

Yavapai Gardens

Master Gardener Newsletter

September 2008



Events & Activities

MG Association Meeting, Wednesday, Sept. 17, 6:30pm, Prescott. Speaker: Pattie Conrad

MG Highlands Garden Conference, Oct 13, 14. Early Bird Deadline, Sept 8

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.

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.

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It's Nearly Conference Time, Sign Up NOW!!



This is it folks; it's nearly conference time. Hope you've signed up—if not, hope you plan to. It's great fun; you might learn something new and you will get an opportunity to hang around some serious gardeners (not that we

don't have fun also) and gardeners are interesting people to hang around. **(Early Bird Deadline, Sept. 8)**

I've heard the excuses before: "they don't have anything new—I've heard it all before..." well if you are that jaded I guess if we brought in creatures from the moon you wouldn't be interested—how about creatures from the Black Lagoon? Well, I'm here to tell you we worked hard to get new stuff like Bonsai. Have we ever had a bonsai program before? NOO-oooo. How about identifying wildflowers when they are seedlings? NOO-oooo. What about hummingbirds? NOO-oooo. What about photographing your garden? NOO-oooo. See, no more whining that nothing's new.

Want new plants for the garden? Mountain States Nursery has been to our conferences before but I bet that you haven't heard about the new plants that they have introduced for southwest gardens. Our gardens—not Oregon gardens or California gardens or Ohio gardens. **OUR GARDENS!!!!**

Rainwater harvesting is big these days. Do you know how to do it? Can you figure out how to incorporate it into your garden? Have we ever focused this much on watering our gardens? NOO-ooooo! Some gardeners like lots of non-plant kind of stuff, in their gardens. Others think that is a road to hell from which there is no return. For the road-to-hell type of folks, sorry, "Junque Gardens" may not be your cup of tea, but have we ever had someone talk about Junque Gardens? NOO-ooooo! **(Early Bird Deadline, Sept. 8)**

Does everyone know what a legume is? Know why legumes are important to the soil? Well here's an opportunity to learn the value of legumes. Something new!!! For the grumblers, malcontents and unhappy people out there, perhaps the session on Feng Shui might balance your chi and you'll come out smiling. Have we ever done that



before NOO-oooo!

As a bonus, there are terrific vendors. You can pick up a few rain-harvesting items while you are there. How about some fresh bread from Orion Bakery in Cottonwood? Jay's Bird Barn will

be selling all sorts of wonderful things to encourage birds into your yard. Good's Little Gloves has been a long time supporter of Master Gardeners and they have terrific gloves at reasonable prices. Need some compost? Arrange for a load from Wilby's Composting, a FIRST-TIME conference vendor. Visit the Ace Hardware booth for any hardware needs. It's my opinion that you can't really have enough books in your life, so add a few more from Cottonwood Books & Prints while you are at the conference. They will have books from several of the conference presenters. 4 Seasons, another FIRST-TIME conference vendor will have patio furniture, spas and passive solar home additions on their mind.

(Early Bird Deadline, Sept. 8)

Please attend. Send in your registration soon. To get the hotel special rate we had to commit to a certain number of rooms. We pay for them whether we use them or not. This could add up to considerable expense. So, if you can, please stay at the conference hotel. You must call to make your reservation. Use group code: G912 for the special rate and we will get credit for the room. If you don't tell them you are attending the Gardening conference we don't get credit even if you stay there. 1-800-967-4637

(Early Bird Deadline, Sept. 8)

There's even more, so register now, RIGHT NOW!!!! Go to the website below. It's worth every penny and think of the fun you'll have! Besides, we have wonderful door prizes and raffle items and you get to hang out with other gardeners. How cool is that?

All the information is available on-line at: <http://cals.arizona.edu/yavapai/ahgc/index.html>

If you don't have an internet connection try your local library's computers. (My pitch for libraries is they are great resources and I think all of the public libraries in Yavapai County have computer access, for FREE!) Or you can call the Prescott Extension office and have them mail the registration form.

Another Conference: International Master Gardener Conference

I know we haven't even gotten through our own conference but there is another conference you might be interested in, the International Master Gardener conference in March in Las Vegas. The International Conference takes place every two years It isn't often that it is close to us and it rarely focuses on desert environments. It is a great opportunity to hear new speakers and get new ideas. They have some fabulous tours scheduled and some great vendors. You can get more information at their website. To get the early bird discount rate you will need to make a decision soon. The deadline is mid-November. Visit their website for all the information: <http://www.unce.unr.edu/imgc/registration/>

Conference Host: University of Nevada Cooperative Extension — Master Gardeners of Southern Nevada.

