



MOJAVE DESERT NATIVE PLANTS

JOJOBA

Simmondsia chinensis

Pronounced (ho-ho-ba), is a densely leafed evergreen shrub that can grow to a height of 2 to 4 feet (0.5-1.2 m) or more. Flowers are greenish in color and bloom from March through May. Male (pollen forming) and female (fruit forming) flowers occur on separate shrubs.

Leaves are dull green and are positioned vertically so that the face of the leaf receives sunlight only in early morning and late afternoon, thus conserving moisture. Jojoba are generally found at 1000 to 4300 feet (300m-1300m), usually associated with creosote bush.

Seeds contain a liquid wax that has been used commercially as a substitute for oil found in the endangered sperm whale. Seeds are toxic to all mammals except Bailey's pocket mouse.

Native Americans would eat the fresh fruit raw or, after drying, would grind it into a powder from which a coffee-like drink could be made.

