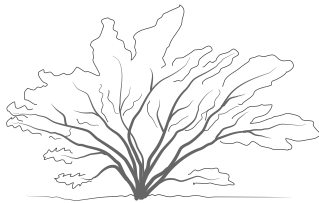


YOU CAN FIND CREOSOTE BUSHES IN CALIFORNIA, NEVADA, UTAH, ARIZONA, NEW MEXICO, TEXAS, AND MEXICO.

SCIENCE MOM  
JENNYBALLIF.COM



The CREOSOTE Bush  
A pocket-sized field guide

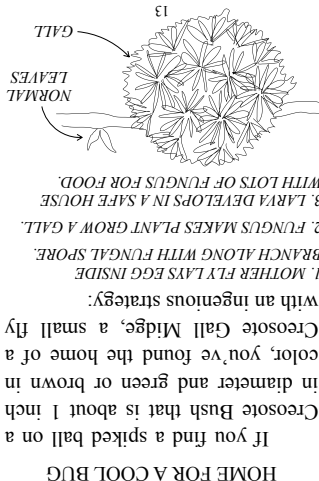
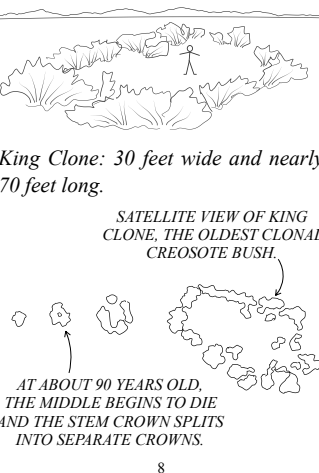
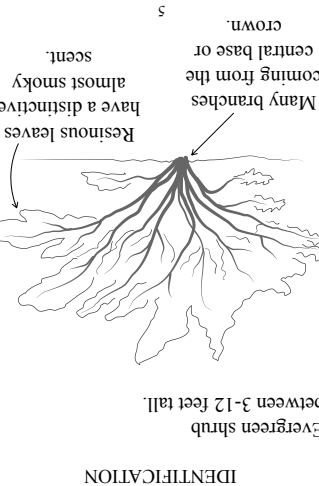


ONE OF THE OLDEST LIVING THINGS

When a certain variety of Creosote gets very old, the main stems in the middle die and the crown splits, forming a circular ring.

King Clone, a Creosote Bush growing in the Lucerne Valley of California, is thought to be 11,700 years old. DNA testing proved that what looks like a ring of bushes was in fact, the same bush. Scientists estimated the age by using radiocarbon dating on pieces of wood in the center of the ring, counting growth rings, and comparing King Clone to other Creosote Bushes.

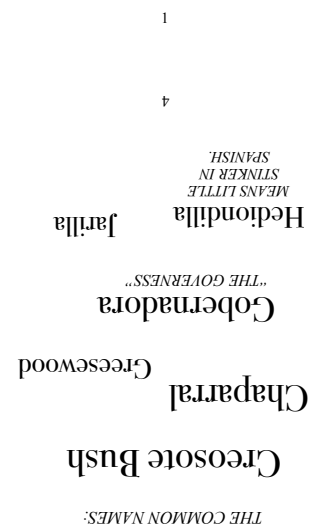
The next time you travel through the desert, stop and take a look at the Creosote: one of the oldest, toughest, most resourceful plants on earth. Take a moment to rub the leaves and smell the distinctive scent, a smell that permeates the air whenever it rains in the Mojave. Imagine that the bush you are next to might be hundreds of years old, and that a bush not so different in appearance has been living here since shortly after the last ice age. These tough survivors are a fundamental part of ours deserts.



The creosote bush, known by the scientific name *Larrea tridentata*, is one of the most common plants in the Mojave, Sonoran, and Chihuahuan Deserts.

Growing at elevations between sea level and 5,000 feet, this evergreen shrub blankets entire valleys in a pattern of regularly-spaced bushes.

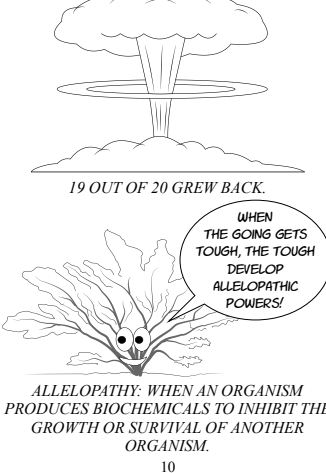
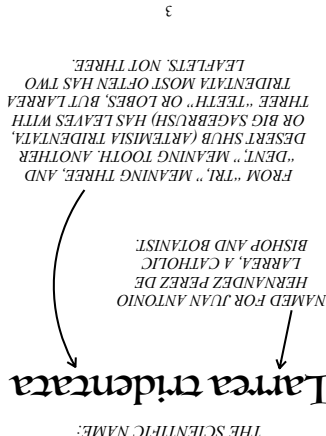
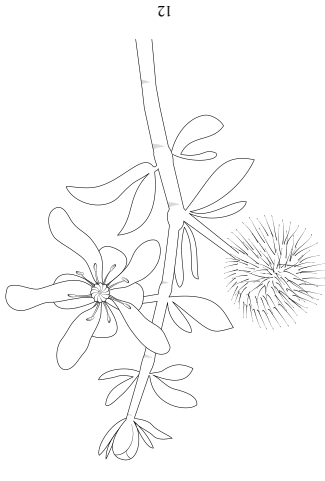
In addition to identification and basic information, this pocket-sized field guide explores some of the talents that make this seemingly ordinary plant one incredible species.



A SUPER TOUGH PLANT

How tough are Creosote Bushes? They've survived a thermonuclear explosion. Out of 20 plants observed to be destroyed by a blast in Nevada, 19 grew back from the roots after their tops had been burned away.

They're also tough on competitors. Creosote bushes secrete a resin that discourages other plants from germinating near them. Their ability to discourage neighbors, both through allelopathy and pulling most of the water from the soil, often gives them a "planted" appearance where bushes grow at regular intervals.



According to a Native American creation story, the Creosote was the first life form to germinate when the world began. From the branches of this bush came the first animal, an insect that made a resin, and that resin became the soil of the earth. Native people used the Creosote medicinally for a wide variety of reasons: as a cure for fever, to abate stomach pains, as an antimicrobial, and as an anesthetic. It is toxic in large amounts (which is why livestock can't graze it), so if using it medicinally be sure to be careful.

B

A

A

X

B

C

C

D

F

E

E

D

E

G

G

X