

Yavapai Gardens

Master Gardener Newsletter

June/July 2021



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A Children's Garden

by Nora Graf



Early experiences frequently influence the rest of our lives. Certainly, the Covid pandemic will have an impact on the rest of our lives, perhaps children especially. We likely need to have some positive experiences that will help everyone feel a bit better about all that has happened. Sometimes what adults perceive as a minor event or experience can have an amazing long-term effect on children. What was your first gardening experience, was it being involved on the family farm or garden?

Maybe you were the one outdoors trying to encourage plants to grow while the rest of the kids were playing baseball or watching TV. Maybe you were lucky to have a teacher that had everyone plant a few radishes or beans in a classroom. Wherever that first experience came from, it obviously impacted your life.

Children today are increasingly raised in an urban environment, often in apartments with no yard or involved in athletics or other after school activities and do not have the opportunities that many of us had. Giving children the chance to experience the joys of gardening could bring joy into your life also.

If you have kids, grandkids or even interested neighbor kids, encourage them to get their hands dirty. (As if that's difficult for them anyway when they are given a chance!) There are some guidelines you might want to consider when starting a children's garden to keep them excited and interested. The garden should be age-appropriate but there is nothing wrong with teaching new things that might be more difficult. Let them help from the very beginning, from planting to cooking, no matter if all they have is a couple of tomatoes, make them part of the cooking and eating.

Grow weird plants and fascinating forms! Children have a different sense of whimsy than most adults and strange, unusual things may keep their attention longer than something like lettuce. Try bulbs that come and go with the seasons. Try extra-long beans that grow to exciting lengths. Purchase giant varieties to weigh and measure as they grow. It could get them excited about next season's garden by encouraging kids to

grow larger veggies next year. Unusual flower shapes can also be interesting. One of my childhood memories is going over to a neighbor's house with flashlight in hand to watch a night-blooming cereus open up. Explore catalogs and nurseries and take the children along. There is a lot out there to excite a kid.

To start, provide kids good tools. Cheap plastic tools break and are not strong enough to work well. When things go badly, kids will lose interest quickly. Good tools that work can make a difference. If necessary, saw off the handle of an adult size tool to make it work.

Look for things that grow tall or have exceptionally big colorful flowers. Tall sunflowers are fun. Also, flowers that can be picked, something all of us like to do. Look for plants that grow rapidly. Kids can have short attention spans, and to be able to go out to the garden and see rapid changes might keep them interested. Have them measure the plant; keep a chart on how fast it grows.

Grow plants that attract insects and animals. Attracting butterflies, hummingbirds, bees, cats (catnip), birds and other creatures can be an exciting experience. There is nothing funnier than the family cat rolling about in the catnip. The flights of bees and insects and birds feeding on seeds and nectar could be a good opportunity for children to understand the world outside.

Grow plants with strong scents. Good or bad scents can be equally enticing.

Grow plants that children can eat.

Start seeds, germination is one of the most exciting things we can do. Most common vegetables are easy to grow. Lettuces, radishes, carrots, snow peas and cherry tomatoes. Try to grow one of their favorite vegetables or fruits. Many children don't realize that food doesn't originally come from a grocery store. Growing their own can be a surprise. Try some edible flowers too. Grow things they like to eat. The magic of seed germination is easy. Use egg cartons, cut-off milk containers, whatever you can find and let them plant seeds.

Build a scarecrow. This can be fun, and you can help them understand the need for one. Let them

be creative.

Tell plant stories. This may require boning up a bit on plants, but plants have interesting stories. Talk about the science of growing plants. Learning science can be fun.

If you have visitors to the house, show off the children's garden. Send pictures to relatives with the kids. Sharing is a great motivator.

Do experiments with plants. I doubt that schools do this any longer but put some celery in a jar of colored water (vegetable dyes like you use for Easter eggs) and watch as the celery absorbs the colored water. Other candidates for this are daisies and mums.

