

Yavapai Gardens

June 2002

Master Gardener Newsletter

Events & Activities

LAST CHANCE—Come on the Master Gardener Field Trip to the Arboretum in Flagstaff on Saturday June 15. The van will be filled on a first-come basis. Call Pattie at (928)778-4810 to reserve your seat on the van. ... pg 3

Yavapai Rose Society - Will meet June 17, 2:00 PM at the First Christian Church, 1230 Willow Creek Road, Prescott. Guests are welcome and there is no charge. For more information call Bob or Nancy at 771-9300, or Dave at 778-5507.

The Cottonwood Organic Gardening Club meets at the Cottonwood-Verde Valley Fairgrounds on the second Wednesday of each month at 1:00 pm.

MG Association Picnic,
July 20, Camp Verde ... pg 7

Table of Contents

Those Messy Trees ... pg 1
The Unplanned Garden ... pg 3
Kniphofia pg 4
The Secret Garden pg 6
Plant Names ... pg 9

MG News and Announcements ... pg 5-8

What's Bugging You ... pg 5
Farmers Market ... pg 5
Volunteer Hours ... pg 5
Youth Gardening ... pg 7
Association News ... pg 8

Those Messy Trees

by Kim Stone

I answer many insightful questions from visitors everyday, like "What tree can I plant that I can completely ignore?" and the ever-popular "Do I have to remove the container before I plant it?" These visitors mean well but the sum total of their plant experience is probably limited to salad bars.



There are others, though, that will approach me with a suspicious look like I just tried to sell them a 7-legged octopus and demand to know, "Is this a messy tree?" This is my stock response—aside from flowers, fruits and shredding bark, a tree makes a mess in one of three ways: it either drops its leaves all-at-once, not-at-all, or all the-time.

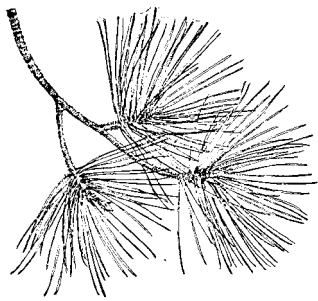


"All-at-once" is the classic case of a winter deciduous tree that deposits all of its leaves every fall beneath its drip line. Even fastidious, neatnik types like my wife don't seem to prickle too much at this scenario. fall colors and the cooler months ahead tend to pacify all those acrid memories of split-open Hefties.

"Not-at-all" is used to describe evergreens, typical of conifers, live oaks, bottle and carob trees.

They appear as if they never lose their leaves but, in fact, fool you by losing them in the spring. Like teenage acne, as the old ones dry up, new ones spring up to take their place.





The “all-the-time” version is ably represented by the Mexican Palo Verde, *Parkinsonia aculeata*. It has the distinction of dropping leaves like a legume and a pine, all irritatingly pre-packaged on one

plant and seemingly always falling--like rain in Forks, Washington, or a chunk-legged toddler.

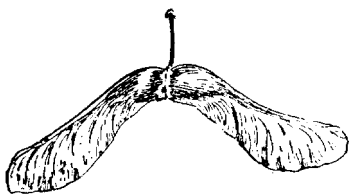
But I want to defend the messy tree. Messy is a human term. It is my wife’s term. To her, it smacks of disorder and chaos and the loss of control. To the soil and the organisms that grow in the soil, leaf fall means nutrient rich mulch and all the benefits that come with it. Disposing of the leaves from a tree is forcing the tree to bite the hand that feeds it— its own hand!



Like housecleaning, landscape maintenance consists of taking things that are nicely spread out, and then condensing them into neat, manageable piles that have to be picked up and disposed of. Or, in the case of leaf blowers, it is taking things that are nicely spread out and then spreading them out even further, preferably in the direction where someone else is making neat, manageable piles.

And where does it all go?

