

Graham County Gardening Newsletter

February 2007

Volume 11, No. 2

FEBRUARY EVENTS

ONE MORE TIME! Receive or Not Receive THAT IS THE QUESTION!

Please Complete the Enclosed Survey

We know that we have many interested readers of the Graham County Gardening Newsletter. Can you provide an e-mail address? **The University of Arizona Graham County Cooperative Extension Office does not share e-mail addresses or telephone numbers with other organizations or businesses.**

AN ADEQUATE NUMBER OF E-MAIL ADDRESSES WILL ALLOW US TO MAIL OTHER LETTERS WITHOUT A SUBSCRIPTION CHARGE. PLEASE COMPLETE THE ENCLOSED SURVEY AND ASSIST WITH AN E-MAIL ADDRESS IF YOU HAVE ONE.

No answer will cause you to be dropped from the mailing list.

Third Annual Gila Valley Gardening & Landscaping Conference Sat., Feb. 24, 2007

Xeriscaping/Native Plants by Dr. Ursula Schuch, Ext. Specialist, Ornamental Horticulture, U of A will be the keynote address.

Session topics include Trees, Vegetable Gardening, Culinary Herbs, Irrigation & Desert Soils, Weeds & Insects, and Lawn Maintenance. A popular continuing feature will be the Agents Session where you can ask any question you choose.

Pre-registration remains at \$25 postmarked by Feb. 21 with \$30 for on-site. Lunch, refreshment breaks, and handouts supplied by speakers are included.

Call Cooperative Extension at 428-2611 if you have any questions.

Efforts are being made to secure Book Sales and Vendors.

Workshops For The Home Gardener

Tuesday, February 6
9:30 a.m.
Pruning

Saturday, March 10
10:00 a.m.
Pond Cleaning and
Maintenance

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

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

Held at Edu-Venture Trail, U of Arizona, Safford Ag Center, 2134 Montierth Lane, Safford.
More Information: Call Karen Thomson 928-428-2611

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Graham County

ARIZONA COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES

What are Hardiness Zones?



The Plant Hardiness Zones divide the United States and Canada into 11 areas based on a 10-degree Fahrenheit difference in the average annual minimum temperature. (The United States falls within Zones 2 through 10) For example, the lowest average temperature in Zone 2 is -50 to -40 degrees Fahrenheit, while the minimum average temperature in zone 10 is +30 to +40 degrees Fahrenheit. See

<http://www.arborday.org/media/zones.cfm> for a full 2006 arbor-day.org Hardiness Zone Map. Then you can go to a menu on the left and click on your Hardiness Zone. You will be able to enter your ZIP Code. It will take you to a map with your location highlighted. For Safford, the zones are 7 – 8.

The menu also lists Tree Care & Planting, Tree Identification, Tree Forum, Pruning Guide, and Planting Videos

Suggested hardiness zones have been indicated for all trees and perennials available online from National Arbor Day Foundation. If a range of zones, for example, zones 4-9, is indicated the tree or perennial is known to be hardy in zones 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9. Suitable hardiness means a plant can be expected to grow in the zone's temperature extremes, as determined by the lowest average annual temperature.

Because this is the National Arbor Day Foundation, emphasis

is on trees. The menu at the left of the page will lead you to various listing of trees with listing of zones. HOWEVER, Keep in mind that local variations such as moisture, soil, winds, and other conditions might affect the viability of individual plants.

For more information, please contact Master Gardener, Karen Thomson at kar-ent@ag.arizona.edu or at 928-428-2611.

Seven Basic Principles of Xeriscaping

While various writers use a different selection of words and a different ordering of the list of principles, all seem to agree that there are seven basic principles of xeriscaping. They are:

Planning and design

Efficient irrigation systems, properly designed and maintained.

Use of mulch

Soil preparation

Appropriate turf

Water-efficient plant material

Appropriate maintenance

Information on the seven basic principles will be featured in future newsletters



Post-Bloom Care for Amaryllis

The amaryllis that you received during the holidays will produce beautiful blooms again with the proper care.

To encourage plants to re-bloom the following summer, follow the steps below. To start new plants, set bulbs 2 to 3 inches apart and 2 to 3 inches from pot sides, with bulb tops above soil level

Step 1. In winter, remove blooms after they fade and before seedpods develop, but leave the stems. Like the remaining foliage, they'll help restore energy to the bulb. Once a stem shrivels and dries, cut it off at the base.

