



Shrub Live Oak (*Quercus turbinella*)

The name *quercus turbinella* comes from the Latin term “Turbinella”, meaning “a little top.” This likely refers to the slender acorn. A member of the Beech family, shrub live oak has the ability to hybridize with nearly every other oak species. Because of this, they produce an array of plants that look almost identical.

Description: A tall desert shrub, shrub live oaks grow between 6 and 12 feet tall. Leaves are holly-like and change multiple colors, including shades of red, lime-green and blue. Leaves do not fall annually, instead they shed old leaves when new leaves begin to sprout. Shrub live oaks grow in thickets and resemble small trees.

Location: Found within the southwestern United States, especially in the Four Corners area, shrub live oaks flourish on dry slopes and pinyon-juniper woodland areas. This plant thrives in dry soils, including sands or clays, allowing optimal survival through droughts.

Uses: Birds and mammals consume shrub live oak acorns while wild and domesticated animals forage on its foliage. The shrub is used for wildlife shelter and a place for animals to hide their food. Insects, especially butterflies are drawn to Oaks as they are ideal host plants.

Sources:

“*Quercus turbinella*.” *Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center*. 16 Jan. 2019.
https://www.wildflower.org/plants/result.php?id_plant=qutu2

“*Quercus turbinella*.” *SEINet, Arizona – New Mexico Chapter*. 16 Jan. 2019.
<http://swbiodiversity.org/seinet/taxa/index.php?taxon=3272&taxauthid=1>