

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

University of Arizona and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.



the Cochise County Master Gardener

NEWSLETTER

VOL. 2, NO. 9

AUGUST 1991

PLANT OF THE MONTH

Peter Whitman
Staff Writer



Gaillardia grandiflora

Gaillardia grandiflora . . . even the name sounds beautiful. I was driving down a neighborhood street in Tucson when this bright splash of vibrant red color forced me to slow down. Someone had planted the strip between the sidewalk and the road with *Gaillardia*, the goblin variety, and what an impressive sight it was. That was the first time I had taken notice of *Gaillardia* in a garden.

After that time, I did some research into *Gaillardia*. I found that it had been developed from native wildflowers. It is well-adapted to the low water desert environment and often reseeds itself. This makes a good choice to add color to the arid landscape.

Gaillardia has found a place in my garden. It gives me a good show every year. So often I have tried to start a flower bed, but about mid-summer I would lose my drive to take care of it. With the *Gaillardia*, I can give it as much neglect as my mid-summer doldrums can dish out, and it still holds up like a trooper. It makes great cut flowers for those who like to bring their flowers indoors.

Each year I like to take some of the seeds from the end of the summer and sow them where I want them to grow the next year. I find that if I let them seed on their own, that each year the birds get more seed and I get fewer *Gaillardia*.

So, maybe you would like to make *Gaillardia grandiflora* an annual part of your garden. It is available at nurseries and in many catalogues under the names *Gaillardia*, Blanket flower, or Goblin Blanket Flower. If you do, you will not be disappointed.

UNIVERSITY
OF
ARIZONA

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Elizabeth Riordon
Staff Writer

For several months, I've been admiring the upright, fuzzy, grey-green leaves of a wild vine which is spreading along the roadways of Cochise County. With the help of John Hamilton, a field research expert, who is working with the BLM at the San Pedro Riparian National Conservation Office, I finally identified it and some other wild vines.

The three illustrated here are annual gourds with yellow flowers and green to cream colored round fruit. Their velvet-looking leaves are actually uncomfortably prickly. All parts of the plants give off an unpleasant, rotten-onion odor when touched or cut (which is why I made these drawings outside, even though it was raining).

The plants are also very bitter tasting, and are usually considered toxic. Careful preparation of specific parts, though, can yield medicines, high protein foods, oils, and insect-attractants (see *Gathering the Desert* by Gary Paul Nabhan).

The large silver leaved vine is the Buffalo Gourd, *Cucurbitus foetidissima*. Brighter green, geranium-shaped ruffled rounder leaves are found on the Melon Loco vine, *Apodanthera undulata*. The coyote melon, *Cucurbitus digitata*, has delicate, starburst leaves, dark green on the outer margin and white to light creamy pink along the middle.

Coyotes, cattle, and most mammals avoid all these vines, but the javelina sometimes consider them a tasty meal.

*****EXTRA***EXTRA***
READ ALL ABOUT IT
NEW AG AGENT ARRIVES IN COCHISE
COUNTY!!!!!!**

By the time you read this it will be official - Robert Call, an experienced horticulturist from Utah, will be the new Cochise County Cooperative Extension Agriculture Agent!!!!

Rob has extensive research experience, both in Illinois and in Utah, with fruits (especially apple) and vegetables, as well as experience with planning workshops for large and small scale gardeners.

Rob will be moving with his family to Willcox in early August and will report for his first day with Cochise County Cooperative Extension on Wednesday August 14. Thirty percent of Rob's time will be spent in support of urban horticulture (the home gardener) and the Master Gardener Volunteer Program so we expect to see a lot of him.

For those of you who have patiently stood by us for the 14 months we were without an ag agent, thank you. And to Rob, our new "boss," welcome to Cochise County!

HOME GARDEN TOUR

Saturday, August 17, the Sierra Vista Area Gardeners Club is sponsoring their first Home Garden Tour. The Tour will start in Palominas at Whitefeather Farms where we will visit with various farm animals as well as touring the gardens. We will then move down the road a bit to tour Dale Leijendecker's home garden followed by a carpool to Elfrida to tour Karen Tanner's garden and have refreshments. Each of our garden hosts are Master Gardeners, have been gardening in Cochise County for many years, and are active in 4H and the County Fair (last year Karen received several ribbons in the vegetable and flower categories).

