

Upcoming Local Events

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| Dec. 7 | Master Gardeners Meeting,
7:00 p.m., Safford City/Graham County Public Library, PD Room |
| Jan 4 | Gardening and Landscaping Course begins
6:00 p.m., EAC |
| Jan. 6 | Master Gardeners Meeting
7:00 p.m., Safford City/Graham County Public Library, PD Room |

Master Gardeners Meeting
will be changed to the 1st
THURSDAY
of every month
January thru April.

ARIZONA COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
TUCSON, ARIZONA 85721

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE \$300

TO:

GRAHAM COUNTY GARDENING

December 1999

From the Dirt Clods!! We completed a final harvest of the tomatoes and peppers remaining in the Farm's vegetable plots. The data can now be input to give us an idea of the more successful varieties for this area. Broccoli and cauliflower seedlings have been started in the greenhouse. We hope to do a planting in January of other winter garden varieties.



Sue is working with Gila Resources to develop a water conservation program to present in the local schools. We hope to include field trips to the water and sewage treatment plants.

The Master Gardeners Program is active again. This month alone 3 people finished their 50 service hours and earned their Master Gardener Certification. Congratulations to **Gail Jones, Ralph McClellan, and Marilyn Weaver**. We have had quite a few inquiries about the upcoming course at EAC. We hope to recruit more Master Gardeners from this class.

A special thanks goes to Master Gardener **Perri Larson** who did an excellent job on educating the community on iris at our meeting last month.

Master Gardeners successfully helped to educate the community about gardening in general at our booth during the Emergency Preparedness Fair. Thank you **Gail Jones, Perri Larson, Ralph McClellan, and Marilyn Weaver** for helping us do this.

A community service project was proposed at our November gardening meeting. Perri Larson suggested that we design and implement a landscape plan for the Safford Care Center. It was met with enthusiasm by those present. As we further develop this idea we will keep you posted. Anyone not at the meeting who would be interested in helping with this project please call the County Extension Office and let us know. Not only will this give us a chance to work together on a service project, it will provide community awareness of Master Gardeners and what we do.

The Extension Office is receiving more questions and requests for gardening information. People are beginning to realize that we are here for that purpose. If we don't have an immediate answer, we will research the problem and find an answer. We now have voice mail for Master Gardeners at 428-2611 extension 105. We are more likely to be in the office on Wednesdays and Fridays but do show up on other days as well.

We have a request for those of you who have already completed the Master Gardening course. We have to provide an annual report of our group's activities and would like everyone to turn in their volunteer hours by our January meeting. Even if you only completed 2 hours of service, we want to know. Added to the rest of the group's hours, it will look impressive.

Keep in touch.

From your Friendly Horticulture Technicians and Master Gardeners
Ruth Anne Neff & Sue Martin

Lee J. Clark

Safford Agricultural Center

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Gardening and Landscaping Class

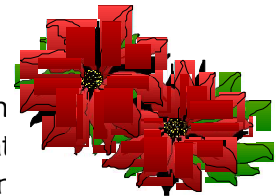
A Gardening and Landscaping Class will be taught at Eastern Arizona College in the Spring Semester of 2000. You may register for this class now. It is course #

1888 and will be on **Tuesday** evenings 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. **Note day change.** Rob Call, Horticulture Agent, Cochise County will be teaching the class. This class will count as training toward Master Gardener Certification for those of you who are interested in this program.

December Master Gardening Meeting
Our speaker's topic this month will be geraniums. Bring your questions and come learn with us.




Caring for Your Poinsettias



Too hot in the summer and too cold in the winter for geraniums. So place your holiday pots in a sunny but cool winter location. They need 6-8 hours of bright, but indirect, light and prefer temperatures between 60-70°F. When you find the ideal spot, leave the pot there; avoid sudden changes in light intensity or temperature. This may cause it to drop leaves. Keep the soil moist but don't let the pot stand in water. Enjoy!

