

## Look In The Mirror - By Stan Southwick

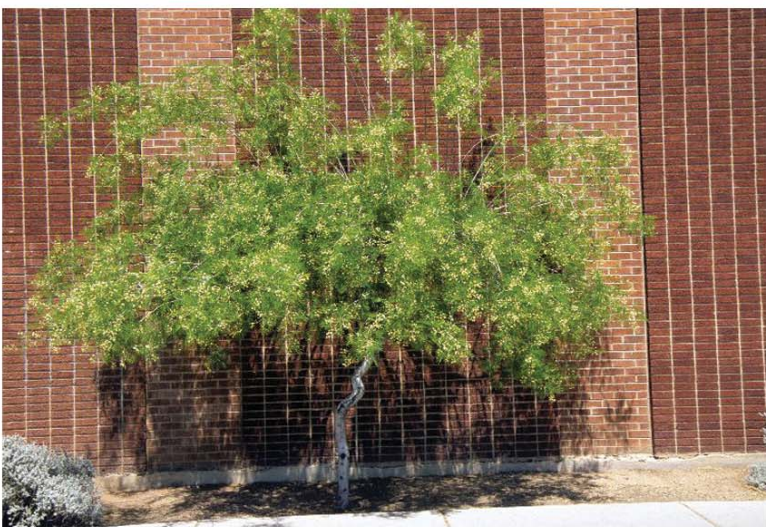


There are many different influences that affect our lives each and every day. Some are good, some are not so good. Some we can control, and others are out of our control. Many times the influences that are out of our control are those that cause us the most aggravation. With the robust economy, it seems that all our clients want everything right now. It isn't uncommon to get a revision request in the morning expecting to have plans returned by the end of the same day. We can't always choose the situations that hit us each day, but we can always choose how we respond to those situations. A positive response to an undesirable situation decreases the aggravation level. We can choose either to act or to be acted upon.

We can only control ourselves so, as Michael Jackson said: "I'm starting with the man in the mirror". Take some time for an introspective look at how you handle life. Choose to respond in a positive manner to every situation. Focus on those things that you can control and choose to act rather than be acted on. Things will go much better.

"By three methods we may learn wisdom: First, by reflection, which is noblest; Second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is the bitterest."  
— Confucius

## Favorite Flora: Acacia berlandieri- Guajillo- By Jon Marenfeld



I would bet many of you, like me, have a small backyard which makes selecting trees, shrubs, and accents difficult. It's all about scale. This month's favorite flora could be the answer to finding a tree that's the appropriate size. Guajillo (Acacia berlandieri), a Texas and Chihuahuan Desert native, is a great choice for a small patio tree that uses little water, can handle full sun and reflected heat. It's common name, Guajillo, is said to come from a Mexican word that means foolish or funny and was called that name because of the unusual places it grew. The Guajillo is aromatic and animals such as birds, bees, and other

insects are attracted to it for its nectar and fruit. Also, while it does have thorns, they are small and not rigid unlike other acacias.

Reaching up to 15 feet high and wide with fern-like leaves this tree is easy to care for. In the low deserts it's nearly evergreen and requires a couple deep waterings per month in the summer to keep it happy. Early in spring it's flush with cream colored flower clusters that are mildly fragrant. It also produces seed pods but the litter from them is minimal. The only trimming it needs is to keep its tree form (it's naturally a large shrub). Pair with other desert natives such as cacti, agave, desert spoons, orange lantana, and boulders for a unique and colorful southwestern look.

Photo of the Month



Crested Saguaro  
Tucson, Arizona  
Jon Marenfeld