

Graham County Gardening Newsletter

January 2007

Volume 11, No. 1

A NEW YEAR IS HERE! New Events are Planned!

Master Gardener Web Site is on The Internet

The address is <http://cals.arizona.edu/graham>.

Click on Horticulture which will take you to Master Gardener choices.

We think you will especially like the Calendar and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ). At a future date, we hope to add more local answers on the FAQ page. Going to Gardening Links/Publications and clicking on the choices in the drop-down menu will provide additional resources to answer gardening questions.

Your comments and suggestions are welcomed. Send to dorinec@ag.arizona.edu. You can do this by clicking on her e-mail address in the box at the bottom of the page.

Third Annual Gila Valley Gardening & Landscaping Conference

Feb. 24, 2007

A brochure enclosed with this newsletter describes the conference in detail and includes registration information.

The Keynote Address by Dr. Ursula Schuch, Extension Specialist, Ornamental Horticulture from the University of Arizona will be on Xeriscaping/Native Plants

A separate article on Xeriscaping will be featured in each issue of the 2007 Gardening Newsletter.

Instead of two, there will be three Sessions at the conference this year providing more choices.

It's Not Too Late! Register for the Gardening & Landscaping Class

AGR 230, January 16 to May 10, Tuesdays, 9:30 to 12 Noon, South Campus 9, Eastern Arizona College. Instructor: Dr. Randy Norton, Resident Director, Safford Ag Center.

Topics include pruning, diagnosing plant problems, fruit tree cultivation, vegetable gardening, lawn care, plant propagation, greenhouse production and design, and landscape design.

Enroll: Records Office at Administration Bldg. at Eastern Arizona College **or** call the Records Office at 928-428-8270 **or** go to the web site at www.eac.edu and select Student Services, Registration.

Purchase textbook at first session of class.

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Graham County

ARIZONA COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION

THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES

Edu-Venture Workshops!

Master Gardeners will be conducting workshops on various topics at the Edu-Venture Trail at The Safford Ag Center from January through June. The Trail showcases plants that thrive in Graham County with emphasis on low to moderate water use. Plants include native and non-invasive species along with ornamentals that are salt tolerant. Workshops will be on the second Saturday of the month at the Edu-Venture Trail unless otherwise noted. Workshop topics and dates are:

Jan. 13	Wildflower Gardening	10 am	March 10	Pond Cleaning/Maint.	10 am
Feb 6*	Pruning	9:30 am	April 14	Herb Gardening	10 am
*Tuesday			May 12	Composting	10 am

Admission is free. A small fee will be charged if printed materials are desired.

For questions or further details, contact Karen Thomson at karent@ag.arizona.edu or 928-428-2611.

The following information is from an article in the December, 2006, High on the Desert Newsletter, from Cochise County. The writer is Deke Descoteaux, Master Gardener. With extensive new construction in the Gila Valley and increased interest in home landscaping, the information is very timely when applied to the Gila Valley.

Troubled Trees

Mr. Descoteaux, walked through his neighborhood and observed the following.

I counted forty-five trees with stakes still attached three years after being planted. As you expect, the supports became imbedded in the tree trunks, and the damaging effects on the trees were obvious. I reported this to the firm that maintains the landscaping and the stakes were removed.

The emitters placed around the trunk when the trees were planted were never moved back toward the drip line. Although previously reported, no action was taken, and in a few months

twelve trees died because of inadequate watering.

Trees known to exhibit rapid root growth were confined in narrow strips between the sidewalks and privacy walls. Not surprisingly, morning joggers and evening strollers were soon contending with uneven walking surfaces due to uplifting of the sidewalks and privacy walls were damaged. In order to prevent further damage, many of these trees were subsequently removed leaving large gaps in street landscaping.

Many trees were planted too deeply and remain in deep, bowl-shaped basins. When it rains, the root collars are submerged in up to eight inches of water for extended periods of time. There is no visible damage yet, but at some time these trees will likely be affected by root rot or girdling, and they will have to be replaced.

A few trees have blown over because the ground around the planting holes was not properly prepared. Their roots were surrounded by impenetrable caliche—thus the trees were actually potted plants and were

not sufficiently anchored to resist the effect of strong winds.

Many trees were planted too close to homes and now their branches hang over roofs and clog rain gutters. In an effort to give their new homes the appearance of having mature landscaping, many homeowners overplanted when they moved into their new homes and now the plants are crowded and competing for sunlight. Some residents find it hard to let go of plants they were fond of in their home states, but every year many of these plants, which have little chance for survival in our climate zone, are killed or severely damaged by our low winter temperature or our arid climate. The different watering requirements of trees and lawns have caused many shallow tree roots to surface; their roots are damaged every time the lawn is mowed. This results in an unsightly lawn and the possibility of serious damage to the trees.



