

**ARIZONA AGAVE**  
**(*Agave arizonica*)**

**STATUS:** Endangered (49 FR 21055, May 18,1984) without critical habitat.

**SPECIES DESCRIPTION:** A member of the agave family. Arizona agave has attractive rosettes of bright green leaves with dark mahogany margins; mature leaves 17-24 cm long (6.7 to 9.4 inches) and 2-4 cm wide (0.8 to 1.6 inches), broadest in middle. Yellow flowers are born on sub-umbellate inflorescences.

**HABITAT:** Arizona agave occurs in the transition zone between oak-juniper woodland and mountain mahogany-oak scrub at 915-1,830 m (3,000- 6,000 ft) elevation. Known habitats are characterized by steep rocky slopes, but Arizona agave can occur on drainage bottoms or relatively gentle slopes or saddles.

**RANGE: Current:** Scattered clones are known from the New River Mountains (Maricopa and Yavapai counties) and Sierra Ancha Mountains (Gila County) in Arizona.

**Potential:** Potential habitat in the Mazatzal Mountains (Gila and Maricopa counties) exists but has not been thoroughly searched. Arizona agave should be looked for wherever the ranges of *Agave toumeyana* var. *bella* and *Agave chrysantha* overlap.

**REASONS FOR DECLINE/VULNERABILITY:** Vulnerable due to low plant numbers and limited distribution. Threats to the species include habitat decline due to herbivory of flowering stalks and historic overuse by livestock, feral burros, and wildlife; and illegal collection.

**LAND MANAGEMENT/OWNERSHIP:** Tonto National Forest and private.

**NOTES:** Some botanists believe that *Agave arizonica* is a species that originated through hybridization (possibly a cross between *A. chrysantha* and *A. toumeyana* var. *bella*) or that it represents a continually occurring hybrid. Insufficient data are available to support the conclusion, but research conducted by the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix is ongoing. For a summary of these taxonomic questions, see Hodgson and Delamater's 1988 "Summary of Status and Report on Recent Studies," available through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Phoenix Office.

Protected from illegal international trade by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

Protected by the Arizona Native Plant Law.