Although the gardens are quite large, they are noncommercial and demonstrate not only the wide variety of vegetables and flowers that can be grown in our area, but also what one gardener can accomplish in a home garden. The Home Garden Tour is open to club members and to the public. Meet at Whitefeather Ranch in Palominas (the stone house on the right along Hwy 92 just before the Bible College) at 7:30 am, or in front of Ace Hardware in Sierra Vista (corner of Hwy 92 & Fry Blvd.) at 7 am to carpool to Palominas. Need more information? Call 459-0159 or 366-9687. Hope to see you there!

PLANTING A FALL GARDEN: ENJOYING COOL SEASON CROPS

Barbara Shelor
Staff Writer

The mild fall weather of Cochise County allows us to enjoy a bounty of fresh vegetables, provided we plan and plant a cool weather garden in the next few weeks. Most cool season crops are leaf or root vegetables (broccoli and cauliflower have edible flowers) and are termed hardy. Their seeds germinate under cooler soil conditions and they need to reach maturity in cool weather. Also, many hardy crops are frost tolerant. They will continue to grow until the ground freezes. Covering the plants can extend their growing season.

VEGETABLE VARIETIES

The right vegetable variety assures better results. Select varieties that are disease and insect resistant, productive, and have good flavor. Part of gardening is also trial and experimentation. So a gardening log or record of the varieties you plant and the performance of each can add to gardening pleasure and be a valuable resource each year. The following varieties of vegetables are among those suggested for cool weather crops in Arizona; **Beets:** *Detroit Dark Red*, which can be stored for the winter; **Broccoli:** *Calabrese* and *Waltham 29*; **Brussels Sprouts:** *Jade Cross* and *Long Island Improved*; **Cabbage:** *Danish Ballhead* and *Flat Dutch*; **Carrots:** *Imperator* with 8 or 9 inch roots for light, sandy soil with no stones; **Cauliflower:** *Snowball M*; **Chard:** *Fordhook Giant*, a green variety; *Rhubarb*, a red variety; **Kale:** *Dwarf Blue Curled* or *Dwarf Green Curled*; **Lettuce:** head varieties include *Great Lakes 659*, *Mesa 659*, and *Empire*; leaf varieties include *Black Seeded Simpson*, *Salad Bowl*, *Ruby*, *Prizehead*, *Oak Leaf*, and *Grand Rapids*; **Radishes:** *Cherry Belle*, a round, red variety and *White Icicle*, a long, white variety; **Spinach:** *Bloomsdale Long Standing* and *Resistoflay*; **Turnip:** *Purple Top White Globe* and *Seven Top* for the greens.

HERBS

Herbs add flavor and aroma to many foods. They may be grown in pots or directly in the garden. Some may be started in the fall garden, then potted and brought inside to a sunny location for winter protection. Chives are prolific growing perennials. They may be propagated from a clump or from seed. Pot and move indoors over winter. A companion plant to carrots, but not to peas and beans. Parsley, a biennial, thrives in cool temperatures. Soak seeds overnight in water to speed germination. Treat as an annual. A companion plant to onions and carrots. Rosemary, a woody perennial, familiar in the Arizona landscape, may also be grown in the garden. It propagates easily from stem cuttings. A companion plant to carrots, cabbage, sage, and beans. Garden sage, *Salvia officinalis*, is a very hardy perennial which can be propagated from seeds, layers, or cuttings. A companion plant to the cabbage plants (cole family), carrots, and rosemary, but do not plant near cucumbers.

SEEDING

Select a sunny, well-drained location and prepare the soil, adding organic material and fertilizer. Use new seeds as the germination of older seeds may not be successful. Scarifying and then soaking some seeds may speed up germination. Seeding may be done directly in the soil in straight rows (cool weather crops do not require hills), which makes a garden easier to maintain. Space the seeds equal distances apart according to the directions on the particular seed packet. A general guideline for planting depth is four times the seed size. Smaller seeds, like lettuce, should be covered with 1/4 to 1/2 inch of soil. Larger seeds, like peas, plant at a depth of 1 to 2 inches. If the soil is sandy, plant seeds a bit deeper. Cover the seeds, firming the soil with your hands or a hoe. Then irrigate the newly planted seeds lightly and continue a watering routine. Seedlings will need deeper regular watering. Thin the plants when established. Thinnings of leaf vegetables are edible and good in salads.

