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# Four-Wing Saltbush

*Atriplex canescens*

Goosefoot Family (Chenopodiaceae)

Zones: 2-10

Full Sun

Very Low Water

Location: Childrens Garden, Herb Garden, Medicinal Garden

*Atriplex canescens* is a many-branched, grayish white-green evergreen shrub whose name comes from its fruiting bracts that have 4 smooth or fringed wings. The flowers are yellow in color and formed on large panicles. It is a highly adaptable plant and has been found in various desert areas: ridges and mesas, in gravelly washes, and in soils that range from clays to sands. It has been found to do well in soils with a high content of lime.

The saltbush usually lives in an elevation between 3,000 and 8,000 feet, but on average is found between 4,500 and 6,000 feet. Its root system thrives in a range of soil depths from 10 inches to 3 feet, but usually is found in moderately deep to deep soils.

This plant can be used ornamentally or for re-vegetation of disturbed sites. It is a great promoter of native specimens, and can be used as an example of what to use in areas with low rainfall. Care should be taken when planting in areas with high foot traffic, as the stems are quite brittle and break off easily.

The leaves and seeds are nutritious for livestock including goats, cattle, and sheep. It is also readily used by various wildlife.

This plant has several interesting uses such as the leaves can be used to make a yellow dye; the leaves have also been used to create the lather in shampoos. The leaves have also been known to treat insect bites and skin rashes. Native Americans used the ground seed as flour for bread.