

*Sphaeralcea coccinea*  
scarlet globemallow

**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**

Scarlet globemallow is a freely branching, low-spreading to erect, drought-deciduous, biennial to perennial, herbaceous plant to subshrub growing 2.4 to 24 inches tall or more. It can form patches by creeping, underground stems. Its smallish, showy, brick red, salmon-pink, or reddish-orange flowers have both male and female parts, occur along the upper stem, and are insect-pollinated.

Scarlet globemallow grows in desert, semi-desert, prairie, grassland, scrub, pinyon-juniper, and sagebrush communities and often on dry roadsides, disturbed areas, and dry slopes. It is adapted to a wide range of soil types from sandy to clay loams, preferring moderately sandy or rocky sites, and is extremely drought resistant, and shade intolerant.

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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**Image Needed**

email  
photos@usanpn.org

**Initial growth**

New growth of the plant is visible after a period of no growth (winter or drought), either from above-ground buds with green tips, or new green or white shoots breaking through the soil surface. Growth is considered "initial" on each bud or shoot until the first leaf has fully unfolded. For seedlings, "initial" growth includes the presence of the one or two small, round or elongated leaves (cotyledons) before the first true leaf has unfolded.



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**Leaves**

One or more live, fully unfolded leaves are visible on the plant. For seedlings, consider only true leaves and do not count the one or two small, round or elongated leaves (cotyledons) that are found on the stem almost immediately after the seedling germinates. Do not include fully dried or dead leaves.



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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 *Sphaeralcea coccinea*, the fruits are clustered into a globose and many-segmented "fruit" with smooth green skin that becomes wrinkled or ridged as it dries out.



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**Ripe fruits**

One or more ripe fruits are visible on the plant. For *Sphaeralcea coccinea*, a fruit is considered ripe when the segments are wrinkled or ridged.

**Phenophases not pictured:** Recent fruit or seed drop