Events & Activities

MG Association Meeting, Aug 19, 6:30pm, Cottonwood. Don Troutman, Ponds. See back page.

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.

Pond Club - this is an informal group that meets every couple of months, usually the 3rd week. Email aquaticgardens@esedona.net for more information.

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.

Verde Valley Iris Society, next meeting Aug 27, 5:30pm, Public Safety Building, Cottonwood, call Linda Smith at 928-567-7470

Table of Contents

Squash Bugs. . . 1
Meet a MG, Bobbie Jo Goslin . . 3
Verde Valley Farmers Market . . 4
Yard Sale . . . 5

Squash bugs

Anasa tristis

by Nora Graf

Well, its August and its hot. Loved the long spring this year but it’s not much more than a fond memory and it’s time to face the difficulties of the summer garden. One of those difficulties is squash bugs. These insects can reek havoc on squash, pumpkins, cucumbers and melons. I’ve only had one real experience with squash bugs and it was one of those Hollywood horror flick experiences where you suddenly gasp in fear and step back in a hurry.

I had a few squash plants growing well and one day I went to check on them. Moved a few leaves around and there they were, thousands—no millions of them (well a few more than you’d normally expect anyway.) So many that I just gave up on the squash and ignored them. Surprisingly, I did have a few squash that year. For those that have a less laissez faire attitude towards insects, there are some things you can do. But first a bit of information.

Squash bugs are about 1/2 to 5/8 inch long, grayish, yellowish brown, dark brown to black, sometimes speckled and with dense black hairs with orange or brown abdominal perimeter. (See picture; color descriptions vary a bit from book to book.) They have a very distinctive, unpleasant odor when squished. Sometimes they are called stink bugs, which are really something else entirely. The eggs are orangish-yellow to brown-bronze and shiny, either found singly or in groups on the undersides of the leaves. The eggs are laid starting in the spring and through midsummer, either on the stems or the undersides of the leaves. The nymph (baby squash bugs) are a yellowish green with a dark abdomen and thorax and turn darker as they age. By late summer to early fall they have grown to adults. Both adults and nymphs feed on the plants. They have piercing/sucking mouth parts. Look for small yellow specks that start to show on the leaves and stems and then they turn yellow and then brown, eventually causing the vines to wilt. Smaller plants can be killed. Larger plants may survive but likely won’t produce much,
depending on the damage. Squash bugs will also feed on the fruit later in the season.

To find these insects you really need to inspect the undersides of the leaves, even under dead leaves. Pumpkin and squashes are the most affected, with zucchini squash the least affected. Wouldn’t you know it!

Because of their ability to hide they are difficult to control. One simple thing you can do is remove all the leafy, dried debris you might have on the ground once the plant is finished for the year. They like to hide under all that stuff, including boards and piles of trash and you do not want to provide them homes while they wait for next year’s plants. On the other hand, you can use boards to work against them. Place boards around the squash plants and then early in the morning turn the boards over and ambush them. You can vacuum them up or handpick them. Check the leaves for eggs and nymphs and remove them. These are all temporary measures that you will have to repeat throughout the season. You can use insecticides but they will only provide a temporary lowering of the numbers. Check the pesticide label to make sure it’s appropriate for squash bugs.

Unmated adults overwinter, hiding under debris you may have left around and under rocks and other protected places. On a happy note, any nymphs still around when it gets cold will be killed. The adults will emerge in the spring and try and to new plants and look for mates. Females lay their eggs until midsummer. After hatching, the nymph will take four to six weeks to become an adult. There is usually only one generation per year.

They do have an insect predator, a tachinid fly (*Trichopoda pennipes*) that is now being used in the east and California. The fly parasitizes the bugs and is quite effective at reducing the numbers.

---

**Summer Reading:** *Flower Confidential*  
by Amy Stewart

Did you know that many of the flowers you buy at the grocery store or florist shop start their life in Ecuador or Columbia? Did you know they are shipped to the Netherlands for the largest flower auction in the world and then shipped around the world (including the U.S.) to be sold on the retail market? I think I resent it a little that those flowers get to go places I’ll never go. (I finally get a passport and the cost of travel goes crazy—just my luck!) This was just one of the more interesting things I found out in Amy Stewart’s rather gentle expose of the cut flower industry. Another is that roses are dipped in a fungicide right before they are boxed up and shipped. There are other sadder results to this practice than the thought of your handling roses from now on. Growing flowers for commercial purposes is so different than cutting your own from your garden it’s amazing. The rose industry is especially bizarre when compared to home growing. Did you know that they have roses that grow on 5-foot stems? Wouldn’t exactly work in my house but I guess maybe in a convention center. Then there is the function of fashion in growing flowers. Every year they come up with new, bigger, brighter, more colorful, more and more flowers, just to satisfy our whims of style and fashion. And what about the man who developed the stargazer lily? The one you see in all those bouquets. It’s a multimillion dollar trade—and he made only a few thousand dollars for his work and died in poverty. It all makes for an interesting story. Pick up the book for a good summer reading project.
Meet a Master Gardener – Bobbie Jo Gooslin (2007)
By Jay S. Fleishman

What is that noise? There goes the neighborhood! Actually she is a pleasant looking young lady. I think I’ll take her a bunch of rosemary as a housewarming present. Have to take care of the across-the-street neighbors. Bobbie Jo Gooslin bought her first house!

