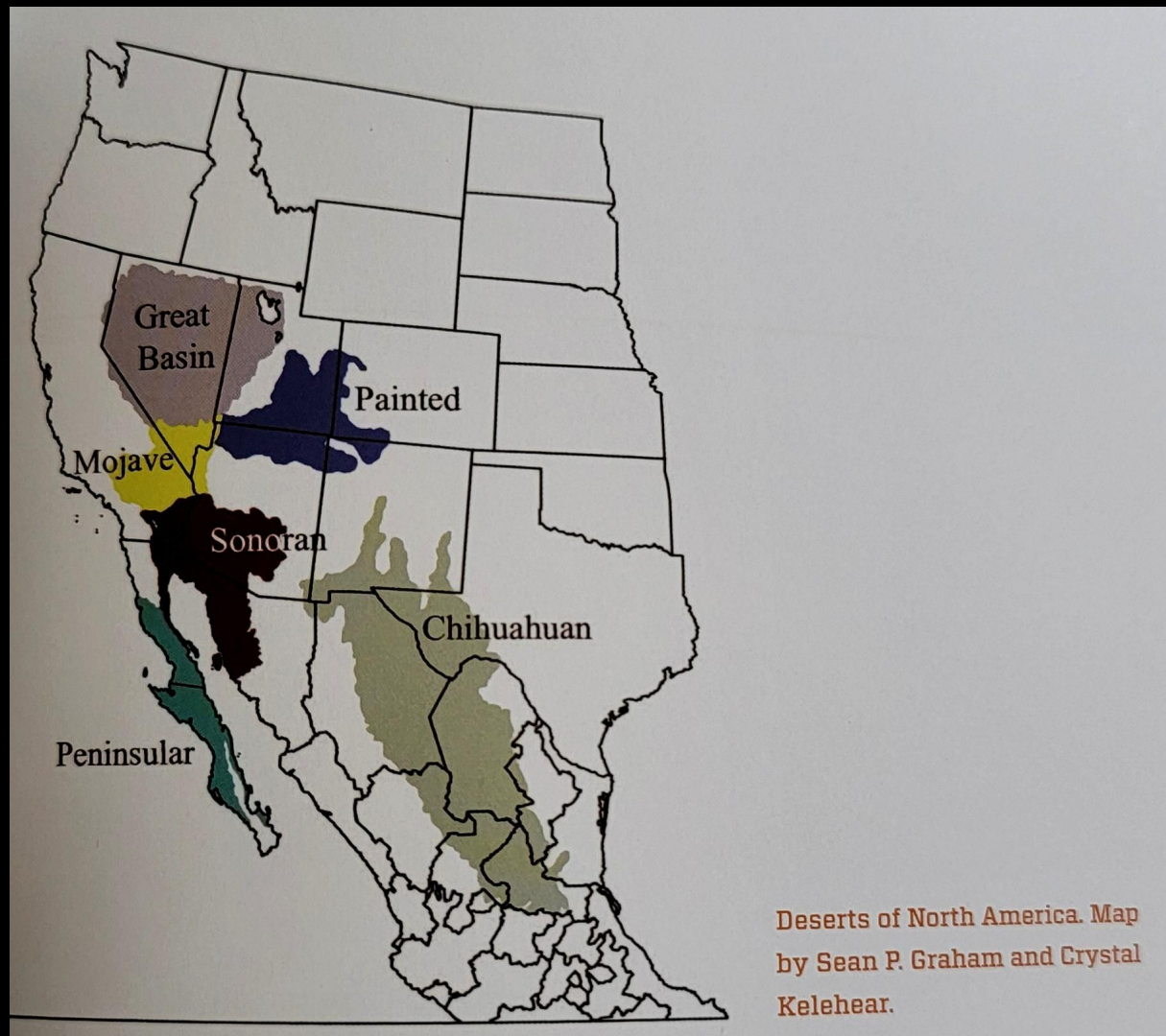




Velvet Mesquite



Neltuma velutina





Texas (Eastern) Honey Mesquite



Neltuma glandulosa



Screwbean Mesquite or **Tornillo**



Strombocarpa pubescens



Photo by David Christiani.