According to the Sept/Oct 2001 Issue of the Maricopa County, Arizona Horticultural Communicator, one quarter of a million pounds of green waste is land-filled per year in Phoenix alone. At an average of 10 pounds per 3 cubic feet bag full, that’s enough to fill the



entire sporting goods section of your local home town Walmart from floor to 14 foot ceiling, one and half times. If that doesn’t sound like all that much, picture the poor guy inside checking out the fly rods.

Whoever coined the term “leaf litter” has only added to the problem. He or she might as well have called it “tree excrement”--an innocent leaf, belittled to the point of sounding like a public health risk. It’s like saying that photosynthesis should be discouraged because it produces a flammable gas.

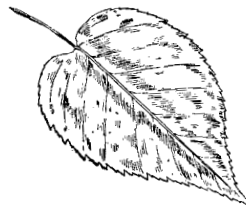
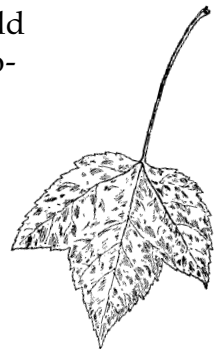
The ubiquitous use of colorful crushed rock as a landscape mulch has done much to focus a homeowner’s attention on the messiness of a tree. If they haven’t already, homeowners associations may begin to prohibit certain species of trees as being “excessively leaf-infested.”

For better or for worse, crushed landscape mulches have become the 21st century version of 1970’s shag carpeting, available in nearly as many trendy colors, but hell to keep clean. They are superb at absorbing water and other liquids but do nothing but trap and negatively display every other non-soluble material that is impudent enough to settle on it.

The most recent and hopeful trend seems to be moving towards more natural appearing rock mulch mixes. Some currently don’t look quite like a Sonoran desert-scape, but the collective eye is developing and it is certainly a positive trend.

I might go as far to say that the more natural-looking ground, plain, looks even more natural with detritus and tree excrement occupying all those nooks and crannies in the rock surface. But I’d better run it by my wife first.

Kim Stone is a writer and a horticulturist at Boyce Thompson Arboretum, a 323 acre botanical and ecological park displaying plants from the world’s deserts, located near Superior, Arizona. Copyright © 2002 by Kim Stone. All Rights Reserved.



The Unplanned Garden

Dorian McLean

I am going to write this on the promise that none of you laugh at me...being new to gardening and somehow miraculously passing this years Master Gardening Class, which I enjoyed immensely.

Last year a friend of mine gave me some *Kniphofia uvaria*, you know.... Red Hot Poker. I am so totally new to the garden that I really didn't know what it was going to look like. A while later this one particular Red Hot Poker is growing like crazy...shoots coming up everywhere with these amazing leaves on them. A month or so went by and my friend came over, the one that gave me the Red Hot Poker.... and I very excitedly showed her how nicely the one *Kniphofia* was growing and wondered what I was doing wrong with the other ones she had given me.

She giggled and said "Oh, he he...you got some *Helianthus* seeds with this one..." *Helianthus* being the New Mexico Sun Flower, which grows to about 8 feet tall and grows in just about any soil, including heavy clay.

Well, my *Helianthus* grew to about the basic 8 feet. In fact, in my new yard it became the only plant I had to push out of the way when I walked by...I loved it. It made me feel so good, so confident, to walk by and give it a strong arm so I could pass. It provided some shade in the afternoon for my herb bed which is just to the east of it.

The flowers come in the fall and there were hundreds of them. Late one fall morning I was standing outside near the *Helianthus*, sipping hot coffee and a cloud of finches came straight at me from the wash down the hill. They landed on the seed heads of the *Helianthus*, not even noticing me half a foot from them. I personally don't care

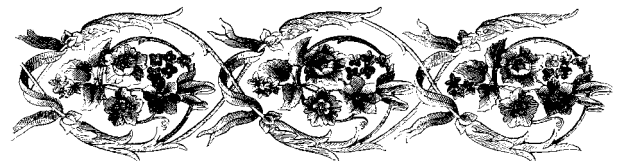
to put feeders out for wildlife but leaving the seeds on this plant well into fall gave me the satisfaction of knowing that I accidentally produced something that provided food for the clouds of finches that live in the valley with me.