Bobbie Jo has been a gardener for many years and loves to make flower arrangements. Here is her big chance to grow all the flowers she needs in her new big yard. But first she has to come across the street to tell me I need to start having gardens. She’ll help. What about the gophers? She has never had any trouble with gophers. Well wait until she starts planting in this neighborhood! I’ve tried water in the gopher holes, smoke bombs, strychnine laced grain (you wind up with a big patch of rye or whatever). Hadn’t tried traps (too much trouble) or electric sound sources (too expensive). So she came over to my backyard and we put down chicken wire flat on the ground covered by garden cloth covered with 20 bags of potting soil, etc. She planted my first vegetable garden and the setup worked great. Next there was an herb garden and several flower gardens. The following year she did a second larger vegetable garden.

Meanwhile a church needed a change in their flower garden and Bobbie Jo spent several weeks and a considerable amount of her own money to fix the garden for them. Then there was a care facility that needed a completely new patio garden. Each spring, Bobbie Jo prepares a dozen flower center pieces for the Cottonwood Public Library volunteer luncheon. Busy lady!

Bobbie Jo was born in Kentucky and raised in Phoenix and Cornville, Arizona. After high school and a brief time in California, she came to Cottonwood where her family lives and worked for many years in the emergency room at the Verde Valley Medical Center. With many family issues and medical problems, she started classes at Yavapai College in Clarkdale and is now ready to complete her associate degree in Sociology-Psychology.

Her yard has been transformed dramatically with several rose bushes, photinia, butterfly bushes, asters, and sunflowers. There are new flower plots this year and the front yard is a jungle of sunflowers of several varieties. She propagates Spanish broom and mulberry trees from cuttings and transplants. The backyard has tricky terrain and has been landscaped with gravel. There are a number of ornamentals in boxes and in holes lined by chicken wire. But the gophers are flourishing! So she installed an electric sound emitter and we will see if that helps.

Bobbie Jo graduated from the 2007 Master Gardener class in Prescott and has worked with the Speaker’s Bureau giving presentations on mistletoe and cold frames. She also has lectured on sedums for the Master Gardener Association and assisted with the 2008 Master Gardener class in Cottonwood. Her mentor was Jeanette T eets.

Bobbie Jo’s intense love of gardening in general and flower arrangements in particular, together with her delightful style of presentations, make her a major asset for the Master Gardener Association.
Fort Verde State Historic Park is the best preserved example of an Indian Wars period fort in Arizona. From 1865 through 1890 Camp Lincoln, Camp Verde and finally Fort Verde were home to officers, doctors, families, enlisted men, and scouts. Fort Verde was the primary base for General George Crook's U.S. Army scouts and soldiers. (http://azstateparks.com/Parks/parkhtml/fortverde.html)

The Verde Valley Farmer's Market opens at 8 am each Saturday from mid June until the first week in October in the ramada next to Fort Verde. In order to use one of the fixed tables under the ramada, the merchant needs to arrive before 7 am because the limited number of tables is quickly taken. All produce must be grown within a 50 mile radius of Camp Verde, according to Jane Davie, this year's market manager. Customers often arrive early and much of the produce has disappeared by 10 am.

More than 20 gardeners and farmers sell lettuce, onion, garlic, beets, zucchini, artichokes, cucumbers, potatoes, apricots, peaches, tomatoes, corn, melons, okra, beans, blackberries, apples, sunflowers, herbs and gourds. Home-made items include salsas, compost, llama yarn and woven items, pottery, jewelry, fine art works, furniture, and metal work.

“Greyhounds of the Verde Valley” bring their dogs each week. House plants are sold by the Citizens Committee for the Camp Verde Library to raise money for the new building. Live music is provided by a number of singers and instrument-alists.

The Master Gardeners have one of the more popular tables. The committee is managed by cochairmen Karen Morris and Kay Huff who completed the Master Gardener classes this past spring. The table is popular with the master gardeners because they often learn as much as the clients who stop to ask questions. Some of the master gardeners bring interesting problems from their own gardens for the clients to see. Another benefit to master gardeners is the opportunity to meet other members of the Association.

A number of reference books are available to assist visitors with specific questions: “What plant (insect, etc.) is this?” “How do I get rid of Bermuda grass?” “Why don’t my tomato plants have fruit?” “Why is one tree dying while the rest of the orchard looks good?” “What is the best way to get rid of aphids (spider mites, ants, grasshoppers)?”

And the classic question: “What are we supposed to do with this awful soil?” Often this question is asked by a newcomer who previously lived in an area with more fertile soil, near sea level, with more humidity, better water quality and quantity, and other amenities not found in our area. The soil gets the blame when other considerations may be more responsible for failure to grow a satisfactory garden. Sometimes the expectations of the gardener are out of proportion to the reality of gardening in the mountains where the air has less oxygen, carbon dioxide and water vapor.