In the Garden:

- C Add compost and manure to garden beds as they become vacant.
- C Pruning of new growth stops.
- C  December: Plant flowers and cool season flowers like sweet peas, larkspur, Shirley poppies, pansies, and alyssum.
- C Spray horticultural oil on fruit and nut trees to smother overwintering pests.
- C Pre-emergent herbicides can still be applied during early this month for winter annual weed control. Follow package directions carefully. DO NOT use pre-emergent where you will be planting seeds this season.

Winter Watering Schedules

The shift to cooler temperatures reduces the amount of water plants require. Bermuda grass lawns (now dormant) and established trees should be watered monthly if rains aren't sufficient. Overseeded, winter lawns can generally go twice as long between watering as summer lawns.



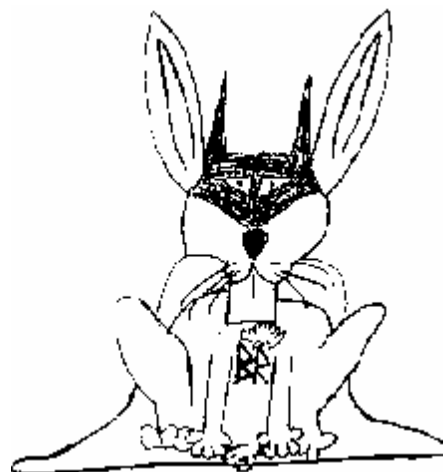
You will still need to water deeply each time. The same goes for growing flowers. They may only need water once or twice a week. Do not over water. Fertilize your overseeded lawn monthly with a nitrate fertilizer to maintain the healthy green color.

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Graham County Cooperative Extension phone # 428-2611

Battling the BAD RABBIT

Some of us gardeners live in the wide open spaces, without the confines or protection of a walled or fenced yard. After many years of living in the desert, I'm finally beginning to realize I can never win the war against the BAD RABBIT. Trying to achieve the look my grandma's garden had is, alas, just not going to happen, so I might as well quit throwing good money (and time) after bad. I began looking for plants that BAD RABBITS



don't find tasty, and remedies to repel these furry marauders. Here's a few I've found, and they are compatible to our high desert climate:

Perennials:

Archillea (yellow flowered)*	Agave*	Columbine	Sage
Cacti*	Foxglove	Geraniums*	Lavender*
Narcissus*	Hyacinths	Oregano*	Locoweed*
Marigold	Penstemons	Peony	Rosemary
Santolina	Salvia	Sedum	Thymus species*
Gaillardia (Firewheel)*	Tansy"Crispum"	Tritoma (Red Hot Poker)	
Yucca	(also repels ants)	Zinnia grandiflora*	

Shrubs:

Caryopteris (Blue Mist Spirea)*	Chrysothamnus (Rabbit Brush or Chamisa)* - NATIVE
Apache Plume* - NATIVE	Russian Sage

* indicates generally deer resistant

The reality is, however, no plant is BAD RABBIT or deer proof. Hungry animals will browse if there is little or no greenery available, like during the dry spring of '99. Some remedies I've come across in my search include:

- Placing a bowl of water at the edge of a planting bed. I found this just helps the BAD RABBIT wash down his meal.
- Mixing Frank's Red Hot Sauce in a spray bottle til water turns pink. This also repels butterflies.
- Sprinkle blood meal among plants. Organic and good fertilizer but also attracts rats and other vermin. I'd rather put up with the BAD RABBIT.
- Soak 1 lb. Raw beef liver in a bucket of water for 24 hours, strain and put in spray bottle. I haven't had the courage to try this because I can imagine coyotes, bobcats and buzzards might find this scent irresistible.
- "Hinder" Repellent- can be used on food crops, home gardens and fruit trees, repelling action caused by odor not offensive to humans. I found this at www.mellingers.com which is an online garden catalog. I've placed my order and plan to try it with a vengeance this spring on a few hapless petunias. If you have any plants/remedies that work against the BAD RABBIT please let us know!

Marilyn Weaver

Master Gardener