



# Friends of SNOW CANYON

## What's That Plant???

### Do you know these "Core Plants"?

The most dominant species in the sand desert of Snow Canyon is called **Sand or Old Man Sagebrush**. A close relative found at higher elevations in the Park is **Big Sagebrush**. Although they are often called Sage, they are not related to culinary Sage or to the cultivated landscape plants that are in the genus *Salvia*. They are actually in the Aster or Daisy Family (Asteraceae) although their flowers bear no resemblance to a daisy.

#### Sand or Old Man Sagebrush *Artemisia filifolia*

- **Foliage:** Silvery blue threadlike leaves with a mint-like fragrance. The blue color is striking against the red sand.
- **Flowers:** Hanging plumes of small creamy yellow flowers in late summer (not showy) that form numerous, minute seeds.
- **Habit:** Shrubby, growing 2-5 feet or more.
- **Other:** This plant provides food and shelter for small birds and mammals.



#### Big Sagebrush *Artemisia tridentata*



- **Foliage:** Aromatic, gray green leaves; wedge shaped with three lobes.
- **Flowers:** Small, yellowish flowers are borne in prominent, upright spikes in late summer. A mature plant can produce up to one million seeds!
- **Habit:** Evergreen shrub, coarse and rough looking, growing 2– 9 feet tall.
- **Other:** Big Sagebrush occupies thousands of square miles in the western states and is the State Plant of Nevada. It is a valuable forage plant for wildlife and was used as a source of medicine by Native Americans.