

Yavapai Gardens

Master Gardener Newsletter

September 2007



Events & Activities

MG Association Meeting, Recognition picnic, see pg 2.

Yavapai Rose Society - Sept. 17, 2:00 PM , 1230 Willow Creek Rd. For more information call Bob or Nancy at 771-9300,

Alta Vista Gardening Club, Prescott, fourth Tuesday of the month, 12:30pm. Call 928-443-0464 for location and information.

Prescott Area Gourd Society, third Tuesday of the month, 6:30 pm, at the Smoki Museum.

Pond Club - Email aquaticgardens@esedona.net for more information.

Prescott Orchid Society, meets 3rd Sunday of the month, 2pm at the Prescott Library, call Cynthia for information. (928) 717-0623

Prescott Area Iris Society call 928-445-8132 for date and place information.

Verde Valley Iris Society, Sept 19, 5:30pm, Cottonwood Library, This is there first meeting.

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Can you believe???

by **Nora Graf**



Egads, summer is almost over—hard to believe we are approaching the end of another year. Soon (well maybe not real soon) we will have the first hard frost and the tomatoes will be over, the basil will be black, and any hope of extending a few extra days of the summer season will be over. In their stead, you should be planting garlic, starting this month. You can also

be planting cool season crops like lettuce. Then there are flowers; cool season flowers will flourish this time of year and, of course, it's time to think of spring bulbs and next year's garden. To plan next years garden it's always a good thing to look back on past gardens. What did well, what didn't.

I planted all sorts of new tomatoes. Unfortunately, some were purchased from Walmart and they certainly weren't what I expected. Someone apparently got clever with the labels. The red slicing tomato turned out to be yellow. The red cherry turned out to be grape tomatoes and I'm not even sure what those small Roma type are. They are prolific, though, so I guess I don't care much what they are.

As to the ones I started from seed, not much is going on. My guess is that Arkansas Traveler doesn't particularly like our hot weather. Grows well—but not much fruit up to this point. (Since writting this earlier in the month, hornworms ate most of the Arkansas Travelers, no doubt spurning the other tomatoes simply because I was eager to taste them!)

Zapotec Pleated tomato also grew well and I have a few tomatoes. These have a wonderful shape and are mild flavored. They can be hollowed out easily to make stuffed tomatoes. Next year I'm going to try two new ones. I'm still looking for a great heirloom tomato that does really well in our summer weather.

My carrots went to seed before they got very big—my fault I really got them in too late and then my irrigation system had prob-

lems. The seed just sat there for a couple of weeks before I got water to them.

I would say this year's garden wasn't one of my finer efforts, but I have enough tomatoes to keep me happy and a couple of good bushes of basil. The blackberries were plentiful and tasty this year, also. I'm about to give up on my asparagus, though. The variety Martha Washington that I started from seed either sends up toothpick size stems or so few fat ones that I never seem to have enough to make it worth cooking. I eat them raw right out of the garden. I added a different variety to the bed a couple of years ago and I'm hoping for better next year.

Not much changed in my flower garden. I'm looking to make some additions there this fall and come spring. I have all sorts of plans but know I'll have to scale it back when the time comes to actually purchase the plants.

Two real joys in the flower department were the amaryllis and the Zephyranthus (rain lily). True to its name, the monsoons brought out a flush of delicate pink blooms with each major rainfall. They are really beautiful and add a soft touch to the summer garden. I'd like to add some more to my garden next year.

At the other end of the scale, my sister-in-law gave me some amaryllis that were out-growing an area in her yard in Phoenix. I was worried they wouldn't survive the winter but I planted them along with some Christmas amaryllis in a protected area next to the house. Well, this year I had a tropical jungle. The Phoenix amaryllis nearly overwhelmed everything else. Huge strapping leaves with flower stalks two to three feet tall that held clusters of white blooms. (My red ones survived but are not tough enough to beat the white ones back; I'll have to move them.) It was a nice surprise in that they sent out stalk after stalk of flowers for several months.

At the moment I'm digging another flower bed. I want to move a rose and I have a few iris coming soon. I also need to rearrange some things—move some iris out of the shade and move something else in its place. The garlic needs to go in soon and it never ends.