I like this plant so much that I looked up *Helianthus* on line and found a *Helianthus* Insect Site which lists of all the insects that could potentially bug it, including various coleoptera (beetles and weevils) lepidoptera (moths and butterflies) and orthoptera...you know grasshoppers etc. But I am not going to let any of this stop me. My accidental *Helianthus* is a thrilling plant that I am going to have fun with. I will have an abundance of seeds this fall if anyone would like some. My friend just called and I told her I am writing this

story...she giggled.



Are you a Sponge? Do you want to learn new things, see new sights? Soak up new experiences? Come on the Master Gardener Field Trip to the Arboretum in Flagstaff on Saturday June 15, 2002. It's their annual Horticultural Fair with educational exhibits and talks, and a plant sale which includes hard-to-find plants, such as certain species of penstemons. The van will be filled on a first-come basis. Call Pattie at (928) 778-4810 to reserve your seat on the van. If you want to follow in your own car, that's ok too. Please call and let Pattie know you are coming so she can give you the information you need.



Kniphofia sp. or Red Hot Poker

By Nora Graf



Dorrian Mclean's article tied in nicely with my plans for this month's issue. I was already researching Kniphofia, or Red Hot Poker. My first plant is beginning to bloom. By the time this comes out, it should be in its full glory. This plant was a bit of serendipity. It came as a "free gift" from one of the companies I mail-ordered some plants from. Not one to

look a gift horse in the mouth, I popped it into the ground figuring that if it didn't survive no big deal.

Well, just when you expect something to disappear, it began to expand exponentially after a slow start. In fact, it crowded out the achillea I had growing, displaced a basil plant and threatened others before cold weather forced it into submission. This year I pruned off the ratty looking growth from last year and I left it more room to grow. It's rewarded me with at least five blooming stalks that I can see. It's delightful to see something growing well in my yard, so I'm passing on the good word. Give this plant a try but give it plenty of room.

Kniphofia is noted for its spikes of brilliant red and yellow flowers that rise above strap-like foliage. While Red Hot Poker describes it well, it is also known as torch Lily. It is a native of South Africa and a member of the lily family.

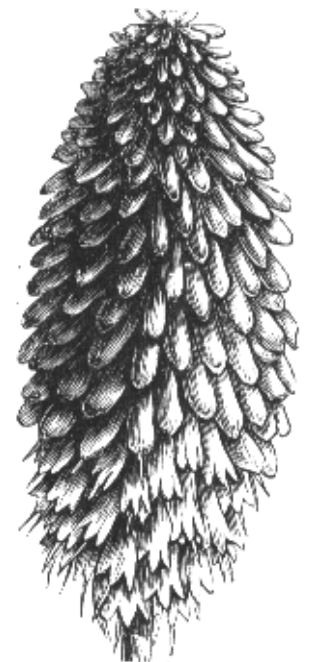
The plant is named after Johannes Hieronymus Kniphof who was a professor of medicine in Germany (1704-1763). He wrote the well known book "Botanica in Originali" or "Herbarium Vivum." The book was put together in a rather unique manner in that dried plant speci-

mens were coated with printers ink and then pressed onto the paper creating a silhouette. One of the plants, then called *Aloe uvaria* L., came to be called *Knifopha uvaria*.

In South Africa a number of wild species can be found that range in height from two to five feet. The color of the leaves may vary from blue-green to medium green. Flowers may vary in size but are either yellow or creamy white when open. The surprise comes because the unopened flowers are usually bright red/orange, hence the common name. New cultivated varieties have toned the flowers down and there are varieties available in a softer palette-along with even brighter ones. There are also varieties that are smaller than the native species.