Give children their own garden space. A space of their own allows children to be creative and experiment outside the adult realm. Let them do what they want. Offer advice on what and how to plant and take care of a garden. Even cheat a little to make sure the garden grows but let them discover as

much as possible on their own.

Grow herbs. Their contribution to dinner is important.

Create a built-in play area— hideaways in the garden by using fast-growing vines over a trellis or by creating a space in the middle of some tall shrubs. Everyone likes a private place and for children, it could be a fantasy fort or a pirate's cave.

Create a theme garden like a pizza garden, planting tomatoes peppers, onions, and so on. One idea I read about which I loved is to create a circular garden and dividing it into (pizza) wedges to plant the different ingredients. How about a red garden and just plant red flowers, red lettuce, red peppers and stretching it a bit purple carrots. And of course, plant a butterfly or insect garden and teach about the importance of bees, butterflies, and other insects.

Let them have art in the garden too. Maybe help them create a fairy house or let them choose some fun ornament from the hardware store.

Make it fun, be creative!!! Even the hardest chore becomes easy if it's a game. Let them have fun even if they come in dirty and wet.



Meet A Master Gardener – Sandy Lundgren

By Linda Guy



Sandy Lundgren was a Master Gardener in her home state of Oregon, where she once owned and operated a wholesale perennials nursery. About the only time that she *hasn't* tended plants was the five-year period she lived a retirement dream cruising the Pacific Coast of North America in a sailboat with her husband Garlan. She laughs about her mobile phone

the size of a shoebox (this was 1995) and reliance on ham radio while offshore. With wanderlust satisfied, in 2000 the couple found their way to Prescott Valley's Superstition Hills, with splendid views of Mingus Mountain and the San Francisco Peaks. She returned to work in several horticultural roles, eventually becoming a Yavapai County Master Gardener in 2011.

Influenced by a grandmother who tirelessly worked a vegetable garden to augment World War II rations, Sandy nonetheless inherited her mother's partiality for the ornamentals grown at their west Portland home. Later in Central Oregon, the climate and terrain would radically alter her approach to gardening – it was then that she took the local Master Gardener training. With winter temperatures dropping to 20 below and soil that was essentially a lava field, she thinks that her current Quad Cities environment is a snap.

Sandy loved her job as a propagation grower at the old Hines Horticulture in Chino Valley where for five years she managed a greenhouse that started 10,000 seedlings per week. She worked in retail nurseries at Watters Garden Center (Prescott) and Ace Hardware (Prescott Valley). As a Master Gardener, she has lent her talents to Monsoon Madness, the floriculture department of the Yavapai County Fair, the Prescott Valley Community Garden, the Coyote Springs Schoolyard Habitat program, our Speakers Bureau, and Olli. She speaks highly of the MGA mentoring program and would like to see more Master Gardeners shepherding our newest trainees.

The couple's three-quarter acre property remains unfenced, as they choose to coexist with the area wildlife – not always an easy relationship. She and Garlan go through about 40 pounds of birdseed a week. The



yards' focus is on trouble-free and drought-tolerant plantings, lacking perimeter fencing to exclude critters, the vegetable garden was let go about five years ago. Some of Sandy's favorite plants include the ponderosas and cypress that anchor the grounds, a front-porch covered with Virginia creeper *Parthenocissus quinquefolia* (recently consumed - javelina is the prime suspect), and the finely textured *Thymus minus* that fringe the pavers. Rocks collected over the years have become a water feature inspired by

Fossil Springs, east of Camp Verde. This lovely home has been featured in a local garden club tour and in the "Home Gardener" section of Phoenix Home and Garden magazine in October 2017.

Indoors, Sandy has festooned the walls of a room with her longest-lived plant, a wax plant (*Hoya carnosa*) that she inherited from her mother in 1970. It has now been passed down to her daughter's care.

Sandy believes that to plant a seed is to believe in tomorrow, and though she is currently on inactive status to care for her husband, she still lovingly tends their property.

We wish her belated good wishes for her recent 80th birthday!