In September I will be on vacation and need any articles as soon as possible, no later than the 5th. Anything that comes in later will be in the October newsletter. Short announcements will still be welcome until the 29th.

Recognition Picnic

Saturday, September 15, 11:00am - 3:00 pm. It will be held at the Highland Center for Natural History, 1375 Walker Road, Prescott All MGs, certified and associate, and their families are welcome to attend. The Extension Office will provide chicken, drinks and utensils. We ask that you bring a side dish or dessert to share. After lunch, Master Gardeners achieving special status with their volunteer hours, will be recognized. Jeff will also conduct an educational walk around the facilities.

If you haven't signed up please contact Herdis MacLellan, bessemor@peoplepc.com, 928-443-8906 and give her your attendance count and what dish you will be bringing. Deadline is September 10. We look forward to seeing you all! Map is on last page.



Membership Book Cover

Artists needed - if you plan to submit a cover for the competition for the 2008 MGA Membership Book cover, please let Eunice know Eunice@commspeed.net, 771-9559. The criteria was sent in a previous message; if you need it let me know. Voting on the new cover will take place at the Sept 15th Recognition Picnic. ²

Passion flower

by Nora Graf

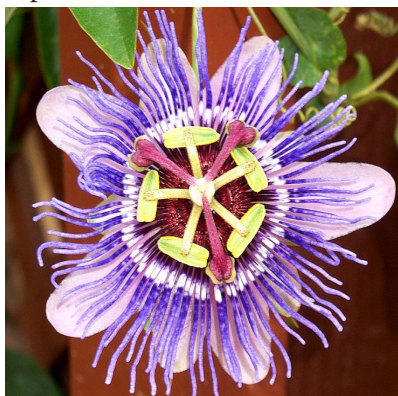


With its remarkable flowers the Passion flower can illuminate a garden. But before you get too excited, I don't actually know of anyone that has had any real successes with this plant in Yavapai County. (Since writing this I found out my editor, Marilyn Perkins has had success growing them in Prescott. This year the cold did freeze her plant but she plans to replant a new vine this spring.) For the most part, they are tropical plants—but you never know.

But first, the name—passion flower does not refer to passion or love but to the Passion of Christ on the cross. Spanish missionaries in the 15th and 16th century discovered the plant and adopted its physical structure as symbols of the crucifixion. The corona represents the Crown of Thorns. Its ten petals and sepals represent 10 apostles. Its top three stigmata represent the three nails and the lower 5 anthers represent the five wounds. In Japan they are known as the clock-faced flower and in North America the native species is called the Maypop, water lemon or wild apricot.

Most of the 500 species are vines, a few being shrubs, and a few herbaceous. The vines can be attractive, but it is the unique flowers that draw the eye. The flowers are pollinated by large bees, including carpenter and bumble bees, and hummingbirds, depending on the species. It is a food plant for the larva of a moth and many of the Heliconiinae butterflies. Interestingly, the flower bracts are covered with hairs that exude a sticky fluid which some insects get stuck to. Some scientists think this may be an adaptation similar to carnivorous plants.

The only places where species are not found are Europe and Antarctica. There are nine species in the United States which can be found from Ohio to California to the Florida Keys. Worldwide they can be found



in South America, China, southern Asia, Africa, New Guinea, Australia and New Zealand. It wasn't until the 19th century that the plants were cultivated for commercial use. Because they are popular garden plants, hundreds of hybrids have been created. In Arizona there are three native passion flowers,

Passiflora mexicana, Mexican passion-flower. (The pictures are from a plant in Tucson.)



Passiflora foetida var. *arizonica* is suspected to be a separate species, as it has some characteristics different than *P. foetida*. It is known for its unpleasant odor.

Passiflora bryonioides, Cupped Passion Flower. (I could find no pictures of this plant and very little information.)



All three of these plants are found in the southeastern part of Arizona. They are available through www.desertsurvivors.org

Passiflora edulis and *P. edulis* var. *flavicarpa* are grown for their edible fruit. *P. edulis* has purple fruit while *P. edulis* var. *flavicarpa* is yellow-flowered. While both have the same genus and species, it appears that they may be two different species.

The Maypop (*Passiflora incarnata*) is common in the southern United States, although it is known to thrive in New York. It has an edible fruit but is quite seedy and is probably best left to the wildlife which enjoys it. Carpenter ants are important pollinators of Maypops and is the larval food of several butterflies. It comes by its unusual nickname because it seems to just pop out of **3**

the ground in May.