Location: Alexis Park Resort Hotel, 375 E. Harmon, Las Vegas, NV 89169; (702) 796-3300

Your conference registration includes: Keynote Presentations, Seminars, "Fit for Gardening" activities, Trade Show, Sunday "Sunset and Stars" opening reception, Monday & Tuesday Continental Breakfast and Lunch, Wednesday Continental Breakfast, Refreshment Breaks. Admission to these included events is by IMGC badge only. They have a number of pre- and post conference tours: which cost extra, but there are some terrific ones. Conference Registration is online only at www.unce.unr.edu/imgc/

- Early Bird Registration, \$260 — ends November 15, 2008
- Regular Registration, \$310 — ends February 15, 2009
- Late Registration, \$350 —if available.



<http://www.unce.unr.edu/imgc/registration/>

Test Your Butterfly IQ



Thanks to Anna Wilson for sending this idea along. I adapted the original to suit Arizona's butterflies. All of these butterflies have been reported from Yavapai County. How much do you

know about butterflies and their host plants? Find out by putting your "butterfly IQ" to the test with this fun quiz, matching each butterfly to the plant where it typically lays its eggs and, for the really brave, try to figure out what is the food source for the adults. Also match the pictures in this newsletter with the name. Have fun!

If you are interested in looking for more information (or need a cheat sheet!) check out this website: <http://www.butterfliesandmoths.org>

Answers are on page 7

(Composites are members of the sunflower family. I believe the family name has been changed to Asteracea)

1. Painted Lady
2. Red Admiral
3. Western Swallowtail
4. Black Swallowtail
5. Pearl Crescent
6. Dotted Checkerspot
7. Viceroy
8. Monarch
9. Empress Leilia
10. American Snout
11. Gulf Fritillary
12. Northwestern Fritillary



Egg Site

- A. Parsley family: carrots, celery, dill among them
- B. Nettle family
- C. Milkweed
- D. Passion vine
- F. Thistles, hollyhocks, mallows, some legumes
- E. Hackberry (Celtis sp.)
- G. Cottonwood, aspen, willow, ash
- H. Willow
- I. Asters
- J. Celtis pallida (hackberry)

- K. Violets
- L. Penstemons

Food Source

- a. Nectar from thistles, abelia, zinnias, yerba santo
- b. Nectar
- c. Nectar from yellow composites (sunflower-type flowers)
- d. Nectar from gaillardia, rabbitbrush, purple mints, shrub cinquefoil
- e. sap flow, fermenting fruit, bird droppings
- f. Nectar from lantana, cordia, composites
- g. Nectar
- h. Nectar from asters, dogbane, goldenrod, others
- i. Sap & dung
- j. Nectar from composites, esp. thistles, asters, cosmos, liatris
- k. Nectar from milkweeds & thistles
- l. Dung, aphid honeydew, carrion



Answers page 7



MONSOON MADNESS DEBUT A SUCCESS

With a small army of Master Gardeners arriving at 6:00 a.m. on Saturday, July 12, the canopies were erected, the tables put in place, and the plants and garden-related items were displayed in an organized, accessible, and informative fashion. The line of buyers grew from a couple to a couple of dozen and, as Cynthia Cartier-Roberts announced the protocol for the sale, Tom Watkins began counting down to the strict 8:00 a.m. opening time for this first Monsoon Madness Plant and Yard Sale.

The big ticket items--a rototiller, solar lights, and composting containers--were quickly claimed as the buyers scoured the enclosed area for bargains. The opening frenzy settled into a more leisurely pace as buyers made inquiries about plants and strolled through the tables examining the treasures for sale.

By day's end, it was clear that Monsoon Madness was a rousing success on all counts. Attendance was estimated at over 400 people and \$3363 was raised to support our Master Gardener Association and the upcoming Arizona Highlands Garden Conference being held this October in Prescott.

Prescott Area and Verde Valley Area Master Gardeners were generous in their time and their donations of annuals, perennials, herbs, house plants, garden art, garden furniture, tools, pots, composting supplies, seed packets, and books and magazines. At least 30 Master Gardeners donated items for the sale, 26 collected and priced items on Friday, and 29 worked the actual day of the sale.

While dozens of Master Gardeners took part be-

fore and during the sale, the effort was led by chairs Bev Bostrom and Richard Wise. They, with the assistance of committee members Cynthia Cartier-Roberts (Logistics), Mary Barnes (Pricing), Sherry Morton (Merchandising), Pam Bowman (Publicity), Anna Wilson (Nonprofit Vendors), and Jeannette Teets (Musical Entertainment) put together an incredibly well-organized and well-attended event.

Pam Bowman wished to especially thank Lynn Hazelwood for her creativity in making the posters for advertising and directing folks to the event. The professional appearance of the publicity and signage, as well as the setup of the sale, are simply more ways in which Master Gardeners set themselves apart as informative, creative, and caring individuals.

