

California Phenology Project:  
species profile for  
Honey Mesquite  
(*Prosopis glandulosa*)



CPP site(s) where this species is monitored: Joshua Tree National Park



Photo credit: Homer Price (Flickr)

**What does this species look like?**

This deciduous species is a thorny, nitrogen-fixing large shrub or medium-sized tree that reaches 0.5 – 12 meters in height. The greenish-white to yellowish-white flowers develop simultaneously with the leaves. These flowers are grouped tightly on elongated spikes that are showy and droopy. Flowers are high in nectar and pollinated primarily by bees.

When monitoring this species, use the USA-NPN *semi-deciduous trees and shrubs* datasheet.

**Species facts!**

- The CPP four letter code for this species is **PRGL**.
- Honey mesquite wood is used for fuel, furniture, flooring, utensils, and posts.
- The pods and seeds are eaten by wildlife.
- Native Americans ground the pods and seeds into meal to make bread, mush, and alcohol. Other plant parts were used to make black dye, rope, cement for pottery, and candy.



Photo credit: Melody Lytle



Photo credit: Thomas Muller

**Where is this species found?**

- Grows in warm desert shrub communities and grasslands.
- On plains, terraces, washes, and riparian sites.
- Grows in sites where plants have access to permanent underground water.
- In California, this species occurs at elevations between 60 and 1090 meters.

For more information about phenology and the California Phenology Project (CPP), please visit the CPP website ([www.usanpn.org/cpp](http://www.usanpn.org/cpp)) and the USA-NPN website ([www.usanpn.org](http://www.usanpn.org))

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USA **hpn** National Phenology Network

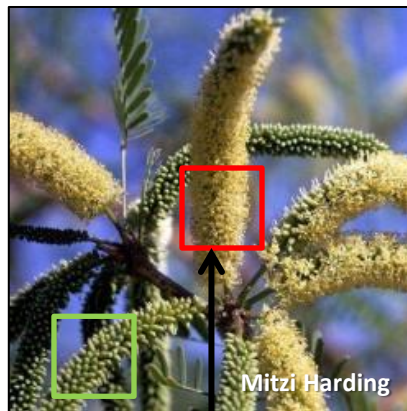
UCSB



**Young leaves**  
In the photo, the leaves have unfolded to reveal their leaf stalk, but they are not yet full size!



**Leaves**  
In this species, each leaf is made up of many smaller leaflets.



**Flowers or flower buds and Open flowers**

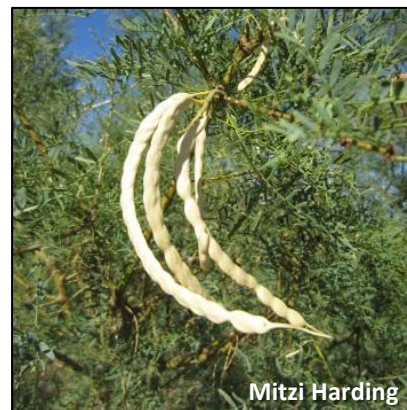
Greenish flower buds (in the green box) and whitish open flowers (in the red box) can both be seen in this photo.

For **open flowers**, you must be able to see anthers or stigma. When monitoring **flower or flower bud abundance**, count each inflorescence as a single flowering structure. When monitoring the **proportion of open flowers**, estimate the number of individual flowers that are open, not inflorescences!

↑ Flower buds  
↑ Open flowers



**Fruits**  
The fruit is a pod that changes from green to tan, sometimes tinged with violet.



**Ripe fruits**  
The fruit is ripe when it is tan, sometimes tinged with violet, and dry.

**Important Note:** USA-NPN flower and fruit phenophases are nested. If you say "Y" to "open flowers" you should also have said "Y" to "flowers or flower buds" and if you say "Y" to "ripe fruits" you should also have said "Y" to "fruits"  
Phenophases not pictured: **Pollen release, Recent fruit or seed drop**