

Chilopsis linearis desert willow

Why Observe?

Species marked for inclusion in the *Nature's Notebook* monitoring program have been identified by scientists or natural resource managers as ecologically important for the Sonoran Desert region. Many Sonoran Desert species have not been observed nor studied as closely as other species in the United States. They are the standard bearer of the Sonoran Desert Region.

Tips for Identification

Desert-willow is a 15-40 ft., slender-twigged, small tree or large shrub, often with leaning, twisting trunk and open, spreading crown. Leaves are deciduous, willow-like, light green, both opposite and alternate, 4-12 inches long and 1/3 inch wide. The blossom is funnel-shaped, 1-1 1/2 inches long, spreading at the opening into 5 ruffled, petal-like lobes. The flower is dark pink or purple, often with white or yellow and purple streaks within the throat. The catalpa-like flowers are borne in terminal racemes. By early autumn, the violet-scented flowers, which appear after summer rains, are replaced by slender seedpods, 6-10 inches long, which remain dangling from the branches and serve to identify the tree after the flowers are gone.

www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=chl12

Be aware there is variation from individual to individual within a species, so your plant may not look exactly like the one pictured. If you are uncertain whether or not a phenophase is occurring, report a "?" for its status until it becomes clear what you are observing after subsequent visits.



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Young leaves

One or more young, unfolded leaves are visible on the plant. A leaf is considered "young" and "unfolded" once its entire length has emerged from a breaking bud, stem node or growing stem tip, so that the leaf stalk (petiole) or leaf base is visible at its point of attachment to the stem, but before the leaf has reached full size or turned the darker green color or tougher texture of mature leaves on the plant. Do not include fully dried or dead leaves.



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Leaves

One or more live, unfolded leaves are visible on the plant. A leaf is considered "unfolded" once its entire length has emerged from a breaking bud, stem node or growing stem tip, so that the leaf stalk (petiole) or leaf base is visible at its point of attachment to the stem. Do not include fully dried or dead leaves.



Colored leaves

One or more leaves show some of their typical late-season color, or yellow or brown due to drought or other stresses. Do not include small spots of color due to minor leaf damage, or dieback on branches that have broken. Do not include fully dried or dead leaves that remain on the plant.



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Flowers or flower buds

One or more fresh open or unopened flowers or flower buds are visible on the plant. Include flower buds or inflorescences that are swelling or expanding, but do not include those that are tightly closed and not actively growing (dormant). Also do not include wilted or dried flowers.



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Open flowers

One or more open, fresh flowers are visible on the plant. Flowers are considered "open" when the reproductive parts (male stamens or female pistils) are visible between or within unfolded or open flower parts (petals, floral tubes or sepals). Do not include wilted or dried flowers.



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Fruits

One or more fruits are visible on the plant. For *Chilopsis linearis*, the fruit is a long, slender capsule that changes from green to light green or red-green to tan, light brown or brown, and splits open to expose seeds with fluff. Do not include empty capsules that have already dropped all of their seeds.



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Ripe fruits

One or more ripe fruits are visible on the plant. For *Chilopsis linearis*, a fruit is considered ripe when it has turned tan, light brown or brown, and has split open to expose seeds with fluff. Do not include empty capsules that have already dropped all of their seeds.

Phenophases not pictured: Falling leaves, Recent fruit or seed drop