Winter Watering

It is winter and it is so easy to forget about watering landscape plants. Unless winter rains begin, continued health of these plants calls for water in our dry climate.

Deep soak every 5 – 10 days:

Annuals

Vegetables/Herbs

Deep soak every 10 – 15 days:

Roses

Perennials

Overseeded Lawns

Wildflowers

Deep soak every 20 – 30 days:

Ground Covers

Vines

Shrubs

Ornamental Grasses

Lawns

Succulents

Trees

Cactus

Moving into the month of March, you should begin to tighten up intervals

How Could You Reduce Winter Water Chores?

Install Xeriscaping with Drip Emitter Systems for low water usage plants!

Thank You!

Pruning Demonstration

Thank you to Marilyn Weaver, Master Gardener, Craig Wilcox, Associate, and Chris Gisinger, Associate for all of their help at the Pruning Demonstration held November 18 at the Safford Agricultural Center.

Home Garden Tour

CANCELLED

We are sorry but due to lack of homeowner participation, there will be no Home Garden Tour as originally scheduled for May.

Plant of the Month

Sugar Bush, Sugar Sumac, *Rhus ovata*



Temperature zone: USDA zones 7B – 10; Sunset zones 7 – 24.

Frost protections: 10 degrees F.

Exposure: full sun

Origin: AZ, CA, northwestern Mexico

Growth habits: dense evergreen bush, slow growing to 12' x 12'

Water requirements: little to moderate, considered fire retardant if given some water.

Propagation: seeds must be soaked about 24 hours before planting, starting with 90 degree F. water. In summer, heeled semi-hardwood cuttings may be taken, or winter, root cuttings or suckers.

Cultural practices: Plant in fall or winter

Bark: smooth, grayish brown when young, becoming scaly and rough with age.

Flower: white to pink, 5 petal flower clusters in spring at end of twigs.

Fruit: edible raw or cooked.

Berries are 1/8' across and elliptical. They have a thin layer of flesh. Fruits can be soaked for about an hour to make a lemonade-like drink. Leaves can be boiled to make a tea.

Wildlife value: hummingbirds and insects collect nectar from flowers. Attractive to warblers. Provides good cover and nesting opportunities.

Insect of the Month

Thrips

Several Varieties



There are various types of thrips that inflict damage in our gardens and ornamentals. Some spread tospovirus (spot viruses). They are difficult to control and their life cycle is strongly influenced by temperature and humidity. Reproduction without fertilization infrequent. Adults survive 30-45 days, range in color from black to yellow/brown, some with red, black or white markings on them, and lay 150-300 eggs. From egg to adult takes from 7 – 15 days. Eggs are laid in leaf or petal tissue, making control difficult. The larvae hatch and usually remain in their protected environment of flower buds and foliage through two stages. At the end of the second stage, they stop feeding and make their way down into the soil or leaf litter to pupate, where they have two more stages (prepupal and pupal). No feeding or movement occurs, but they are still protected from insecticides directed at crops. Currently, no insecticides are labeled as drenches for soil. Chemical control is not usually warranted as they have moved on when the damage has been spotted. A narrow range of insecticides that target minimal insects such as neem oil, insecticidal soap, and pyrethrins are only somewhat effective (Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

as is systemic control that again has the least effect on non-target organisms and is much better to control weeds, giving the thrips less places to multiply. Biological control can also be used. Green lacewing larvae, damsel bugs and minute pirate bugs (*O. insidiosus*, *O. tristicolor*, and *O. albipennis*) can be encouraged or released in the infected area to devour the thrips. Row covers on crops work well to keep thrips off plants. Reflective mulch around young plants works by using ultraviolet light to interfere with the insects' ability to locate plants. Once plants have covered 60% of the mulch, it becomes ineffective.

Bean Thrip

Adult-blackish with white wing bands. Nymphs (pupae) yellow to orange. Found on beans and occasionally other legumes. Causes brown, distorted leaf and seedling terminals

Greenhouse Thrip

Adult-black with pale wings. Nymphs (pupae) yellow. Found on many perennials, (usually with harder leaves). Causes leaves to be bleached and black excrement on underside, scabby fruit.