Composting versus mulching is sometimes discussed. Both are important and both need an explanation. The ‘Square Foot Garden’ has become more popular because of the ease of management, minimal expense and conservation of water.

Water test kits are on sale each with the minimal packet costing $8 and an arsenic kit costing for $24.

Well, it is time for me to survey the produce and meet some of the gardeners offering vegetables and herbs from their gardens. We always learn from other people’s problems and solutions!
MG Yard Sale

Thanks to everyone who donated items, who planned and organized the event and to those who worked hard on the day of the event.
**Bird Granola**

I enjoy watching the birds that come to my feeders even if most days it’s just sparrows and house finches. For me it isn’t the species, it’s just the birds. I’ve been trying different ways to attract them and found this recipe. In our ever expanding urban environment birds need all the help they can get. If you have multiple feeders, place them at different heights and locations, including trays or platforms on the ground. Ground feeders need open space to prevent cats and other predators from sneaking up on them. Keep them away from shrubs and other things where something can hide. Hanging feeders can go close to trees and shrubs. It allows birds to flee into cover if they see something that frightens them. Different feeding strategies attract different birds. This “granola” for birds is a real treat you can try in your feeders. Feel free to add other or different ingredients. In the winter suet can be added.

1 cup corn or peanut oil
1 cup honey
2 cups chopped nuts
2 cups millet
1 cup wheat germ
2 cup raisins or other dried fruit (do not use coconut!)
2 cups hulled sunflower seeds
2 cups crumbled dog biscuits

Mix the oil and honey, then heat gently just until they blend together. Mix the other ingredients in a large bowl. Add the warm honey and oil and stir to combine. Press mix into a shallow baking pan. Bake at 375°F for 10 minutes.

---

**Ranch Explorers Day**
http://ag.arizona.edu/aes/vbarv/ranchexplorersday.htm

This is a U of A, V Bar V Ranch sponsored event. If you haven’t participated before, it is a fun day – you will learn about the ranch, raising cattle, and enjoy a delicious pit BBQ lunch. There are bus pick-ups in Prescott and Cottonwood. The registration form on the website provides more details. The public is invited.

If you do attend your time at the ranch counts as Continuing Education hours. If your questions are not answered with the website information you may contact Debra Pearson, dpearson@ag.arizona.edu.

---

**IRIS SALE**

Verde Area Iris Society First Rhizome Sale outside Mount Hope in Cottonwood from 10 to 2, Labor Day-Sept 1.
MG Calendar

August 16, Flower Arranging Workshop, 9-12:00 a.m., $25.00 charge—call Cynthia Cartier-Roberts to reserve your spot now—pay by July 26th, only certified Master Gardeners may attend.

August 20, Cottonwood—Don Troutman—“Ponds”

September 13, Autumn Outreach Fair at Mortimer Nursery, showcases local non-profits dedicated to gardening and conservation.

September 17, Prescott—Pattie Conrad—“Fall Gardening”

September 18-21—Yavapai County Fair

October 13 & 14—Arizona Highlands Garden Conference, Prescott Resort

October 26—Recognition Awards & Picnic—Verde Valley

November 19, Prescott—Elections; Panel—“The State of Organics in the Food Distribution Industry”

December—No Meeting

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.

Nora Graf
PO Box 3652
Camp Verde, AZ 86322
mesquite2@hotmail.com
(928) 567-6703

Plant ID at Heritage Park Zoo, Prescott
The Heritage Park Zoo in Prescott is looking for someone to identify some of their native plants. They would like to know the names of the plants and if they are poisonous for the animals that browse on them. If you’d like to do it but will need input from others the Native Plant Picture ID project group probably has some information that will assist you. Please contact Mary Barnes, mcbarn1@cableone.net.

Tree Shaker
An almond tree grower in the Verde area is trying to locate a tree shaker (machine you attach to the tree that shakes the nuts off). He has checked the retail outlets and rental places with no luck. If any of you have input let me know.

Shift Open in Prescott Ext Office
The Friday morning phone shift is still available in the Prescott Extension Office. I guarantee you will not be bored and will learn a lot. Let me know if you are interested.

Jeff Schalau
County Director, Yavapai County Extension Agent,
Agriculture & Natural Resources
email: jschalau@ag.arizona.edu

Prescott
840 Rodeo Dr.
Building C
Prescott, AZ 86305
(928) 445-6590
FAX: (928) 445-6593

Cottonwood
2657 Village Dr.
Cottonwood, AZ 86326
(928) 646-9113
Don Troutman, who has lived all over the U.S., from New York to Alaska to the Southwest, will be talking about “Ponds” at the August MGA meeting in Cottonwood. As a young man Don started out working for a garden center and landscaper and, after diverse and interesting careers, returned to landscaping where he enjoys the challenges of water gardens. He is a member of the International Water Lily and Water Gardening Society, the National Pond-builders Association and the Valley of the Sun Koi Club. As a local resident, Don started the Verde Valley Water Garden and Koi Club and the first water garden tours in the Verde Valley. This presentation promises to be interesting to all master gardeners and especially those interested in adding a pond to their landscape.