AAAAAHHH...PHOENIX IN AUGUST

Jackie Dillon-Fast
Staff Writer

This year's International Master Gardener Conference meets in Detroit September 24-27. The price of the conference (\$150) itself, not to mention the cost of transportation to Detroit and food and lodging for four days, prices the International Conference out of the reach of most of our budgets. Closer to home, however, and more in the realm of possibilities, is the first Arizona State Master Gardener Conference in the middle of this month.

The State Conference is being held at Westcourt in the Buttes in Tempe, just outside of Phoenix, on Thursday and Friday, August 15 & 16. Cost of the conference is \$75 which includes two lunches, both day's sessions, and a tour of the grounds by the resort's landscape supervisor. Cost for one day of workshops is \$35 and includes one lunch.

Workshops in integrated pest management, garden photography, planting for wildlife, watering techniques, gardening with native plants, grafting, native trees and uses, greenhouses, and composting are among those being offered during the two-day conference. The keynote speaker is Dr. Ellen Hanke, a major speaker at the last international conference, who is a nationally recognized garden authority, writer, and instructor.

The conference is not restricted to Master Gardeners. Any interested gardener or landscaper is invited. Registration forms and more detailed information is available through the Sierra Vista Cooperative Extension Office (458-1104).

CLOSER TO HOME

Jackie Dillon-Fast
Staff Writer

This fall, the University of Arizona Sierra Vista Campus is offering a course on environmental history that will interest anyone seriously concerned about conservation in Cochise County. HIST 346 is being taught by Paul Hirt, an environmental historian. You may recognize Paul's name - he recently spoke on the influence of cultural changes on Southern Arizona's environment as part of the U of A Sierra Vista Campus Lecture Series. (He is an excellent speaker.)

The 3-credit course will review national and Southern Arizona environmental changes, compare Indian and Anglo approaches to the environment, review the history of conservation in the U.S., and consider the future of public lands and water resources. The course will meet from August 26 through December 9, Mondays, 6-8:45 pm, in Sierra Vista. For more information, contact the Sierra Vista Campus (458-8278).

AUGUST REMINDERS

FERTILIZE

PLAN YOUR SPRING WILDFLOWER GARDEN
WATCH FOR NUTRIENT DEFICIENCIES,

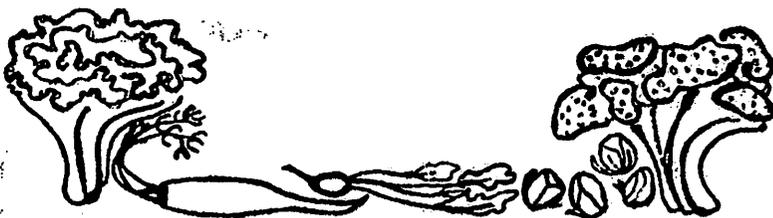
SUNBURN, SALT BURN, OVERWATERING,
TEXAS ROOT ROT, CICADAS,
AND OTHER INSECTS

PROLONG ANNUALS

KEEP PULLING WEEDS

PLANT COOL SEASON FLOWERS & VEGGIES

(See article elsewhere in this issue)



IT'S HARVEST TIME!!!

Jackie Dillon-Fast
Staff Writer

The updated "Fresh Farm Produce From Southeastern Arizona" brochure is now available from the Willcox Chamber of Commerce. The brochure lists many of the sources in Cochise County for fresh produce and meats, including many pick-your-own farms. The brochure also supplies a harvest calendar listing picking dates for specific fruits, nuts, and vegetables. To receive a copy of the brochure, send a stamped, self-addressed long envelope to Willcox Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture, 1500 North Circle I Road, Willcox AZ 85643.

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Articles to be published in next month's newsletter must be received at the Sierra Vista office by August 23.