How to grow these terrific trees?





Break open pods (soaking helps)





Remove seeds from husks. Nail clippers work great!

Scarifying

- Scratch side of seed lightly against a rough surface.
- Create a small hole in the seed coat so that the seed can absorb water.



Water germination

After one day of soaking in
a warm room

Change water



Water germination

Two days of soaking

Warmer = faster germination





Screwbean germinates best with a scalding water soak overnight



Ideal tree pots

Poke 5+ large holes in bottom

Planting seeds

- Fill cup with soil
- Poke a ½ inch deep hole.
- Place seed with root facing down.
- Water gently until water runs out of the bottom.

Caring for seedlings

- Warm, sunny place.
- Water every 1-2 days.
- Seedlings will sprout within a week.



- Once seedlings start growing adult leaves, move to afternoon shade outside.
- Gradually increase sun exposure.





One month old: Ready to
plant outside!





Wait too long and you'll have to dig a deep hole for the taproot!

Don't let this happen!

Let the rain water your tree!

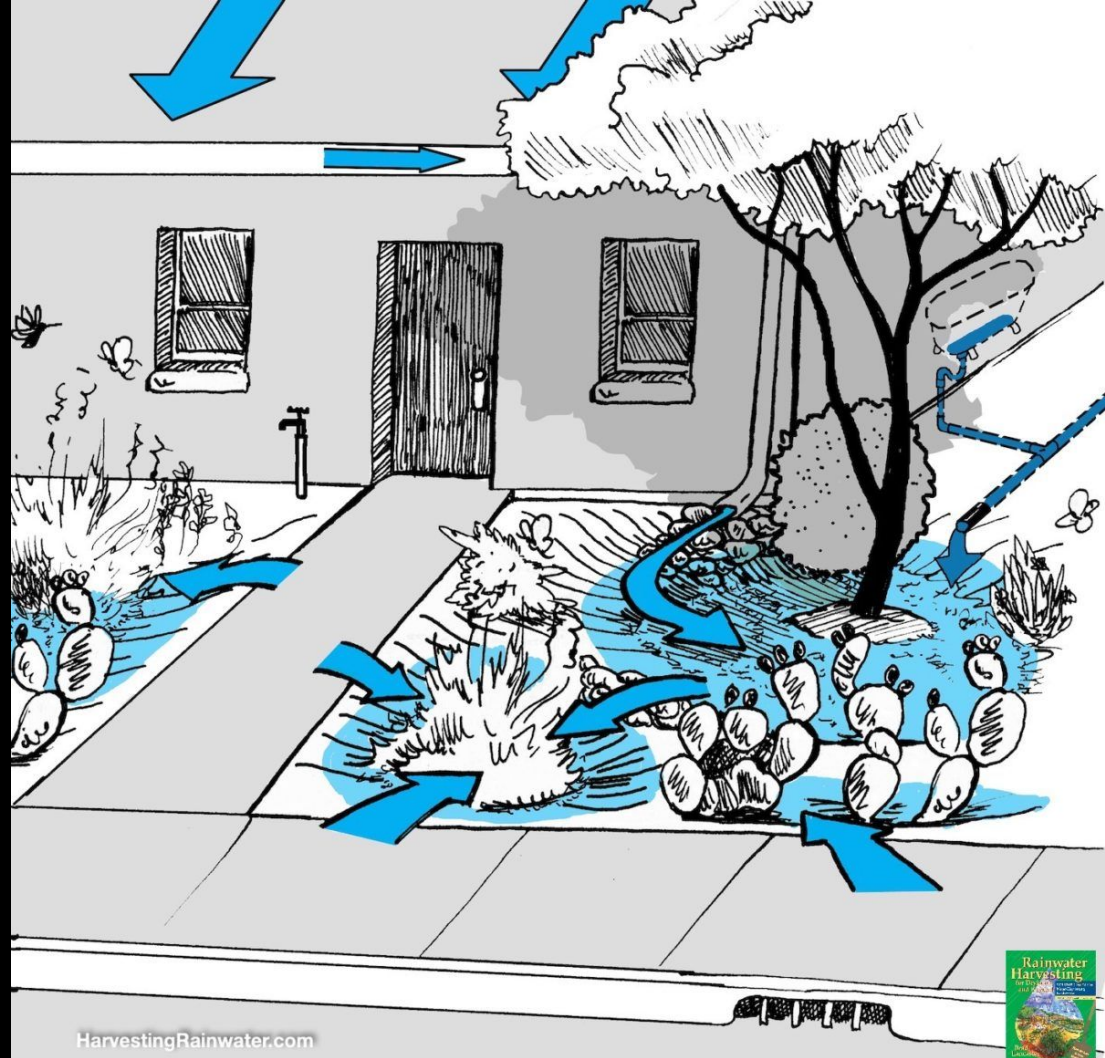


Fig. 5.3. From left to right, a tree planted atop a mound from which water and soil drain away; within a circular berm which diverts area runoff and any leaf drop falling outside the berm away from the tree; and within an infiltration basin toward which the surrounding area is sloped so all direct rainfall, surrounding runoff, and leaf drop is harvested. These trees could've all been the same size at planting, and planted at the same time, though their current size reflects how the vegetation will respond to the degree to which different landforms drain or harvest resources.

sheltering shade tree. Dirt excavated to form the basin can further beef up or raise the road base so it stays high, dry, and accessible. And, the easy access to the

this chapter for tips on tree species and spacing from buildings.) Greywater from household drains can also be directed to the basins to carry associated plantings