This was a wonderful opportunity to interact with the public and to share our knowledge and enthusiasm for gardening. One early

buyer commented "If this stuff is from Master Gardeners it must be good!" And good it was, as the lion's share of sale items were purchased throughout the day and a multitude of questions were answered. The success of this first Monsoon Madness event makes it a shoo-in for annual status!

While the clouds built throughout the day, the rain held off until the sale was over and cleanup was complete. Clearly, the monsoon smiled upon our efforts!



Fall Is Here, Well—Almost!

by Nora Graf

Can you believe it's September already. Kids are back to school. Shorter days with the promise of cool weather, sooner than later—at least we all hope so. There is also the promise of a great tomato crop. For all those that work hard to have ripe tomatoes early in the season, the reality of it is that our best and most abundant crops seem to come in the fall (at least for the Verde Valley). The reason being is that most tomato flowers don't like hot temperatures and fail to pollinate. Once the temps drop below 90°F, pollination occurs and plants burst with green tomatoes. This also means that the race is on for the tomatoes to ripen before it freezes.

Some years we are lucky and winter comes late. Other years not so and you are faced with plants filled with green tomatoes hanging on withered, limp and blackened vines. Some folks pick the green tomatoes and ripen them inside. I've never been a big fan of that. Mine end looking awful, rotting away on bedraggled vines until I pull up the dry plants come spring.

September means garlic-planting time. One of my favorite crops, I always plant more than I can use and give away a lot. The joy of garlic comes in May when you harvest. Now you just have to deal with the anticipation. Garlic starts growing soon after planting. Shoots should be poking their way through the soil within a couple of weeks of planting. It grows until it gets cold then hunkers down for a few months. Come spring it grows more, and forms the bulb. I normally leave the bulbs in the ground until the leaves have dried completely. Aside from the bulb though you can cut garlic greens during the spring and eat the young flower scapes and eat those also.

September means you can plant perennials again. I've had both good and bad luck planting in the fall. The idea is to give the plant some time to get established before it goes dormant for the winter. Dormancy doesn't mean inactivity; roots continue to grow off and on during the winter. When the first warm days of spring arrive, the plant is poised to leap forth and be in better shape than

something you have just planted.

September means bulbs—tulips, daffodils, lilies and others. While I love some tulips, I'm just not excited about planting them anymore. You have to plant them every year. They are a javelina magnet and I just can't seem to get them to grow well. The plants have a bad habit of shriveling up and only producing a flower (sometimes) that isn't even a mere shadow of the photo on the bag, but an outright insult kind of flower. The kind of flower that taunts you. Reminds you—that maybe you don't know as much about gardening as you thought. Daffodils are a little better. Lilies do ok,

although they seem to disappear after a couple of years; at least I usually get a big bang out of them come spring. The surprise winner in my bulb basket is amaryllis. Damned if I don't have monster plants that bloom prolifically in the summer (a bulb that blooms in the heat—how cool is that?) and they come back year after year, bigger and better than ever.

September means you can still plant lettuce, spinach and other cool season vegetables. You don't have to enter the winter season already pining away for fresh vegetables. Most lettuces and spinach don't like the summer and would much prefer waiting for the cooler fall weather. Peas are another good choice. Both sweet peas and eating peas can be planted in the fall. Like the garlic, they grow for awhile until it gets cold and then wait for spring. There's nothing better than peas fresh off the vine. Mine rarely make it to the house. I usually eat as I pick. This year I am promising myself that I am going to plant sweet peas. Gosh, do I miss the fragrance of sweet peas!

September is all about the promise of winter, those halcyon days of cold nights and balmy days. The trouble is we still have to get through all the hots days left in September and all of those hot days of October I did say it was just the promise of winter. . . .



Faire Time

by Nora Graf

The Yavapai County Fair is coming up. The following article appeared in both the 1996 and 1998 Newsletter but it seems timely to repeat it.

The fair offers judging in agriculture, horticulture and food preservation—for all the things you canned this year. For those so inclined, or with a better garden than I had this year it's a fun way to "show off" your successes. You can learn all the classes and rules in the Premium Book, which is available at the Extension Office. (Since 1998 they have also put things online, just search for the Yavapai County Fair 2008) Check out the Junior Home Economics Division if you have youngsters gardening. Use the following tips to improve your entry. They come from an exhibitor and judge of gardening competitions. GOOD Luck!

1. FOLLOW THE RULES IN THE FAIR BOOK!! If the rules call for six specimens, do not enter five or seven . . . they will not be judged. If stems are required, leave them on!! Many beautiful entries are not judged because the rules were not followed exactly.

2. Try to "pick" or prepare your entry the same day you are to enter it. (Flowers are different, see number 8) The fresher, the better they will look for the judges and hold up for the entire fair.