Grow the plants in well drained soil in full sun; they do not tolerate shade. Plant the roots no more than two to three inches deep. They do like extra water but do well in dry conditions if you give them extra water during the blooming cycle. Lack of water will lead to sparse blooms. If you live in one of the colder areas, mulch in the winter to protect the crown. Mine never really died back and I did see some information that the plant is actually evergreen but sensitive to freezing weather.

Remove the dead foliage in the spring. Divide in the spring to increase your plants, or they can be started from seeds. The seedlings are slow growing, so have patience. Removing the flower stalks will encourage more blooming. They can be used as a cut flower and would certainly make a striking addition to any vase of flowers.



MG Association Announcements

Prescott Farmers Market

The Master Gardener Association will be manning a booth at the Prescott Farmers Market on six (6) Saturday mornings this summer: June 22, July 13 & 27, August 10 & 24, and Sept. 14. Our mission will be to let the community know what we are all about and answer questions they may have on garden pests, plants, trees, Xeriscape, best flora for the area, native plants, tree trimming, etc. You don't have to be an expert...this is a fun experience that lets you communicate with others who also enjoy gardening. We are hoping to have four (4) persons volunteer each Saturday so that everyone will get a break to visit booths at the market. The Farmers Market hours are from 7:30 a.m. until noon, and with additional time to pick up the equipment from the Extension Office, set up the booth, and return everything, we are looking at six (6) hours total. If you are interested in helping with this project (for one Saturday or more than one,) please contact Eunice Ricklefs at 771 9559 or Jonella Blake at 771-9471. Last year, we also handed out give-away packets of seeds, cuttings and plants, so if you can help in that area we would appreciate a call!"



ARE YOU LOOKING FOR A FUN WAY TO GET SOME VOLUNTEER HOURS?

School gardening is the answer! Kam Barrow has been working on a garden at Daniel Bright School in Cottonwood for about 2 years and is looking for some help. She has a variety of tasks, from working with the children in small groups to pruning roses to helping with the pond. There is also an aviary and a rabbit hutch. Do your talents lie in any of these areas? Please call Kam at 282-7358.

If you are planting a hummingbird garden this plant would make a nice addition. When looking for plants, try most mail order companies. There is a common variety found in catalogs but try some of the other varieties for even more spectacular displays.

I searched the internet for sources of Knifophia, didn't find a huge number but you can find information at these sources:

Thompson & Morgan—they have minature varieties, but sell only seeds.

www.thompson-morgan.com

Plant Delights Nursery—they spealize in unusual perennials. Have several varieties of Knifophia.

9241 Sauls Rd.

Raleigh NC 27603

(919)772-4794

www.plantdelights.com

Joy Creek Nursery

20300 NW Watson Rd.

Scappoose, OR 97056

(503)543-7474

www.joycreek.com



WHAT'S BUGGING YOU?

Your help is needed!! Elinor Benes is putting together a specimen insect collection to identify the insects in Yavapai County. Please collect your insect in a canister or other suitable container. Include information as to where, time, plant taken from and any other pertinent info. Please include your name and phone number so that Elinor can contact you if she has any questions. Drop off samples at either Extension office. You can contact Elinor at 649-5814.

The Secret Garden

by Cindi Schaefer

Since the last MG meeting, five classes have planted flowers in the Secret Garden (Abia Judd Elementary School) and four classes have made

grow cards for Mother's Day. Everyone at the school is really jazzed about the program and how the garden looks. I am intent on starting a Junior MG chapter there as an after-school club in the fall and will be working diligently

on getting the needed paperwork, funding, etc., finished on that. The principal is really supportive and promises funds for next year!!

(This came in too late for the May issue, but I thought you might like to hear what other Master Gardeners are doing. Also if you are interested in helping Cindi, give her a call, she might appreciate more help or an on-call list that she could use in similar circumstances—ed.) I will be on vacation from May 12th to the 23rd and from May 28th to June 4th. The classes that planted in the garden have agreed to help water. The watering system, however, is still incomplete and a little involved to use.

