

# Comanche Partridge Pea



**A Native, Warm-Season, Reseeding  
Annual Legume**

- **Provides Cover on Critically Eroding  
Areas and Surface-Mined Lands**
- **Provides Food and Cover for Wildlife**
- **Is Widely Adapted**

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**In cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agri-  
culture-Soil Conservation Service and USDA-  
Agricultural Research Service**

# Comanche

## Partridge Pea

'Comanche' partridge pea (*Cassia fasciculata* Michx.) was released by the USDA Soil Conservation Service in cooperation with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station.

### Origin

Comanche was collected in **1968** from a native stand in Throckmorton County, Texas, by Larry W. Seymore of the Soil Conservation Service.

### Description

Plants grow **1-4** feet tall and range from erect to prostrate with several branches often forming dense stands. The alternate leaves are compound with **8-15** pairs of leaflets. Leaflets are minutely pubescent top and bottom, distinctly veined,  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches long,  $\frac{1}{8}$ - $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch wide with abruptly sharp-pointed tips. Flowers are bright yellow. Seed pods are flattened and **8-10** times as long as wide. The pods contain **10-20** dark brown flattened, partridge-shaped seeds. There are approximately 65,000 seeds per pound.

### Adaptation

Comanche is more widely adapted than ordinary partridge pea. It grows well in all areas of Texas and Oklahoma receiving **19** or more inches of rainfall and has also done well at locations in Kansas and Georgia. Favoring sands and sandy loams, Comanche has had varied successes on soils heavier than clay loams. Since it is a reseeding annual, rainfall plays an important role in establishment.

### Uses

A pioneer plant, Comanche is valuable in land reclamation and critical area revegetation efforts. Bare areas are covered quickly and stands will stay

for as long as **5** years without reseeding until perennial species dominate. Relatively low palatability to livestock helps Comanche to survive. Seeds are an excellent source of food for bobwhite quail and other birds.

### Establishment

Comanche should be seeded in the spring at **2** pounds pure live seed per acre in range or pasture seeding mixtures to obtain **2-3** plants per square foot. Strips or small blocks for wildlife uses can be established by planting seed  $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch deep in clean, firm seedbeds at **10** pounds pure live seed per acre broadcast or **3** pounds per acre in rows. Seed scarification is helpful but not necessary. Seed should be inoculated before planting.

### Seed Production

Seed production fields should be planted  $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$  inches deep on raised beds, **36-40** inches apart, at a rate of **2-3** pounds pure live seed per acre, fertilized and watered. One 20-pound application of phosphorous in the spring is recommended each year. Average seed production at the Knox City Plant Materials Center over the past **10** years has been **550** pounds per acre. Harvest can be direct combined or swathed and combined.

### Foundation Seed

Foundation seed is available to certified growers from the Soil Conservation Service, Plant Materials Center, Route **1**, Box **155**, Knox City, Texas, **79529-9752**.

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Closeup of *seed*, 'Comanche' partridge pea.