



ARIZONA-SONORA
DESERT
MUSEUM

ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM PLANT CARE INFORMATION

Curly Mesquite or Zacate Chino *Hilaria belangeri*

DESCRIPTION: Curly Mesquite (a grass, not a mesquite as the common name might suggest) is a small, fine-textured bunchgrass. It spreads readily by aerial stolons. It mounds up to 8" or so and a single plant can spread to cover 6 square feet in the first growing season. It is most abundant on gentle, gravelly slopes in the desert uplands and grasslands. Flowering occurs any time when warm temperatures and adequate soil moisture are present. Blue butterflies have been seen feeding at the flowers. Those, and other butterfly species are attracted to the gutation (natural water-seepage from the leaves noticeable on dewy mornings).

RECOMMENDED USE: Good for holding slopes, ground cover; in a rock garden or in an enhanced desert landscape or xeriscape.

CULTURE:



Hardiness: Very cold hardy; at least down to 10F.



Sun tolerance: Full sun to very light shade.



Watering and feeding: Once established can survive with little water, but appreciates regular irrigation. Can benefit from monthly warm season fertilizing.



Soil requirements: It can grow in a wide variety of soil types from sandy loam to clay loam. It is much less common on some heavy clay soils, soils with poor drainage, under conditions of extremely low fertility and in saline situations.



Pruning: Can be cut back severely to control and will resprout readily.