



ARIZONA-SONORA
DESERT
MUSEUM

ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM PLANT CARE INFORMATION

Baja Elephant Tree or Copalquín *Pachycormus discolor*

DESCRIPTION: A small tree with grotesquely swollen and twisted stems and white, peeling bark, resembling an overgrown bonsai in nature. This Baja California endemic is nearly indistinguishable from the distantly related elephant trees (genus *Bursera*), but grows during the cool season and is deciduous and dormant during summer heat. It grows rapidly in height, but stems thicken slowly. Baja Elephant Tree bears clouds of small, pink flowers in summer when leafless.

RECOMMENDED USE: Makes an excellent bonsai subject. It requires container culture due to frost sensitivity.

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CULTURE:



Hardiness: Very tender. Even though it grows in winter and requires cool temperatures, it will not tolerate freezing.



Sun tolerance: Full sun when growing; shade is acceptable when leafless in summer.



Watering and feeding: Keep soil moist during winter growing season. When leaves turn yellow and drop with first warm weather in spring, reduce watering to once a month or so until cool weather returns. **SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS:** It is crucial to water very sparingly in summer, because the plant will rot. Store in cooler, shady location during hottest summer months to reduce desiccation. Feed lightly to avoid rank stem growth.



Soil requirements: Use any well-drained potting mix.



Pruning: Needed only to shape plant.

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