Onion Thrip

Adult-yellow to dark brown. Nymph (pupae) yellow to orange. Found on vegetables including garlic, onion pepper and many herbaceous ornamentals, but usually not damaging. Stippled and scarred petals, leaves, plant parts, distorted terminals.

Western Flower Thrip

Adult-yellow to dark brown. Nymph (pupae) yellow to orange. Many herbaceous ornamentals, vegetables, fruits and some shrubs and trees. Stippled and scarred petals, leaves, plant parts, distorted

terminals. Spreads tospoviruses that infect herbaceous plants.

Harvest Festival



Thank You

It was a warm breezy day for the Harvest Festival on October 28. The Master Gardeners Booth was under the big tree on the corner of Eighth and Main, the coolest spot at the Festival. Volunteers gave out over 200 pieces of literature! A great big Thank You to our exuberant volunteers—Norma Walker, Associate, Phil and Alice Prey, Associates, Chris Gisiner, Associate, Craig Wilcox, Associate and Lorraine McGhee, Master Gardener.

Master Gardener Meeting, December 6, 2006

Marilyn Weaver, President, introduced Karen Thomson, Extension Program Assistant Lead. Her major work is Master Gardener Activities and answering homeowner questions.

Karen is making cooling bandanas with water crystals which will be sold for fundraising.

The Home Garden Tour planned for May is canceled due to lack of homeowners willing to participate.

Activities will include the Third Annual Gila Valley Gardening and Landscaping Conference on February 24 and Edu-Venture Trail Workshops from January to

May. Karen Thomson and Marilyn Weaver will prepare advertising materials. Volunteers will assist with workshops. A separate listing of workshops is on page 2 of this newsletter.

Master Gardening Certification Records should be presented quarterly to Karen Thomson at the Extension Office. Criteria must be met each calendar year.

Plants may be donated for placement at the Edu-Venture Trail. Take them to Jonie Burge at the Ag Center.

Diane Drobka requested help in designing the landscape and drip systems at St. Rose of Lima church. All present provided information on how to proceed.

Karen Thomson proposed development of a Master Gardener Calendar to be sold as a fundraiser. Photos of Graham County plants and landscape can be submitted up to June, 2007.

Future activities include:

1. Booth at Arizona State Parks 50th Anniversary Celebration at Roper Lake on January 20.
2. Adopt-a-Road---14th Ave. Cleanup, Saturday, December 16 at 9:00 a.m.
3. Edu-Venture Trail Workshops from January to May.

A Master Gardener and/or an Associate will be present at each Gardening and Landscape Class at EAC in the Spring Semester to encourage interest in the Master Gardening Program and to assist Randy in any way.

Meetings will be held quarterly rather than monthly. March 6, 2007 will be the next meeting at 6 pm. Location will be announced.

Officers elected were:

President: Marilyn Weaver
 Vice-President: Diane Drobka
 Secretary: Karen Thomson
 Treasurer: Ginny Peck

In Your January Garden!

- Continue to add compost and manure to garden beds as they become vacant.
- Mulch to keep winter weeds down and to conserve moisture.
- Plant head lettuce through the 15th of the month.
- Plant asparagus, beets, cabbage (plants), carrots, chard, kale, leaf lettuce, green bunching onions, peas, and spinach all month.
- Tomato and pepper seeds may be started indoors after January 10th.
- Set out perennials and cool season annuals, such as alyssum, calendula, chrysanthemums, dianthus, daisies, larkspur, pansies, snapdragons, stocks, and violas.
- Start to plant bare rooted trees, roses, grapes and cane berries.
- Begin pruning deciduous trees and shrubs.
- Between rains, irrigate deep-rooted plants, such as trees, occasionally, but thoroughly. Once a month is usually sufficient for trees and many shrubs. Shallow-rooted plants require water more often (every 2 – 3 weeks).
- Don't forget that dormant Bermuda grass lawns still need to be watered once a month.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

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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



GARDENING & LANDSCAPING CLASS

**TUESDAY, 9:30 TO 12:30
JANUARY 16 – MAY 10**

**Arizona State Parks 50th Anniversary Celebration
Roper Lake—Master Gardener Booth**

Saturday, January 20

**Third Annual Gila Valley Gardening
& Landscaping Conference**

Saturday, February 24

BROCHURE WITH FULL DETAILS INSIDE NEWSLETTER

Home Garden Tour

**CANCELLED DUE TO LACK OF
HOMEOWNERS PARTICIPATION**

Edu-Venture Trail Workshops at Safford Agriculture Center:

Wildflower Gardening

Saturday, January 13—10 a.m.

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.

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