Is there one (or more) master gardener(s) who would be willing to just check on the garden regularly during this time to make sure no plants are being left out? It's about three weeks. Unfortunately the other MG's signed up for youth gardening are in Chino, PV and Sedona so regularly checking on water in the Secret Garden in Prescott doesn't make sense for the volunteers that I am aware of.

The MG wouldn't have to work with the classes or children at all. (In fact, they should not interact with the children without going through the school district's screening procedure.) I would show them where the watering system is and they would just walk in (wearing their MG badge) and check the plants and water if necessary. I know

it's short notice, but the best way to get started is to just dive in -- or should that be "dig in"!

If we can't find an MG volunteer, it will still be all right because the classes have agreed to help and I will have the teachers request parent participation within the classes who have planted.

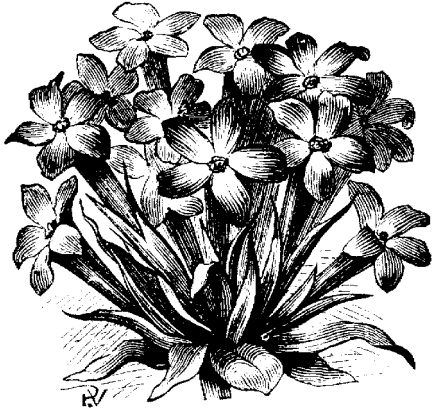
Secret Garden Update

Let's all remember to take the opportunity to thank Bob Rogalcheck for the tremendous amount of work he has done to upgrade the landscape of the Secret Garden. Because of all of his work, the potential for growth of the garden as a special place for Abia Judd students is practically unlimited.

The Secret Garden has increased in use by the students of Abia Judd during the 2001 2002 school year. Several classes have planted flowers in the garden and really enjoyed doing so. A "Grow Card" project was completed by several classes as a Mother's Day card which taught how to make paper and focused on recycling paper products.

Bob Rogalcheck's hard work has provided the Abia Judd Secret Garden with a basic infrastructure, including a watering system and multiple youth-sized bedding areas to grow a variety of flowers, vegetables and herb theme gardens. Future plans are to offer an after school gardening club, as well as garden activity opportunities for all grades during the 2002-2003 school year.

Many fun and educational projects will be available in the garden, including theme gardens such as a butterfly garden, students edging the



beds themselves with student painted bricks, creating new paths, adding benches in the garden and learning about the natural world around them. One young man asked me, "If we grow vegetables, can we eat them in the cafeteria?" Wouldn't it be great if the children at Abia Judd all decided they wanted to eat their vegetables?

Abia Judd has become my volunteer project, as a Master Gardener with the University of Arizona Yavapai County Agricultural extension. The Master Gardener program in Yavapai County graduates up to 40 new Master Gardeners each year, each of whom must then complete 50 volunteer hours to obtain the title Master Gardener and 20 volunteer hours each year thereafter to maintain their certification.

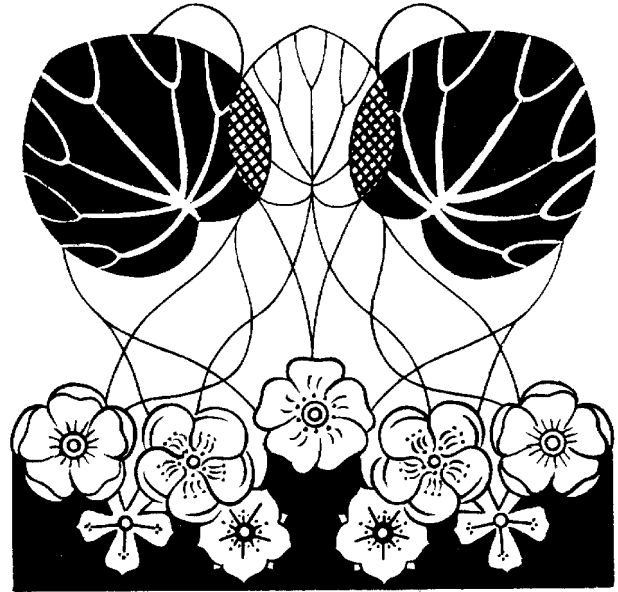
It is my quest to make Abia Judd an official Junior Master Gardener site, a volunteer opportunity for Yavapai County Master Gardeners and, most importantly, an educational tool for Abia Judd students. The students, parents and teachers, in conjunction with the help and encouragement from Master Gardener volunteers, will have the opportunity to give the students of Abia Judd very special memories and lessons about the food we eat and the land that we all live in that will become a "growing" gift both during the students' years at Abia Judd and continuing for many years thereafter.