Native Americans used *P. incarnata* medicinally. A tea was brewed to treat insomnia, hysteria and epilepsy and as a painkiller. Modern research has shown that some chemicals in the plant have antidepressant properties, especially in the leaves and roots.

Insects can be a problem, it is quite popular with butterflies. They lay their eggs on the leaves, which in turn hatch into caterpillars which then proceed to eat all the leaves off. It can also be afflicted with spider mites, some flies, scale, leaf rollers, slugs, snails and scale. In Arizona the Gulf Fritillary butterfly uses passion vines as a host plant for its larva. Too many caterpillars can decimate a small plant, but if the plant is large enough, leave it alone and down the road enjoy the butterflies. It might not be problem free, but it might be worth the trouble for the flowers.

According to Phoenix Tropicals (www.phoenixtropicals.com) some varieties of passion flower grow well in the lower desert. You can use this information to help select varieties and a site to give this beautiful plant a try. All the cultivar and growing information is from their website.

Give them afternoon shade in the summer and a protective microclimate in the winter. (The winter microclimate will be especially important for our area.)

The best fruiting varieties for Phoenix are "Frederick" (purple fruit) which has the best flavor, "Blue Crown" and "Incense." Incense needs hand pollination. Blue Crown has the best cold resistance but is the least flavorful.

Yellow Passion fruit (*Passiflora edulis flavicarpa*) is cold hardy as long as it has good protection from the worst weather. Officially, it is hardy to 30°F (I know we get a lot colder than that); the roots have been known to take cold weather down to 26°F. The plant doesn't seem to flower in Phoenix, though.

Purple Passion fruit (*Passiflora edulis*) is even hardier in



the cold. It can tolerate temperatures into the mid 20°s.

Blue Crown (*Passiflora caerulea*) tolerates summer heat if given shade and is hardy to 15°F. The flowers smell minty and are self-fertile. The fruit is orange but not very tasty fresh. It can be combined with other foods to add an interesting flavor. The flavor is berry-like.

If you are willing to give this plant a try, you will need to dig a hole at least 2 feet wide by 2 feet

deep. Mix compost 50/50 with the soil. Mix it thoroughly. Water as often as you water your lawn. It is best to use a basin or flood irrigation for the plant. This will help keep the salts in our soils from accumulating around the roots and encourage deeper roots which will protect the plant from both the heat and cold. Fertilize heavily. During the summers they will need a steady supply of nitrogen. It is best to use a slow-release fertilizer. Use a fertilizer with a soil acidifier and a layer of compost on top the soil helps conserve moisture and amend the soil. If the conditions are right, the plant will grow rapidly, even invasively. Pruning may be necessary to keep it from overwhelming other plants.

It is easy to propagate the plants from seeds, cuttings and grafting. The vines do need to be trellised; they produce tendrils so they need something to hang onto. In Arizona blooms can appear by April to August. The fruit can be eaten raw or used for jellies and jams. Young leaves can be used as a cooked vegetable or fresh in salads.

Sources

Phoenix Tropicals

www.phoenixtropicals.com

The owner grows out of his home and does not have a nursery, contact him via email phoenixtropicals@cox.net

For native varieties

Desert Survivors

www.desertsurvivors.org

1020 W. Star Pass

Tucson, AZ 85713

520-884-8806



Meet a Master Gardener

by Pam Bowman

With her husband's retirement from the Flagstaff Fire Department and a mutual desire to move from a "high-way town," Pattie and John Conrad moved to Prescott in 1992. She says that a town center, museums, history, cultural events and no deep snow prompted their decision. A graduate of the 1997 Master Gardener class, Pattie volunteers for numerous activities, including: judging Floriculture and staffing the U of A Extension Office booth at the Yavapai County Fair, writing newsletter articles, performing field visits for those who have questions about plants, diseases and landscaping, and leading the trek to the Flagstaff Arboretum for the annual plant sale. Of all these activities, she admits that field visits are her favorite because she can usually resolve an immediate problem and the gardener can relax and enjoy gardening in Prescott.