Another Hot Summer Ahead?

by Nora Graf



Last summer was a tough one. Hot, hot, and hotter. To make it worse there was almost no rain. It was one of the driest Monsoons on record. Records in Arizona go back to the 1860's thanks to the US Army. (A fun fact: it was the Military Weather service, a division of the

US Army's Signal Corp that was the precursor to the National Weather Service of today. The Verde Valley's data goes back to 1868 when the US Army at Camp Verde began recording data. Prescott data starts in 1898. Tucson has records back to 1866.)

So, what's expected this year? Maybe better times ahead, but don't get too excited, this is just a prediction. The good news is the National Weather Service has predicted above-average chances of more rain for June, July & August. With the extreme drought of the past few years, more rain would certainly be welcome. I suspect though this means flooding. Seems it's one or the other.

Even if it rains it will be hot and sunny for the most part. Since temperatures are going up, now would be a good time to review what happens when you spend time in the sun. Heat-related problems can creep up on you and can be deadly.

Heat Cramps: Symptoms include involuntary spasms in the arms, calves or abdomen although the spasm could occur anywhere in muscle groups involved in exercise. First Aid: Rest, stop what you are doing, cool down. Sip water, sports drinks high in electrolytes or clear juice. Gently do full-range-of-motion stretching of affected muscles. Don't do strenuous exercise for several hours or longer after the cramps end. Call a doctor if the symptoms don't go away.

Heat Exhaustion: Symptoms can develop slowly or very quickly. Symptoms can include faintness, dizziness, fatigue, a weak pulse, low blood pressure on standing, muscle cramps, nausea, and headache. First Aid: Get out of the sun, lie down, and loosen your clothing. Fan yourself or move to an air-conditioned room. Sip water or sports drink. If you are or you see someone vomiting, confused, agitated, or lose consciousness, seek immediate medical attention and try to stay as cool as possible.

Heatstroke: Symptoms include high body temperature (104°F or higher), hot, dry skin, a rapid

pulse, and possibly unconsciousness. Altered mental state may include confusion, agitation, slurred speech, irritability, delirium, seizures, and coma. Change in sweating, the skin will feel hot and dry to the touch. In a situation brought on by strenuous exercise a person may feel dry or slightly moist. have nausea or vomiting, flushed skin, rapid breathing, and headache. First Aid: Call for emergency medical help or get the victim to the hospital immediately. While waiting for help to arrive, move the victim to a cooler place if possible. Remove the person's clothing and use fans, air conditioning, a cold bath, spray from a hose, use ice or cold packs, wet towels on a person's head, neck armpits, and groin. Anything to reduce the body temperature. DO NOT give the person fluids.

Sunburn: Nearly all of us have had a sunburn in our life, but it's only been in the last 25 years or so that they have connected this exposure to skin cancer. Arizona has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the United States thanks to its abundant sunshine. Good reason to protect yourself. Sunburn is when the skin turns red and painful and feels hot to the touch. Swelling may occur and fluid-filled blisters which break open easily may appear. In severe cases, headache, fever, nausea, and fatigue may happen. Eyes might feel painful or gritty. It may take a few days for it to fade. Repeated sunburn can cause dark spots, rough spots, and dry, wrinkled skin. Any part of your body exposed to the sun can burn even through loosely woven fabrics. The sunburn will appear within a few hours of exposure. Damaged skin may peel and flake off as it heals. It can cause severe swelling. Signs of infection appear as pain, pus or red streaks starting at an open blister. Emergency care is required if you have a fever over 103°F, fainting or confusion. See a doctor if blistering covers large portions of the body, severe streaks start at an open blister, blisters develop on the face, hands, or genitals, and if conditions don't improve within a few days.

Prevention is fairly easy. Wear a wide-brimmed hat and if you can stand it a lightweight long-sleeved shirt, long pants, and socks if you are going to spend a long time outside. Make sure it has a tight weave, sun rays can go through lightly woven cloth. Stay out of the sun during midday. Use sunscreen frequently. The higher the SPF number the better and make sure it blocks UVA and UVB rays.