Build a wide, shallow basin to capture runoff from your roof or driveway





Outplanting

- Acclimate to sun exposure at planting site for a few days
- Water the hole before planting.
- Allow the coiled taproot to fully extend downward.
- Water again after planting.



Most trees prefer fall, but
mesquites love being planted
outside in summer!

Just give them some **deep**
waterings as they establish.



1 year



2 years



2 years



4 years



200 years



May your
mesquite be a
pillar in a diverse
and abundant
landscape!



Also plant now:

- Desert Willow (*Chilopsis linearis*)
- Chamisa (*Ericameria nauseosa*)
- Apache Plume (*Fallugia paradoxa*)
- Rio Grande Wolfberry (*Lycium torreyi*)
- Mexican Buckeye (*Ungnadia speciosa*)
- Seepwillow (*Baccharis salicina*)
- Desert broom (*Baccharis sarothroides*)
- Creosote (*Larrea tridentata*)



Photo by [James Riggs](#) on [iNaturalist](#)



Extra trees? Share with your neighbors!



What is Cool It
Burque, anyway?

Our Mission

Cool it Burque empowers our community to significantly cool life at ground level by **regenerating bare land and restoring the forest canopy, water cycle, and soil carbon sponge.**

We're just people
who like to plant
trees and shrubs
(and sometimes
cacti)



Our first planting:
A tiny food forest
at the Center for
Peace and Justice



Building rainwater
harvesting basins
at the Pan-African
Community Garden





Building soil health and planting young, native, diverse trees at our new Dryland Food Forest at the Rio Grande Community Farm

We teach workshops emphasizing the importance of growing and caring for native trees and shrubs.

They are our kin, our shade, our beauty, our food, our medicine, and so much more...

Trees are valuable members of our community and need our respect and care!



It all starts with a seed...

Planting trees from seed feels like a miracle!



Netleaf Hackberry (*Celtis reticulata*)

Questions?



Sign up for our Newsletter



Join us on Discord



“Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It’s not.”

- The Lorax