



## ARIZONA-SONORA DESERT MUSEUM PLANT CARE INFORMATION

### Sonoran Nightshade or Mariola *Solanum hindsianum*

**DESCRIPTION:** Sonoran Nightshade is an openly branched shrub to about five feet tall and a little less wide. The stems are sparsely clothed with fuzzy gray leaves and occasional thorns. Lavender, star-shaped flowers an inch and a half in diameter, with a crinkled texture are borne year-round. These are great attracters of carpenter and bumble bees, two of their pollinators. This species is also a great food plant for sphinx moth caterpillars. Sonoran Nightshade is native to the hottest and driest habitats of the Sonoran Desert in Sonora and Baja California.

**RECOMMENDED USE:** Background in informal landscapes, enhanced desert revegetation, large container.

#### CULTURE:



**Hardiness:** This plant is somewhat frost tender. In colder areas around Tucson it should be grown against a protected south-facing wall or boulder, or kept in a container that can be moved under cover during freezing weather.



**Sun tolerance:** This plant thrives even in the hottest, sunniest locations.



**Watering and feeding:** In pot culture, watering frequency increases as the weather warms, and may need daily, or every-other-day watering. In the ground it will take less water. Sonoran Nightshade can survive months without water once established, but needs occasional rain or irrigation to maintain leaves and flowers. Fertilizing is not necessary in the ground.



**Soil requirements:** Any soil type is suitable as long as it drains.



**Pruning:** Remove frost damage in the spring. Light pruning to shape any time.

**NOTE:** Being a member of the nightshade family (*Solanaceae*), the fruits and seeds of the *Solanum* are presumably poisonous to mammals.