

Graham County Gardening Newsletter

April 2007

Volume 11, No. 4

Xeriscaping Resources

After listening to Dr. Ursula Schuch at our February Conference, you clearly knew that xeriscaping and low water usage meant far more than rocks and a plant or two here and there. As she said, you could have a beautiful, colorful and fairly lush landscape all with low water usage. She displayed and discussed many pictures which were proof.

So I went to the computer for more information and ideas. For best results, I associated xeriscape with landscape. In doing so, I found the following site which has a great variety of information and ideas. It is called Landscape Design—Do It Yourself at <http://www.the-landscape-design-site.com/index.html>. The writer is Steve Boulden, S&S Designed Landscaping. It is obvious that advertising on the site allows it to be

free; but the advertising is not overbearing. You might find some interesting information in books, software or services. Or you can overlook these and move on to a wealth of free information.

One example of a pathway was to start on the Home Page, then click on Landscape Ideas in the top menu bar. This takes you to a page on Free Landscape & Design Ideas. Scroll down the menu on the left of the page and you will find three items under xeriscaping. Or scroll down further to Everything Else where the last item is Past Newsletters. Click on this choice. Scroll down your new page and you will find past newsletters with a topic listing and brief description. Click on your choice. Again scroll down the page past advertising and you will be able to read a full newsletter.

I chose one on Landscape Fabric for Weed Control—"How to use it, how to choose it, and where to get the good stuff". And if I had stayed on this site, there was such a wealth of information I would not have been able to finish this issue of the Gardening Newsletter!

Back on the Home Page, scroll down to visit the free landscaping pictures gallery. You can click on each picture for a larger and more detailed view. Some have minimal plantings while others have many plantings. Some include a small patch of yard (which Ursula also had in selected illustrations) while others have no green yard. Some use more trees and some use more flowers and shrubs.

In any case, then consult lists of low-water use flowers, shrubs (continued on page 2)

Workshops For The Home Gardener

Saturday, April 14 10:00 a.m. Herb Gardening

Saturday, May 12 10:00 a.m. Composting

Held at Edu-Venture Trail, University of Arizona, Safford Agricultural Center, 2134 Montierth Lane, Safford.

More Information: Call Karen Thomson 928-428-2611 or karent@ag.arizona.edu.

April 21: Square Foot Gardening by Dr. Tom Harris from Texas—U of A South Campus, Sierra Vista, 10 a.m.

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Graham County

ARIZONA COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES

Xeriscaping

(Continued from page 1)
and trees to select good choices for the southwest and Graham County. If you do not already have these listings, please consult Master Gardener Karen Thomson at kar-ent@ag.arizona.edu.

Other pages provide ways for you to design your own area—such as How to Use a Bubble Graph in Garden Design.

Another site that I have found to be very useful and reliable is High Country Gardens, <http://www.highcountrygardens.com/> located in Santa Fe. I and other local Master Gardeners are familiar with the High Country Gardens catalog. Garden articles are listed in the menu on their Home Page. Their plants (many in number and variety) are particularly suited to xeriscaping and are available for ordering. There is a section where you can choose plants for your particular region. If you can not access the site by computer, you can order a catalog by calling 1-800-928-9387. I have ordered plants by mail. They come well-packed and live upon transplanting. I have also visited their nursery when in Santa Fe. It is wonderful. If you sign up by e-mail, they offer a free monthly gardening newsletter packed with valuable gardening tips. This means that you will also receive advertising but sometimes it is worth it. You decide.

Are there other reliable sites? Yes. I ran out of time. It is your turn to sit down and play. You will find how very helpful computers can be. One caution however. All computer sites are not reliable with true facts and reliable information.

By Dorine Chancellor, Master Gardener

What If You Don't Have a Computer?

Review of the Gardening Newsletter Survey replies provided various answers on computer usage.

There were those who were not aware of the website or not in the habit of thinking of it when researching information. Others do not have a computer. And others indicated that they did not know how to use the computer or were not comfortable in using the computer. Generally, this was someone who is over 60.

I am over 60 and then some. I can relate to your feeling. Although I was very comfortable with “business machines” in my younger working years, a computer was not one of those “machines”. But due to my job before retiring, I was required to use a computer. One was placed on my desk and it was quite clear that it was not there just to catch dust. Slowly but surely, I began to learn. I retired and decided that I needed a computer to receive e-mail. And then I wanted a part-time job that required use of a computer. So I took classes and learned more. I am not one to spend a good deal of my personal time on a computer. (I would rather be outside in my yard and garden.) But I do know that I can research and find interesting and helpful information when I want or need to.

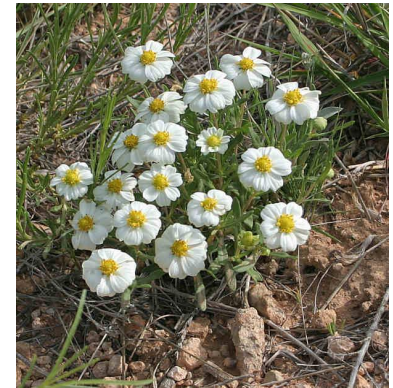
Perhaps you live where a computer connection would be difficult, or you do not wish to buy or have money to buy a computer. The public library in your community probably has computers that you can use free of charge. Some people use library computers for their personal e-mail.

