



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

Cooperative Extension

Master Gardener

Rain and Shine

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SaddleBrooke and SaddleBrooke Ranch Master Gardeners*

The summer of 2021 has been a marvelous time for gardening in our SaddleBrooke/SaddleBrooke Ranch communities. Tomatoes, squash, potatoes, lettuces, herbs, and flowers were abundant before the rains of July — and cooler temperatures have allowed us to enjoy our home grown delights for many days following the monsoon moisture.

This July is the wettest calendar month on record for Tucson. Ever. More than eight inches of rain fell according to the National Weather Service. SaddleBrooke received 6.46 inches (maps.cocorahs.org) and SaddleBrooke Ranch logged 7.67 inches according to resident Tony Pietrzykoski's weather station—all welcome relief for our gardens and landscapes. As we slouch toward September there is much to be done to prepare for the cooler growing season.



Flooded Wash 1

As Texas Rangers lose their purple majesty and Bougainvillea blossoms fade, September is the perfect time to choose your annuals for the next bloom so your yard will once again shine with color. Bulbs should be available by the end of the month so start designing your flower beds ahead of time. You can begin to switch out your summer annuals for cool-season annuals as the temperatures cool down. Sow seeds for Golden Dyssodia, Mexican Gold Poppy, Lupine, Desert Bluebell, and Cherry Red Sage for a range of color.

We now begin that transition from summer into fall allowing us time to maintain and prepare our landscapes for cool weather, planting, and grooming our trees. Local growers and nurseries should have trees by the end of the month. As you amend your soil, consider planting native and, or drought tolerant trees and shrubs. Ironwood, mesquite, Texas ebony and Acacia trees adapt well to our desert climate. Planting them this month will allow ample time to develop a solid root system before any danger of frost.

Now is a good time to consider adding shrubs to your landscape, as well. Look for plants that are not cold sensitive and plant early in the fall so they can establish a root system. Adding a generous layer of mulch to new shrubs will protect and encourage new growth. Some lovely desert shrubs include Turpentine Bush, San Marcus Hibiscus, Chuparosa and Desert Lavender. As

for pruning established shrubs, dead-head summer flowers and prune conservatively to discourage new growth.

SaddleBrooke/SaddleBrooke Ranch Master Gardeners are volunteers trained under the auspices of the University of Arizona, Cooperative Extension, Pinal County. We offer educational programs and classes to residents of our communities.