Born in Pasadena, California, Pattie was raised in West Covina until the 2nd grade when the family moved South to Leucadia. Her respect for all plants and inability to throw any away was probably instilled by her father who "dumpster dived" for discarded plants at a local nursery. Her father, a natural-born gardener, brought discarded staghorn ferns, orchids and roses back to life. Leucadia, the poinsettia capital of the world, also provided Pattie with an environment filled with vivid colors in the poinsettia fields visible from the family home. Because Pattie frequently visited the local Stubbs Fuchsia Nursery, "a fairyland in a giant greenhouse," with fuchsias hanging in pots and growing from the floor, she says the fuchsia is her "all-time beloved and favorite plant." But her "green moment" came when painters trampled the happy-faced pansies she had planted in the first home she shared with her husband in Flagstaff.

Pattie attended Northern Arizona University for 2 years, planning to become a teacher. However, marriage in 1972 necessitated working for the telephone company as a service representative for 11 years. Admitting to being very shy prior to this job, a more outgoing Pattie was able to start her own housekeeping business that

flourished until she moved to Prescott. She also became involved in a variety of crafts, including making stained glass and dough ornaments, wheat weaving, quilting, doll making and crafting dried-flower and herb wreaths and



bouquets. Finding she enjoyed dried-flower and herb arranging above all others, Pattie removed all the sod and trees in her front yard and planted flowers to dry and use in this endeavor. When she and John moved to Prescott, Pattie continued to craft for a couple of years and then started working at Watters Garden Center in 1994, where she is a full-time seasonal. She has also been working at the local JoAnn's Store for about 2 years, where she now

teaches a hat-making class.

When asked about her garden, Pattie describes it as "a cross between a passionate person's collection garden and an abandoned homestead, i.e. a mixture of planted and native plants." Those plants she introduces to her garden must provide any two of the following attributes: Spring bloom, interesting leaf color, Fall color, Summer flowers, and food for birds. Despite her love of gardening, Pattie says her greatest passion is the history of gardening and her most prized possession is an 1860's edition of "The Language of Flowers."

All her other interests and activities involve history and how it relates to people. Pattie volunteers in the living history program at Sharlot Hall Museum and in staging the Cowboy Poets Presentations where she dresses in period attire. She also enjoys making reproduction hats and began collecting hats when she purchased her first hat at the age of 12. In addition, Pattie collects antiques, including teapots and garden implements.

Although work often prevents her from attending MG Association meetings, you will recognize her at Arizona Highlands Garden Conferences because she will be wearing one of her trademark hats. Pattie's continuing interest in gardening and her obvious enjoyment in helping and teaching people about one of her passions—gardening—make her an indispensable member of the MG Association who will receive Emeritus honors this year.

MG Association News

Highlands Gardens Conference

October 11th and 12th, Apache Gold Casino in San Carlos (east of Globe). This is an annual conference for Northern AZ Master Gardeners and the public. Yavapai County MG's are assisting the Gila County MG's. Two to four volunteers are still needed to staff the MG table. Sometimes it may be necessary to miss part of a presentation when you help, but they try to keep that to a minimum. Contact Beverly Emerson, bjemerson11@juno.com, 646-0379

Please register soon!

Space is limited this year, so register and make your room reservation as soon as possible! Don't be left out!

Speakers include Judith Phillips. She is a well known landscaper and garden writer. You might already have "Plants for Natural Gardens" on your bookshelf.

Other sessions include: Plants of the Sonoran Desert, Apache Gardening/farming and useful plants of the Apaches, BEE in the Garden, Industrial-scale Gardening-Reclamation project at Phelps Dodge, Success with fruit trees, Edible Herb Varieties and Growing Tips, Sawflies, caterpillars & beetles, Oh My! The good, bad & ugly of tree insects, Landscape Basics—First things first, Gardening in Southwestern Highlands, Backyard Composting, Plant viruses of vegetable, vegetable seedlings and ornamentals, Success with Butterfly Gardens, Shade Tolerant, low water use plants for the high desert, Tomato, Chili and herb varieties for the Arizona Highlands, Tree Pruning-Deciduous and conifer techniques, Grow! Dirt-eating worms get no respect

Workshops include—Fun Indoor Fountains, Indoor Cacti/Succulents-the best in low care houseplants, Decorative Gourds, Landscape II—Landscape planning, Painting with watercolors, autumn leaves and colors

For registration information and forms go to:

<http://cals.arizona.edu/gila/horticulture/azhighlands2007.html>

Boyce Thompson Arboretum is having their plant sale at the same time as the conference. It's a great place to pick up a few plants and is just a few miles from the conference site. Check their website. Will have more information next month.