Perhaps you do not know how to operate a computer and think you are too old to learn. There will be someone in the library who will

assist you in the basic operation of researching information. Give it a try. You will learn and you will begin to enjoy it. You are never too old and never unable to “catch on” if you want to. It can become fun, interesting and helpful.

Your first attempt can be to use this address: <http://www.the-landscape-design-site.com/index.html> to discover extensive information on landscaping and xeriscaping. This site has many places to go so it would be a good first learning experience on how valuable a computer connection can be!

Flower of the Month



Blackfoot Daisy

Melampodium leucanthum

Temperature zone: 7 – 11

USDA, 1 – 3, 10 – 13 Sunset

Frost protection: Hardy to 0 degrees F.

Exposure: Full sun, very heat tolerant

Origin: Texas native, range from 2,000 – 5,000 ft. in western U.S.

Growth habits: Perennial, forms mound about 1.5 ft x 2 ft.

Water requirements: Water established plants weekly in summer, little water in winter, needs good drainage.

Propagation: seeds, deadhead to keep blooming

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(Continued from page 2)

Flower: White with yellow center. “Black feet” are actually aged stigma. Honey scented.

Blooms March – November

Leaves: Evergreen

Wildlife value: Attracts butterflies.

New Tomato Virus Identified in Arizona

By Susan McGinley

February 19, 2007

Contact Information:

Judith K. Brown, UA plant sciences, 520-621-1402, jbrown@ag.arizona.edu



Tomato plant showing stress from yellow leaf curl virus



Close-up of tomato plant with yellow leaf curl virus

A new plant virus identified in fall 2006 in Arizona threatens not only home gardens, but also the commercial tomato industry in the state. Tomato yellow leaf curl virus, also known as TYLCV, was found in two home gardens in the Phoenix area.

Tomato plants infected by the TYLCV develop severely curled, yellowing leaves, shattered nodes

and short stalks. The virus causes many of the flowers to abort, lowering fruit set and reducing yields. Symptoms are more apparent on the growing tips of plants, where the newest growth is taking place.

“You’ll see very small, stunted plants that aren’t going to be able to produce fruit—not good enough for shipping and storage,” says Judith Brown, a virologist and whitefly vector biologist in the Department of Plant Sciences at The University of Arizona.

“The virus stresses the plants beyond belief, and they simply stop growing”.

Brown isolated DNA and identified the virus from plant samples submitted by Mary Ann Garewal, a UA-certified master gardener in Surprise, who observed symptoms and collected samples from her vegetable garden and those of another Phoenix gardener. At about the same time, Brown also identified a distinctly different isolate of the virus on infected commercial tomato plant samples from Sonora, Mexico, suggesting that the two isolates came from different sources.

The plant samples from both Arizona and Mexico were also infested with the “B” biotype of the sweet potato whitefly, *Bemisia tabaci*, which feeds on the leaves and can transmit the virus to other plants through its saliva.

TYLCV first infected tomatoes in the western hemisphere in the Caribbean and along the eastern coasts of both the United States and Mexico in the early 90s.

“It seemed to be contained in those areas until it was introduced in Texas last summer,” Brown says. The source of that outbreak was traced to infected commercial transplants that were possibly infected by virus in plants

brought in from out of state. TYLCV has also been tracked from the east coast states of Mexico to the Pacific coast production area in the state of Sinaloa where the virus ravaged commercial tomato crops throughout the state during spring 2005 and again in fall and spring 2006, according to Brown.

“In the summer of 2006 we next found it in Sonora” she says. “Now it’s becoming a giant epidemic across the Pacific coastal Mexican states, causing heavy yield losses in fresh-market tomatoes and peppers that are exported to the United States.”

Brown notes that the TYLCV identified in Arizona did not come from Mexico. DNA testing matches it with isolates from Texas. When viruses pass through different hosts, particularly ornamentals or new hosts, they can mutate into different isolates and then be introduced back into a crop.

“It’s a very prolific virus,” Brown says. “If TYLCV infects a variety of tomato that is not resistant, you’ll have a huge problem. I don’t think any of the varieties grown hydroponically in greenhouses are resistant, although some of the field processing varieties are. None of the current home garden varieties are resistant.”

TYLCV infects not only tomatoes, but also beans and peppers in home gardens, and some ornamentals.

Brown advises against spraying whiteflies to control the virus because by the time the symptoms appear it’s too late to stop the disease. She adds that there are currently no chemical or biological controls for TYLCV.

“The best approach is to avoid introducing the virus in transplants. (continued on page 4)

New Tomato Virus (continued from Page 3)

Virus free seedlings are the way to go,” she says. “You’re safest if you buy virus-free plants or start your own from seed although that

still may not help if your garden or crop is near an infected field or a neighbor’s garden that harbors the virus.”

