

# Comparison of Common Palo Verdes in the Tucson Area

## Form

Blue palo verde (*Parkinsonia florida*) and hybrid palo verde (*Parkinsonia* hybrids) are both trees. Blue palo verde (left) has a weeping form; the hybrids (right) are more upright.



Littleleaf palo verde is most typically a shrub.

## Leaves

The leaves of all palo verde are bipinnate. Hybrid palo verde (left) have the longest leaves - 3 inches or so - with small leaflets. Blue palo verde (center) has short leaves with a few, relatively large leaflets. Littleleaf palo verde (right) has short leaves and tiny leaflets.

[Mexican palo verde](#) is sometimes planted in the Tucson area. Its leaves are extremely long - 8" to 16".

All four palo verde are easily distinguished by their leaves.



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## Flowers

Palo verde flowers are yellow with 5 petals, not quite symmetrically arranged. One petal, called the banner, will be slightly different from the others. It may be marked with red dots or be white instead of yellow.

Blue palo verde flowers (center) are about 3/4 inch across and are a bright yellow. There may be a few red dots on the banner. The flowers of hybrid palo verde (left) are about 1.25 inches across, a bit deeper in color than those of blue palo verde. The red dots on the banner are prominent. Littleleaf palo verde flowers (right) are a paler yellow and less than half an inch wide. The banner is white.