Miniature Roses

by Nora Graf



I didn't realize it but there are over 200 varieties of miniature roses. The history of the miniature rose is somewhat muddled, but it is thought that they are descendants of a single dwarf China Rose called "Rouletii" or maybe one called "Mima" sometimes known as the fairy rose. Miniature roses were popular in China and became popular in Asia and Europe in the 1700s. In the 1800s they came back but once again faded in popularity and wouldn't be back for another 100 years when one was discovered in the garden of a Swiss man named Roulet around 1919. The rose was eventually renamed after Roulet.

In 1936 Jan de Vink in Holland bred one of the Roulet's rose with a polyantha (a plant that has small flowers in clusters). In the United States, Ralph Moore was breeding miniatures and he became known as the "King of Miniatures." Moore spent 50 years breeding miniatures creating hundreds of new varieties. Today miniature roses are back in fashion, but many people buy one at a big box store as a gift. You don't see a lot of them grown in gardens.

If you are not familiar with miniature roses, they look like their bigger cousins but can range from three to 24 inches tall. Micro-miniatures are approximately 3 to eighteen inches tall while dwarfs are 18 to 24 inches tall. They are not fragrant or have a very faint fragrance but bloom nearly continuously. Unlike the larger roses, miniatures are all grown on their own rootstock and not grafted onto a special rootstock. Today there is an entire range of types of miniatures. They can be compact, bushy, climbers, cascaders, and more varieties are coming out each year. Blooms can be frequent just like their big

cousins.

Like the larger roses, miniatures will grow well in Arizona. They can handle the heat and sun and colder temperatures. If you live in the lower areas of the county, you probably should not plant them where they get reflected sun in western exposures while in the winter in the higher parts of the county they probably will freeze back. They thrive under much the same conditions that larger roses do.

They can be grown in the ground or in containers. A good draining soil is important, but they can grow in a variety of soil types. They do well in containers and using a good potting mix will help them thrive.

Bright light is important, they will need around 6 hours of sunlight each day. Without sufficient light, they will not bloom, and the plant starts to grow taller and wimpier as it looks for more light.

Deep watering is always a good idea. This helps flush out salts in the soil and water and prevents the salts from accumulating. It also helps allow the roots to develop deeper roots making it easier for the plant to survive dryer conditions. They do need a bit more water and should be watered when the top one inch of soil has dried. During the winter just keep the soil barely moist. Try to avoid watering the leaves.

Miniature roses can get along without much fertilizer when planted in the soil outside. Applying a one-inch layer of good compost in the spring and again in the fall is about all you will need to do. The layer of compost will also help protect the roots in the winter and keep the soil cooler and wetter in the summer. You can use other fertilizers if you wish but apply only if you recognize the plant is suffering a deficiency. More isn't always better. If the plant is in a container, you should feed it more often. Every two weeks is recommended but watch the plant, if it is looking good and growing well you can adjust the fertilizer schedule.

Like full-sized roses miniatures suffer from invasions of aphids. Simply spraying the aphids off the plant with water is the easiest solution. If you are afraid of damaging the plant, simply provide some support for the plant during the washing process. Chances are that one good spraying session should take care of the problem, but the process can be repeated. Spider mites and mealybugs might also be a problem so a soap-type of treatment (dish



detergent and water, use the simplest soap you can find, some additives can damage plants. You can also purchase products in stores) will help keep the problem under control. With the smaller roses, you can just give it a swish or two in

soapy water. It also helps remove dust from the leaves. Powdery mildew can show up on roses, usually in the spring. You will start to see small blisters followed by white or gray powdery spots. The best remedy is to keep the area around the rose clean. Get rid of old leaves, prune, and occasionally do some overhead watering. (Yes, I know I said earlier not to get the leaves wet, but if you have problems with powdery mildew an occasional bout of wet leaves will not harm the plant and will help get rid of the mildew.)

Roses big or small benefit from deadheading. Removing spent blooms encourages the plant to bloom more. A sharp pair of scissors is usually sufficient to cut the stems. You don't want to pull the old blooms off with your fingers. Doing so causes damage to the stems and encourages diseases.