For more information, contact Judith K. Brown, 520-621-1402 , jbrown@ag.arizona.edu

Mud, Trolls and Mint (Pond Cleaning)



Chuck Campos of Trinity Landscaping



It takes many hands to pull stubborn cattails



Ginny Peck and Lorraine McGhee cleaning rocks



Equipment was loaned from several sources

We might have called the event “Mud Wrestling in the Pond”, because “Pond Maintenance” just wasn’t an adequate title. Six or so years of not doing it quite right was corrected Saturday, March 10. With the help and guidance of Chuck Campos, owner of Trinity Landscaping, who volunteered his time (a whole day!) and chemicals, volunteers had a warm day to “play” in the water. Keller Ellsworth caught fish and drained the pond and ran the water tank around, filling and dispensing water for flushing

the pond. Chuck and Kent Peck, barefoot in the pond, took over pulling out cattails when Marilyn Weaver and Karen Thomson couldn’t budge the plants in the middle. Ginny Peck washed and scrubbed rocks, Lorraine McGhee hauled wheelbarrows full of cattails and muck to the compost pile and people came out and asked questions. Then, mint, both chocolate and spearmint, were found to have invaded the pond the line, waterfall, papyrus, under the bridge, everywhere and from all directions. Pulling

mint was as difficult as pulling cattails! Under the bridge, a mud pool was found and when it was cleared out, some of us thought we saw a troll running off disgruntled. After all, it had taken years to get the pond and mud pool under the bridge “just right”

Troy and Shauna Goodman stopped by to help and loaned a fabulous little vacuum to suck out the muck that repeated flushing couldn’t get. They had spent the morning cleaning out their own pond and came to help us. They (Continued on page 5)

Mud, Trolls, & Mint (continued from page 4)

also donated some water lilies. Ray and Nayda Luster were by, asked questions and observed for a while, then went out of their way and brought lunch back for everyone! We were all tired and hungry and really appreciated

their thoughtfulness. We still had filters to clean, fill the pond and return the fish to their home. It all got done and the result is a clean clear pond. Lee Clark got us started, but it was Chuck Campos and Keller Ellsworth

who really gave it their all. Thanks for a job well done! Now we can have a Workshop on Pond Maintenance!

In Your April Garden!

- Average date of last frost in the Gila Valley is April 9. This is usually considered the first day that it is safe to plant tender plants outdoors. Remember that the weather is never predictable. Continue to monitor weather forecasts and protect seedlings if frost is forecast. Milk jugs with the bottom cut off and the lid removed make good hot caps for small plants. Remove the jugs to prevent a severe heat buildup.
- Apply 2 – 3 inches of fresh mulch. This suppresses weeds, keeps roots cooler and helps retain moisture.
- Fertilize non-native garden plants. Water the day before you apply it and again immediately afterwards.
- Fertilize Bermuda grass lawns as they begin to green up. Use a high nitrogen fertilizer and water thoroughly.
- Don't deathwatch Bermuda lawns until June or July.
- If using drip irrigation, give plants a deep watering now to leach salts from the soil.
- Add chelated iron to bottlebrush, citrus, pyracantha, globe willow and other plants that show chlorosis (yellowing of the new growth).
- If water shortages occur, use available water to maintain health of your trees, over more easily replaced plants.
- Plant summer flowering bulbs such as agapanthus, caladiums, cannas, dahlias, gladiolas, and tuberoses.
- Seed or transplant warm season annuals such as ageratum, celosia, cosmos, four o'clocks, gloriosa daisy, lisianthus, marigold, portulaca, sunflower, and zinnia.
- Transplant eggplants, peppers, sweet potatoes, and tomatoes.
- Plant cucumbers, melons, peanuts, pumpkins, okra, radishes and summer squash.

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Graham County Cooperative Extension: Interim County Director: Randall Norton




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If we can be of service in providing objective information in agriculture, natural resources, youth, family, community resources, and related fields, please call us.

Send Comments or Questions by e-mail to: dorinec@ag.arizona.edu or call 928-428-2611

MEMORANDUM

DATE: 2 April 2007
TO: All Interested Parties
FROM: Randy Norton 
SUBJECT: Interim CED Graham County Extension
Interview Schedule for Graham County Area ANR Agent

Graham County Cooperative Extension is pleased to announce the interview schedule for the candidates for the Area Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent position based in Graham County. All interviews will be conducted in the:

**Eastern Arizona College Campus
Gherald L. Hoopes, Jr. Activities Center
12 April 2007**

The general public is welcome and encouraged to attend.

The schedule for these interviews is as follows:

Time	Candidate
8:00 am – 8:45 am	Dr. Sabrina Tuttle
9:15 am – 10:00 am	Dr. Angus McIntosh
10:30 am - 11:15 am	Mr. Eric Schwennesen

**Graham County General Services Building
18 April 2007**

2:00 am – 2:45 am **Mr. William Brandau**

If you have any questions regarding this schedule or process, please give me a call at 928-428-2432 (Voice) or 928-428-6745 ((fax) or 928-651-0420 (Mobile). rnorton@cals.arizona.edu. We appreciate your support in making this process as successful as possible.

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