Yavapai County Fair

We need lots of volunteers for the county fair. All volunteers will receive free entry passes. Here's what we need: Produce Area - 1 volunteer needed for each shift to watch the produce area. Saturday is the most critical day for coverage. Contact Sherry Howard, howardpena@cableone.net, 445-5647

Friday, Sep 21st: 10am–2pm shift; 2pm–6pm shift

Saturday, Sep 22nd: 10am–2pm shift; 2pm–6pm shift; 6pm–10pm shift

Sunday, Sep 23rd: 12pm–4pm shift

Coop Ext Table – Need several volunteers for shifts on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. You will provide general information. Also need MGs to give short demos. Contact Bob Burke, bburke@commspeed.net, 567-5543



Gene Twaronite, Defensible Space Educator at the U of A Cooperative Extension for Yavapai County, will be teaching a fire-resistive landscaping course, geared especially for homeowners. It will be offered through the Community Education program at Yavapai College in cooperation with the U of A Cooperative Extension.

Wildfire Defensible Landscaping for Homeowners is an 8-hour course offered in two 2-hour evening sessions (Monday/Wednesday, September 24 and 26, 6:30–8:30 PM) and a 4-hour morning field session on Friday, September 28, 8:30AM–12:30 (locations to be announced). Considerable time will be devoted to field exercises and interactive learning activities. Students will learn to: identify our local ecosystems and the historical role of fire; visualize wildfire behavior; recognize basic elements of wildfire hazard and how they are assessed; apply defensible space zoning criteria; prune trees properly; use hardscape elements to break up fuel continuity; identify fire-resistive plants; control weeds and woody sprouts; and recognize practices that promote forest health.

The cost is \$45 and is payable at time of registration by calling Yavapai College at (928) 717-7755. Each student will receive a comprehensive student manual.

2007 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 15, (Prescott) Recognition Awards & Picnic

September 20-23, Yavapai County Fair

October 11/12, Highland Garden Conference, Apache Gold Casino, San Carlos

October 17, 6:30 (Prescott) MGA meeting, Insect Identification--William Currie, Entomologist from Ash Fork

November 14, 6:30 (Cottonwood) MGA meeting, Elections, Flora and Fauna in the Verde Valley--Janie Agyagos, District Wildlife Biologist, Red Rock Ranger District, Sedona and Master Gardener

Highlands Center Plant Sale – Need to sign-up again

We have enough volunteers for the plant sale, but Lynn Hazlewood's computer crashed, and she lost the list of volunteers. So, if you volunteered to help at that event, please e-mail Lynn again and she will put the schedule together klwoodz@cableone.net. Sorry for the inconvenience. These are the dates/times she will be scheduling:

Sept 20th, 10am – 12pm – unload plants

Sept 21st, 9am – 12pm – arrange and set up the space, price

Sept 22nd, 7am-1pm – provide plant info, carry plants, load plants, cashier, clean-up

Work Day at Yavapai Guidance Clinic in Prescott Saturday, Oct 13th, 505 S. Cortez, Prescott, Start 9:00am

The West Yavapai Guidance Clinic has asked for assistance with their landscaping, Lesley Alward (MG) has been working on the design with them. It is now time to implement. The clinic is hosting a work day on Oct 13th, and Master Gardeners and other members of the community are being asked to participate. Lesley will be the overall supervisor that day, but she would love to have some Master Gardeners supervise the different volunteer workgroups – this is our chance to educate on planting, etc. Or, if you'd like to do some hands-on work, we welcome that as well. All time spent on this is Volunteer time. The tasks involve planting, mulching, etc.

Bring shovels, picks, bow rakes, wheelbarrows, hats, gloves, sunscreen and a willingness to work hard with a smile! The area is large, but there will be many people helping. Refreshments will be served. It will be fun and very rewarding to know you have helped a very good cause.

Contact Lesley Alward if you can participate, gardenmaker@cableone.net, 533-4229.