Step 2. Water when the soil is dry to 1 inch deep (about once a week), and feed every couple of months with liquid fertilizer diluted half-strength, as long as leaves remain green. Keep the plant in a bright, protected spot (such as indoors near a window). If the foliage dies back and the plant goes dormant, withhold water and fertilizer. Remove dead leaves at the base. Once danger of frost has passed, move the plant outdoors, ideally to a spot that gets morning sun and some afternoon shade.

Step 3. In spring, when new leaves emerge, top-dress with fresh soil, keeping the top of the bulb exposed; resume more frequent watering and fertilizing. The amaryllis should bloom again in late spring or summer.

Step 4. In early fall, stop watering and feeding after foliage fades (though some amaryllis are evergreen in mild climates); remove dead leaves. Move container to a protected spot. (In cold-winter climates, bring the container indoors to a cool, dry place such as a basement or garage.

Plant of the Month

Arizona Rosewood *Vauque-
linia californica*



Tree Form



Shrub Form

Temperature zone: USDA
zones 7 - 8

Frost protection: 10-15 degrees
Fahrenheit

Exposure: sun

Origin: native to Arizona, Baja,
Sonora, Mexico, 2,500 – 5,000 ft.
elevations

Growth habits: multi trunked
shrub or can be trained to tree

Growth rate: slow until estab-
lished the first year, then moder-
ate

Water requirements: can sur-
vive on rainfall only, but best
with monthly deep irrigation in
summer.

Propagation: seed or cuttings

Bark: rough

Flower: white dense, flat clus-
ters in spring – summer

Fruit: hard dark brown berries
that hang on through winter

Foliage: evergreen, leathery,
dark green, lanceolate, 2 – 4”
long, sharp, fine serration on
edges.

Wildlife value: none

Good, non-toxic alternative to
Oleander. Arizona Rosewood is a
distant relative of the rose family,
but took its’ common name be-
cause of the red-brown heartwood
of its branches.



Flower

Insect of the Month

Scale



Mature and young scale



Scale on branch



Mealy Bugs

Scale is inconspicuous pests of
many deciduous and evergreen
plants. They vary in size, shape
and color depending on the spe-
cies, but all range in size between
1/16- 1/2 inch.

There are three basic types of
scale, hard or armored, soft, and
mealy bugs. Mealy bugs are not
considered a problem on most
woody ornamentals although they
can infest all plant parts from
roots to flowers. Injured plants
have discolored, wilted and de-
formed leaves.

Hard or armored scale use shed
skins and a waxy substance they
secrete from 2 – 6 molts to attach

to their bodies to form a hard
shell-like cover. These covers
can be removed. Hard scales
typically lose their legs and an-
tennae in the first molt and do not
move after they insert their pierc-
ing, sucking mouth into succulent
new growth. Eggs are laid under
the waxy covering and hatch over
a period of 1 – 3 weeks. Newly
hatched “crawlers” are all soft
bodied and susceptible to control
at this stage. They will move
about to locate a suitable site to
feed and secrete their protective
shells. There can be several gen-
erations produced in a year.

Soft scales secrete an attached
waxy layer over themselves. It
cannot be removed from their
body and although their legs and
antennae are reduced after their
first molt. They are still able to
move around, but rarely do. The
waxy secretions usually form a
sac at the rear of the body, enclos-
ing the eggs and forming a thick
mass over the body. The life
cycle is similar to the hard bodied
scale, but takes about one year to
mature.

Check plants carefully using a
10X hand lens or magnifying
glass, looking on upper and lower
portions of the plant, leaves, bark,
crevices and anywhere plant
branches or leaves join. Scales
rarely move from plant to plant,
but wind, birds and humans can
move scale to uninfested plants.

Control is difficult when scales
are mature as chemicals do not
easily penetrate their waxy coat-
ing, and the dead do not fall off of
the plant. Insecticides are best
used when timed with the emer-
gence of “crawlers”. Select insecti-
cidal soaps, horticultural and
dormant oils that have the least
effect on non-target organisms.
Check to make sure the plant can
tolerate the oils as many can not.
Apply according to directions.