If you grow roses in containers you will need to move them inside for the winter. They prefer extra humidity so putting them on a pebble tray with water will make them happier.

I hear a lot of comments that roses don't grow well in Arizona, they are labor-intensive and prone to lots of problems. None of those is true. Roses grow very well here and can be a beautiful addition to your yard. Ursula Schuch Ph.D. from the Plant Sciences department at the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension has a guide available on rose-growing in Arizona available online. The link is below. The article is simple, easy to follow, and has lots of pictures about how to plant and prune and information on problems with roses. At the end, there is information on two other publications that might help you. They focus on full-size roses, but the miniatures aren't much different.

<https://cals.arizona.edu/extension/ornamentalhort/landscapemgmt/aclp/rosecare.pdf>

Safety in the Storm

by Nora Graf

Dire news is about all we hear when it comes to the environment. It can be overwhelming and depressing. Every once in a while, some news comes along about things we can do as individuals. Today's news is to plant flowers!

The bee and butterfly crises is well documented. Habitat loss, changing climate, the lack of suitable native plants, and pesticides are just some of the problems reducing the populations of native bees and butterflies. Did you know there are 3600 native species of bees in North America and that most live in the ground and are so small you probably don't notice them.

An ecologist studied how non-native vs. native habitats attracted bees. The study was conducted at Mt. Cuba Center near Wilmington, Delaware.

Turns out the highest diversity of bees wasn't found in natural areas but in human-planted gardens. By planting a diversity of species that bloomed at different times in the growing season, from early spring thru late winter, the planted gardens provided a nearly year-round supply of nectar and pollen and helped mitigate habitat loss. Your yard can become a safe harbor for many species that are struggling to survive. There has been a lot of focus on planting milkweeds to help monarchs, but it might be better if we planted insect gardens that included milkweeds and invite all the neighbors.

This information came from an article by Adrian Higgins in the Washington Post. I've included the link, but it may be behind a paywall.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/home/declining-bee-population-survey-garden/2021/04/27/81c56962-a14f-11eb-85fc-06664ff4489d_story.html?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&wpisrc=nl_homes&utm_campaign=wp_at_home

https://sarverecological.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Meadows_and_Buffers_for_Bees.pdf

These sites can help you start an Arizona pollinator garden and includes information about non-insect pollinators including bats and rodents.

<https://www.pollinator.org/PDFs/Guides/AmericanSemiDesert.rx8.pdf>

<https://environmentarizona.org/resources/ame/guide-planting-pollinator-friendly-garden>

<https://extension.arizona.edu/sites/extension.arizona.edu/files/attachment/Pollinators.pdf>



Congratulations

for completing your first 50 hours

Martha Frisella mentor Nancy Christie

The Hours Reporting fiscal year ends June 30th. Please report all hours by July 5th.



Yavapai Gardens Searches

Because the Yavapai Gardens newsletters are on our website as pdf files, they are not searchable. However, the specific horticulture topics found in each newsletter are now noted next to the newsletter link. Hopefully this will help if you are looking for a particular subject. Thank you Jo Glaves and Kim Corcoran for compiling the data. <https://extension.arizona.edu/yavapai-gardens-newsletters>

2021 Newsletter Deadline Schedule

The newsletter comes out every two months. Please note the deadlines.

Publish	Date	Deadline
Feb-Mar	Feb 1	Articles Jan 5, announcements Jan 25
April-May	April 1	Articles March 5, announcements Mar 25
June-July	June 1	Articles May 5, announcements May 25
Aug-Sept	Aug 1	Articles July 5, announcements July 25
Oct-Nov	Oct 1	Articles Sept 5, announcements Sept 25
Dec-Jan	Dec 1	Articles Nov 5, announcements Nov 25

From the Editor: Send or email articles to the address below. Email is preferred. Please see schedule for deadlines.

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MG NEWSLETTER



Next Meetings

Still Zooming! Next Meeting is June 16. Watch for Mary's email with the link.