FROM THE EDITOR: Please send or email articles and announcements to the address below. All articles must be in my hands by the 10th of the month. Short announcements (no more than 2 or 3 lines) will be accepted until the 25th.

Nora Graf

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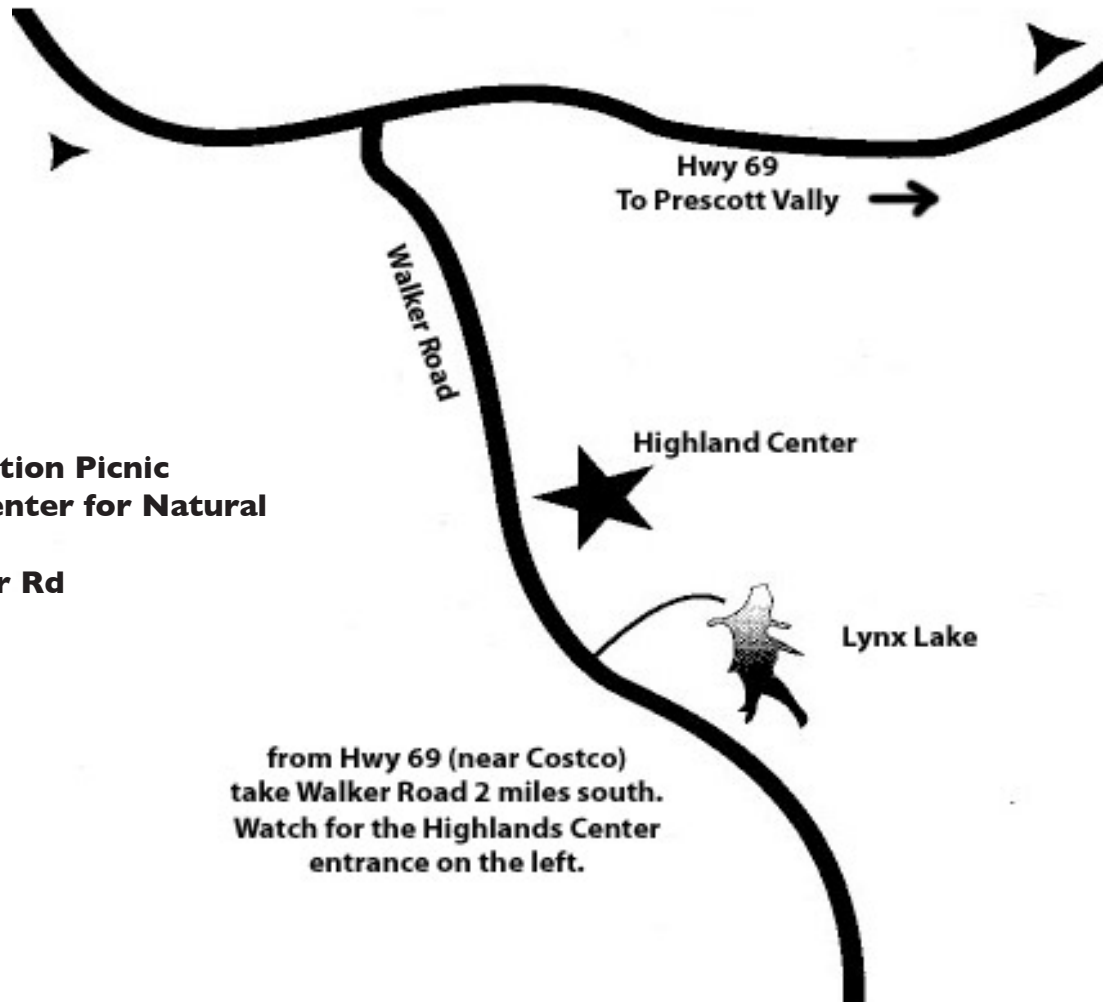
(928) 646-9113

Arizona Cooperative Extension
Yavapai County
840 Rodeo Dr. Building C
Prescott, AZ 86305



MG NEWSLETTER

**MG Recognition Picnic
Highland Center for Natural
History
1375 Walker Rd**



from Hwy 69 (near Costco)
take Walker Road 2 miles south.
Watch for the Highlands Center
entrance on the left.