We fell in love with this property in 2012. We liked that it was an acre and a-half of Sonoran Desert that was adjacent to more desert. The most northern area was cleared when our neighbors built their home. It was barren when we purchased it.

To revegetate the desert, the focus is on Tucson native plants. They are the most apt to thrive. Sonoran Desert native plants are second, and then desert adapted plants. Tucson native plants are in all xeriscape zones. The flowering ornamental desert adapted plants are kept close to the house and driveway. Importantly, we strive to keep our plants thriving, then they are less likely to become diseased or bothered by pests.

There are three habitats: a large Certified Wildlife Habitat, a Butterfly Habitat, and a Certified Monarch Habitat. While we do not feed the wildlife, we do have fresh water available for birds, animals, reptiles, and bees. The native plants provide food, shelter, and safety for raising young, this in turn supports the natural wildlife we love to observe.

### Gardening Basics

**Watering:** Passive water harvesting berms and basins capture rain water and slow it down so it can seep into the soil instead of run-off. Ultimately, there will be grey and active water harvesting. Supplemental drip irrigation is used to support plant vigor.

**Soil:** Caliche covers about 75% of the property. It is removed and clean native soil is put in its place when digging holes for all transplants. Drainage is also ensured.

**Fertilization:** New plantings receive a blend of bone meal, blood meal, powdered sulphur, compost, and mycorrhizae in their well dug planting holes.

**Pest control:** We practice Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and use natural predators like green lace wings, to control pests. I disperse their eggs in 3 waves in the spring. Tender new plants are covered with cloches to protect them from hungry bunnies.

### Gardening Philosophy:

My best advice is to “work with nature not against it.”