Russian olive (Elaeagnus angustifolia) • Shrub/small tree with silvery-colored leaves and fruit. To 30’ tall, 25’ wide. Fruits resemble miniature olives, remain on tree long after the leaves fall. Flowers small, yellow, give off a spicy aroma. Invasive nonnative species, dominates many degraded riparian areas.

Arizona walnut (Juglans major) • Tree to 50’ tall and 30’ wide. Bark furrowed and scaly; compound leaves 6–9’ long with 9–13 lance-shaped leaflets. Leaves smooth, large, dark green and shiny above; green and slightly hairy below. Fruit is round and 1” long, in clusters.


Mesquite (Prosopis spp.) • Tree to 25’ tall and 30’ wide. Bark dark and rough. Thorns ½” long on branches. Leaves divided into two primary leaflets, which are subdivided into 2-36 leaflets. Yellowish flowers grow in tight clusters in a spike-like arrangement that is 2-4’ long. Bean-like seedpods 4-8” long.

Desert willow (Chilopsis linearis) • To 30’ tall, often many-branched. Leaves smooth and narrow. Woody flowers with fine purple markings in small clusters at branch ends. Common shrub of desert washes.

Fremont cottonwood (Populus fremontii) • Large tree to 75’ tall and 40’ wide. Best known for white, fuzzy cotton that covers seeds. Leaves triangular with toothed edges. Bark whitish-gray and roughly furrowed. Was once the dominant tree in the bosque.

Mesquite willow (Salix spp.) • Dozens of species along waterways. Bark smooth, often reddish-brown. Narrow leaves. When the small fruits open they release many small seeds with copious tufts of hair at their bases.

Willow (Salix spp.) • Usually less than 30’ tall. The velvety-surface of young leaves and stems distinguish this ash from other ashes. Compound leaves 3½’ long with 3–5 pairs of oval, pointy-tipped leaflets; pale green and shiny above; green and slightly hairy below. Fruit is paddle-shaped and 1” long, in clusters.

Engelmann’s prickly-pear (Opuntia phaecantha) • 1–6’ tall and 1–10’ wide; pods 4–8” long, covered in spines. Flowers yellow-red, fruit oval, fleshy, yellow-red and small mammals.

Indigo bush (Amorpha fruticosa) • Shrub 6–15’ tall. Flowers single-petaled, purple, in long, dense, spike-like clusters at the ends of branches. Compound leaves with short, round leaflets; 15 leaflets per leaf.

Soaptree yucca (Yucca elata) • Yucca 6–20’ tall, 6–12’ wide; slender, stiff tree; sword-like leaves with curly white fibers (1–3’ long) along edges, yellowing, and curling down when dead; hanging bell-shaped flowers cream to white in color, on a stalk 4–6’ above foliage.
### Grasses and wildflowers

**Russian thistle, Tumbleweed (Salsola tragus)** • Dense, round, intricately branched annual shrub up to 3’ tall and 4’ wide. Branches striped red or purple. Flowers white to pink. Leaves usually 1 1/2” long, roundish, very pointy at tips. Nonnative invasive.

**Cheatgrass, Downy brome (Bromus tectorum)** • Annual grass to 2’ tall. Blades emerge in fall and can overwinter below snow. Mature plants have red/purple drooping seedheads. Rapid spring growth with seeds maturing before most grasses. Usually many short, soft hairs.

**Sand dropseed (Sporobolus cryptandrus)** • Erect grass, to 30” tall; blades flat, 2-9” long, taper to a slender point, smooth below and rough above, whitish margins. Leaves tend to roll inward from the edges when drying. Seed heads to 12” long, 6” wide, spreads at maturity and has scattered slender branches to 3” long. Seeds crowded towards the branch ends, pale purple to lead-gray.

**Apache plume (Fallugia paradoxa)** • Shrub to 6’. White, solitary flowers resemble single white roses and can be 1” wide. Branches are slender and have a shaggy, shaggy texture. Leaves 5-7, lobed and sticky; feather-tailed fruits grow in clusters.

**Side oats grama (Bouteloua curtipendula)** • Tall bunchgrass with flat blades that are rough on the upper surface and hairy on the edges. Stem is also hairy. Seed stalk has 20-50 short (½”) branches that hang off of the main stem giving it a distinctive pennant-like appearance.

**Purple threeawn (Aristida purpurea)** • Perennial grass to 24” tall; 1½” wide. Seed heads have three awns (long stiff hairs), purple to red in color. Leaf blades from base of plant to 9” tall and are slightly coarse.

**Galleta grass, James’ galleta (Hilaria jamesii)** • Perennial grass to 12” tall. Seed heads composed of small clusters that alternate along the flower stalk for up to 3”. Leaves are very coarse and are mostly basal with lengths up to 18”. Similar to Tobosa grass.

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**Fluff grass, low woollygrass (Dasyochloa pulchella)** • Low, densely tufted perennial bunchgrass that sometimes forms open mats. Flowers have 4-18 spikelets and are covered with fluffy, silvery hairs. Leaves are thin, wiry, and crowded at base of stems.