3. Consider how to transport them to the fair. DON'T let them roll around the bed of your pickup. Wrap fruits separately in paper, wrap veggies in damp dish towels to keep them moist.

4. The specimens should be reasonably clean. It adds to the appeal of the exhibit. Remove excess soil by brushing or washing.

5. One of the MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS FOR A WINNING ENTRY IS UNIFORMITY! Your specimens should be as nearly identical as possible in size, shape, color and degree of maturity.

6. Look at your specimens. What appears to be the most appealing for the best eating. (Taste is not judged)

7. Size is also an important consideration, selections should be medium to slightly larger, or the size that is commonly sold in commercial markets. Large size suggests over maturity, coarseness or poor quality. So, save that monster zucchini for something else. (Like giving it to your neighbor.)



8. Along with fruits and vegetables there are also categories for the flower grower. Most of the same rules apply. Conditioning the flowers before exhibition is recommended. Cut your flowers under water the EVENING BEFORE and place them in a bucket of water that has a preservative in it. Cutting under water can prevent an air

bubble from forming that can cause premature wilting, or in the case of roses, a bent head. The flower stems should be cut at a slant with a SHARP knife. Leave enough stem so that it can be re-cut at the time of entry. Put in a cool, sun-free, wind free place. Refrigerate if possible in a food free environment. Gases from some foods can cause wilting. At the time of entry, re-cut the stems at a slant at least 1/2 inch above the the end of the stem.

GOOD LUCK! — let me know how you faired!!

(The picture is to give you something to aspire to. It is from the British National Vegetable Society. They are a charity that is dedicated to improvement of vegetables, among other things.)

Yavapai County Fair Produce Entries

If you would like to enter produce (or anything else) at the Yavapai County Fair here is the link to an on-line copy of the "Fair Book" <http://www.yavapaidownsatpv.com/fairbook.html>. It is not a conflict of interest for you to enter produce and work at the Fair. If you would like some hints on what size of produce, etc. are appropriate, contact Sherry Howard, howardpena@cablone.net. 6

MG Association News

Congratulations!

By completing 50 volunteer hours, the following Associate Master Gardeners received certificates and nametags (signifying certification) at the August Master Gardener Meeting:

Leon Bowers

Conference Volunteers Needed

Following are the volunteer opportunities for the Arizona Highlands Garden Conference. The help you give at the conference will mostly be between the sessions, so you will still be able to attend the sessions if you volunteer. We all must pay the registration fee, even if we work at the conference. Please review the volunteer opportunities below and respond to me about your preference. You may work in more than one area. If you volunteer at the conference that time is considered Volunteer time. The time you spend in the sessions is considered Continuing Education time. You will be contacted within 2 weeks of volunteering by either me or one of the conference chairs. Contact Mary Barnes for specific dates and duties:

Welcome Bags and Conference Binders, need 10 – 12 people.

Door Prizes, about 3 people.

Monitor door prize room Monday and Tuesday, 2 monitors each day

Registration Tables

Master Gardener Table

Audio/Visual Assistance

Vendor Assistance

Speaker Monitors

General Set-up Help on Sunday, 5 people.

Greeters, Need 4 people each day.

Buffet Attendants

Tear Down, Need at least 4 people

Butterfly Answers: 1FjJJ; 2BeLL; 3GaGG; 4AkHH; 5IgBB; 6LcKK; 7HIAA; 8CbFF; 9JiEE; 10EhCC; 11DfDD; 12KdII

Verde Valley Farmers Market

Saturdays, 8:00 am until 12:00 noon, June 14th through October 4th. Eagle Scout Pavillion, located off Main Street on Hollamon, directly in front of Fort Verde State Park

Market Manager , Jane Davie, 634-7077

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.

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MG NEWSLETTER

MG Association Meeting Sept 17, 6:30pm. Prescott

Speaker: Pattie Conrad

Many of you know Pattie Conrad if you have taken her annual trip to the Flagstaff Arboretum plant sale. As your tour guide she imparts what she has learned over her years as a passionate gardener. Born in California, Pattie moved to Flagstaff in 1972 where her first “green moment” occurred when painters trampled the happy-faced pansies she had planted in the first home she shared with her husband. Moving to Prescott in 1992, she now describes her garden as “a cross between a passionate person’s collection garden and an abandoned homestead, i.e. a mixture of planted and native plants.”

Pattie will be talking about “Fall Gardening” at the September MGA meeting in Prescott. She will address color in the winter garden and how to make your containers colorful and winter proof. And she promises that “it’s easy and fun.” As a long-time resident of Prescott, a Yavapai County Master Gardener Emeritus and an employee of Watters Garden Center, Pattie brings a wealth of knowledge to her presentation. If you are tired of a dull, somewhat lifeless winter garden this is a presentation you should not miss.