During the 2002-2003 school year there will be volunteer options in the garden for parents wishing to participate. The Secret Garden would also like to be included on the PTA's fund-raising agenda for worthy projects at Abia Judd.



Youth Gardening

Master Gardeners interested in youth gardening in the Yavapai County area, please call or e-mail Cindi Shaffer at 928.717.0828 or cindi@shafcomm.com. **Specifically there are volunteer opportunities available this summer in the Abia Judd Elementary School Secret Garden in Prescott at the corner of Iron Springs Road and Williamson Valley. **



Be Prepared to Party , It's the MG Picnic

July 20, 11am -3pm, Camp Verde. It's a potluck. The original intent was to have the picnic up on Mingus Mtn so no one would have to drive far, but because of forest closures and a late start were not able to secure a site. Fortunately Cecy Gilbert has offered her home on the Verde River for the picnic. Please get in touch with Laura James to RSVP and sign up to bring a dish. Call (928)778-3206. There will be a map in next months newsletter so you can find the place.

Don't forget to RSVP!!!!!!

MG Association News

The May meeting of the Master Gardeners Association coincided with the big fire in Prescott. As I drove over from Camp Verde once I reached the Cherry Road exit and headed west, it was like driving into a sunset even though it was only about



5:30pm. There was a certain point when the sun appeared blood red in the sky.

The turnout for the meeting was light, but we enjoyed a nice program by Jeff Schalau on internet resources. Officers were elected by acclamation. Anna Wilson, President, Lucian Murphy, vice-president and Eunice Ricklefs, secretary.

There were also reports by the various committee chairs who were in attendance. The bulk of the reports concerned the various Master Gardener projects. A list follows which may not be entirely complete or accurate. If you have any additions or corrections please call Ralph Young, Project Committee Chair, (928)204-9764.

Plans for the next meeting, the picnic were discussed and please see the note on page 7 about the picnic. Hope to see you there and take the time to volunteer for a project!

Current MG Projects

1. Margaret T. Morris Center, Prescott, Contact Charlotte Ewalt (928)443-0312
2. Prescott Farmers Market—see page 5
3. Sedona Heritage Park, Contact Ralph Young (928)204-9764 or Linda Scherer (928-282-4706
4. School Gardening Projects-Prescott Valley School, Call John Hassell (928) 777-0938, Prescott—

Cindi Schaffer (928)717-0828, Daniel Bright School, Cottonwood contact Karen Barrow (contact Ralph Young for phone)

5. Extension Office needs people to answer questions from callers, contact Bev Emerson in Cottonwood (928)646-9113 or the Prescott office (928)646-9113