THANK YOU TO:

Ann Hildreth and Helen Huth for making Cool Ties for the Master Gardener sales

Linda Sparrow for her creative and artistic abilities in making a Master Gardener emblem stencil. It will be used on shopping bags for Conference attendees to collect materials.

Jim Thomson for taking pictures at the Wildflower Workshop.

Diane Drobka for designing the poster advertising the Workshops and for donating material for the Cool Ties.

Karen Thomson and Marilyn Weaver for planning and organizing the workshops for the Home Gardener Series.

Marilyn Weaver for teaching Wildflower Gardening.

Randy Norton, Interim County Director, for teaching the Spring Semester session of the Gardening and Landscaping Class.

MASTER GARDENERS MEETING, TUESDAY, MARCH 6
6:00 P.M., JERRY'S RESTAURANT

WORKSHOPS FOR THE HOME GARDENER SERIES

It was a cold, overcast day. The wind was light, the mountain ominous and shrouded. The greenhouse was warm and provided a cozy place to meet thanks to Keller at the Ag Center and so began the “Workshops for the Home Gardener” series on January 13 at 10 a.m. Wildflower Gardening brought a group of 11 hearty people out to learn and have a hands-on experience. President Marilyn Weaver guided the group in the how to’s of preparing a wildflower bed, cleaning out an existing bed, gathering and saving seeds, and lastly, planting. In about two hours, the wildflower beds were cleaned, prepared and planted, and everyone had the knowledge to plant some of the seeds harvested. The next workshop is on Tuesday, February 6, at 9:30 a.m. The topic will be Pruning and the new Gardening and Landscaping class will be there. Come out and join the fun at the Safford Ag Center.



Front: Marilyn Weaver. Back: L to R: Karen Thomson, Bev Paull, Lorraine McGhee, Celia Farland, Erica Phelps, Chris Gisiner, Ginny Peck

In Your February Garden!

- Fertilize winter ryegrass lawns with 2 pounds of ammonium sulfate per 1000 square feet. Water thoroughly.
- Start preparing your garden soil for the upcoming season. Add compost and organic matter and work in 2 pounds of ammonium phosphate and 3 pounds of soil sulfur per 1000 square feet.
- Start eggplant, okra, pepper, and tomato seeds indoors. Cantaloupe, cucumber, pumpkin, summer squash, and watermelon seeds should not be started until the end of the month.
- Plant asparagus, beets, carrots, chard, onion plants, potatoes, radishes and spinach all month.
- Plant kale and leaf lettuce through Feb. 15.
- Set out perennials and cool season annuals, such as calendula, chrysanthemums, dianthus, daisies, larkspur, pansies, snapdragons, stocks, and violas.
- Continue planting bare rooted trees, roses, grapes and cane berries.
- Check your irrigation system now to make sure it is not plugged and is operating correctly.
- Finish pruning deciduous trees and shrubs before the buds swell.
- Between rains, irrigate deep rooted plants occasionally, but thoroughly. Shallow-rooted plants require water more often.
- Watch for weeds to appear and control them while they are still tender. Remove London rocket and other weeds in the mustard family. These plants provide an excellent host for insects such as false chinch bugs.

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Graham County Cooperative Extension: Interim County Director: Randall Norton



Phone: (928)428-2611

Fax: (928)428-7023

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



**THIRD ANNUAL GILA VALLEY GARDENING AND LANDSCAPING
CONFERENCE**

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24

If you have misplaced the conference brochure, go on line at

<http://cals.arizona.edu/graham/>

Or call the Cooperative Extension Office at 928-428-2611 for another copy or to register.

Home Gardener Series at Safford Agricultural Center:

Pruning Demonstration

Tuesday, February 6—9:30 a.m.

Pond Cleaning and Maintenance

Saturday, March 10—10 a.m.

Herb Gardening

Saturday, April 14—10 a.m.

Composting

Saturday, May 12—10 a.m.

**MASTER GARDENER MEETING, TUESDAY, MARCH 6
6:00 P.M., JERRY'S RESTAURANT**

Home Garden Tour in May Cancelled

Graham County Cooperative Extension
2100 South Bowie Avenue
P. O. Box 127
Solomon, AZ 85551

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