ECOLOGICALLY-SANE PEST CONTROL (Part 7) ©

2. If none of the before mentioned remedies work well enough for you, here are some "natural" pesticides that you can apply to help control your problem. Please realize though that "natural" does NOT mean harmless. These are all poisons of one degree or another. Some are relatively dilute or selective in the creatures that they affect. Others kill simply everything they come in contact with (including beneficials) and can be very toxic, even to humans. Remember: Arsenic is a "natural" substance! Time pesticide use to avoid beneficials as much as possible. Use the least toxic substance that will do the job and take proper precautions to protect the health of yourself and non-target creatures.

a. False Hellebore - This botanical insecticide comes in powder form. It can be mixed with water (usually 1 oz to 2 gallons of water) or applied as a dust mixed with hydrated lime and flour. It acts as a stomach poison for many chewing insects such as beetles, caterpillars, grasshoppers, and sawflies.

b. Fatty acid soaps - (Safer's, etc.) These new insecticides are made from naturally occurring fatty acids. They are used in the control of soft-bodied insects such as Aphids, Mealybugs, Spider mites, and Whiteflies.

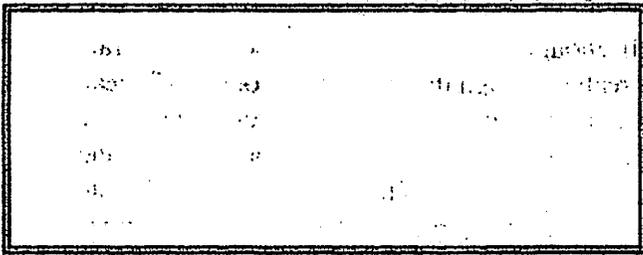
c. Nicotine Sulfate - (Black Leaf 40, etc.) This is a very potent fumigant and contact poison. A broad-spectrum insecticide, it can kill pests and beneficials alike. Although it has little residual effect, it is fast-acting and extremely toxic. Because it is a tobacco product, be careful of its use around tomatoes.

d. Pyrethrum (Pyrethrin) - (Safer's, etc.) This is a very potent insecticide made from ground-up Chrysanthemum flowers. A contact poison, it has a quick knock-down effect causing paralysis, but some larger or hardier insects may recover. For this reason, Pyrethrins are often combined with other botanical insecticides where they provide the initial "knock-down" and the other insecticide(s) finish off the pest. It has little residual effect and has low toxicity for bees, ladybug larvae, and mammals. It may be an allergen for some people. Pyrethrins break down quickly when exposed to light and air, and will need to be reapplied on a regular basis for continued control.

Please do not confuse naturally occurring pyrethrin preparations with synthetic pyrethroid products. The latter are a group of synthetic pesticides that work in much the same way as pyrethrum, but they are highly toxic to bees and fish and persist much longer in the environment.

e. Rotenone - (Green Light, etc.) This is a resin derived from South American and Malaysian plant roots. It is a broad-spectrum contact and stomach poison and affects the nervous system and muscles. The insect stops feeding and dies within hours or a couple of days. It breaks down fairly quickly and has no residual effect. Rotenone is sometimes combined with Pyrethrum for its quick knock-down or with Ryania for a longer residual effect. It is available as a dust or spray. Rotenone is extremely toxic to fish!

f. Ryania - Made from a tropical shrub, this insecticide works as a stomach poison, by making the pest so sick it ceases to feed. It is only moderately toxic but has a longer residual effect than most botanicals and seems to work best in hot weather. Seldom found alone, it is usually combined with other organic insecticides for better overall effectiveness. It is considered "relatively harmless" to humans and other mammals, but is toxic to bees, earthworms and fish.



ARIZONA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
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g. **Sabadilla** - This dust comes from the ground-up seeds of a tropical lily. Toxic alkaloids affect the pest's nervous system and cause death. A broad-spectrum contact poison, it degrades quickly in the sunlight and leaves no residue. Sabadilla is very potent and can be used on normally hard-to-kill insects such as Colorado Potato Beetles, Cucumber Beetles, Harlequin Bugs, and Leafhoppers. Use in the evening to avoid bees and other beneficials.

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