6. Camp Verde Pecan and Wine Festival—looking for an event coordinator, call Ralph Young

7. MGA Public Relations—contact Anna Wilson (928) 632-8158

8. Insect Project—see page 5

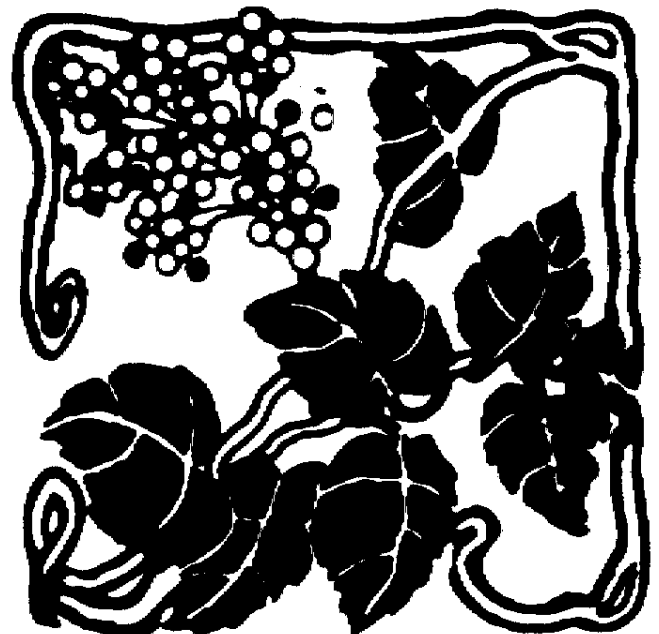
9. Veterans Hospital Greenhouse Project—contact Betty Stevens 717-7505

10. Sharlot Hall Project—contact Steve Whitley (call Ralph Young for number)

11. Gardens for Humanity—contact Adel Seronde (928) 284-9052

12. Password protect web site for Master Gardeners—contact Jeff Schalau, Prescott office

13. Articles for MG newsletter-mail articles to Nora Graf, P.O. Box 3652, Camp Verde, AZ 86322 or preferably email (in the body of the message, no attachments) to: mesquite2@hotmail.com



Plant Names

If you were at the MG Association Meeting a few months, you heard Terri Mikels talk about plant names. Here are a few more that might interest you.

Achillea—after Achilles, who supposedly used the plant for medicinal purposes.

Agave—from Greek, meaning noble referring to the tall flower stalk.

Ageratum—from Greek, a- (without,) geras- (age,) referring to the long lived flowers

Alyssum—from Greek, A- (not,) lyssa- (madness,) it was said to cure rabies.

Aquilegia (columbine)—from Latin, aquila- (an eagle,) referring to the shape of the petals. The common yellow species chrysantha- (with golden.)

Convolvulus (morning glories are a member of the group— from Latin, convolve- (to twine around.)

Careopsis—from Greek, koris- (a bug,) opsis- (indicates resemblance.) The seeds of careopsis resemble ticks.

Delphinium—from Greek, delphis- (a dolphin,) referring to the shape of the flowers.

Digitalis (foxglove)—from Latin, digitus- (a finger,) referring to fingerlike blossoms.

Ferocactus—from Latin, ferox- (savage,) referring to the spines.

Gladiolus—from Latin, a name for a small sword, referring to the leaves.

Hydrangea—from Greek, hydr- (water,) agos- (a jar) referring to the cup-shaped fruits.

Iris—After the Greek goddess of the rainbow.

Nasturtium (water cress)—From Latin, nasus tortus, a twisted nose referring to the smell of the leaves

Tropeolum (Nasturtium, the flower) From Greek, tropaion- (a trophy,) originally used for the trunk of a tree in which were fixed the shields and helmets of a defeated enemy. The leaves representing the shields and the flowers the helmets.



Master Gardener Website

You can find this newsletter along with the Master Gardener Manual, the Farm Fresh brochure plus other information at the Yavapai County Cooperative Extension Website. Go to:

<http://ag.arizona.edu/yavapai>><http://ag.arizona.edu/yavapai/>

The "Arizona Master Gardener Manual" is now on-line. Check out <http://ag.arizona.edu/pubs/garden/mg/>

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

Let me know about your garden, the types of seeds you planted, interesting articles you found—anything of gardening interest. Send to:

Nora Graf

P.O. Box 3652

Camp Verde, AZ 86322

Jeff Schalauska

County Director,

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