I’ve found when I get the rare opportunity to travel, instead of seeking out historic sites and shopping opportunities, I want to see gardens. The folks from “Colorado Gardening” have gathered a list of the 20 most popular. (http://www.coloradogardenclub.com/the-top-20-best-public-gardens-to-visit-in-the-united-states.html) So if you get itchy feet, here are a few places to look for.

The most popular is the **National Arboretum in Washington, D.C.** The arboretum is run by the Department of Agriculture. (The government can do things well, in spite of popular opinion!) They have a variety of gardens and special programs, check out the website once you decide on a date. One that would be quite spectacular this year is the Azalea Bonsai Exhibit, May 26 to June 10. You can also check out their average blooming date page and see what you might expect to see when you arrive. [http://www.usna.usda.gov/index.html](http://www.usna.usda.gov/index.html)

Too late for this year’s cherry blossoms, but there is a lot more at the National Arboretum. There is a second site in Washington D.C., also—the United States Botanic Garden. [http://www.usbg.gov/](http://www.usbg.gov/)

The **Brooklyn Botanic Garden** comes in at number two. I’ve used their website. I’ve heard about them but never been there, one of these days maybe…… They have a good website with a page about what’s blooming. You might try for the water lilies blooming June through September or orchids all summer long. [http://www.bbg.org](http://www.bbg.org)

If you are planning a trip to Brooklyn you might want to take the time to go to the New York Botanical Garden In the Bronx. It is #4 on the list. [www.bbg.org](http://www.bbg.org)

The **Chicago Botanic Gardens** is # 6 and I have been there. Among the more memorable moments were the water lilies and Echinacea. I know Echinacea doesn’t sound that exciting but this was before it became a hot nursery plant and you rarely saw it out here. But there it was, this wall of blooming Echinacea. I’ve been trying to grow it ever since. While I couldn’t find a blooming calendar, check out their website for lots of information. They do have a section for what is currently blooming. [http://www.chicagobotanic.org/visit/](http://www.chicagobotanic.org/visit/)
Chocolate and gardening, couldn't go wrong there. The company that now owns Hersey's chocolate (Hersey, Pennsylvania) has moved much of the chocolate manufacturing out of town, but the original owner left a legacy of good works, among them the Hershey Gardens. For 75 years the garden has gone from a "nice garden of roses" to 23 acres of trees, flowers and shrubs. They have a butterfly house, children's activities and theme gardens. [www.hersheygardens.org](http://www.hersheygardens.org/)

I've heard of Longwood Gardens, (Kennett Square, Pennsylvania) for years, but have never had the pleasure of going there. I think it would be worth the trip. I have heard it is one of the finest gardens in the world. They have 11,000 plants indoors and out. There is a festival of fountains May 26 to September 2. The pictures on the website are staggering. Think this could be added to the bucket list. [www.longwoodgardens.org](http://www.longwoodgardens.org)

Southern travelers can check out the New Orleans Botanical Gardens, the Memphis Botanic Garden and the Missouri Botanic Garden in St. Louis.

The New Orleans Botanical Garden started out as a WPA project. They do have an event calendar so you can plan ahead but their "What's in Bloom" page doesn't seem to be working, but there is enough information to plan your trip or just be adventurous and stop in. [http://garden.neworleanscitypark.com](http://garden.neworleanscitypark.com)

I'd check out the lantern festival this summer at the Missouri Botanical Gardens, sounds amazing—ZooLights of the botanical world. To plan your trip the website does have a blooming calendar to check out. [www.missouribotanicalgarden.org](http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/)

The Memphis Botanic Garden has an iris garden, a day-lily garden, a water garden and many others. Their website is easy to use for planning your trip. [www.memphisbotanicgarden.com](http://www.memphisbotanicgarden.com)

The San Antonio Botanical Garden, San Antonio, Texas includes formal gardens that change seasonally along with a Texas Native trail which might be a good place to check out possibilities for your garden. The website has a calendar of events for planning your trip. [www.sabot.org/](http://www.sabot.org/)

Beaumont Botanical Garden, Beaumont, Texas, is apparently the only public garden in Southeast Texas. It has a variety of theme gardens including bromeliads, natives and a rose garden. Birdwatchers should enjoy this garden also as it is on a flyway. Their website is awful and not very useful, but it will help you find it. [www.beaumontbotanicalgardens.org](http://www.beaumontbotanicalgardens.org)

The Denver Botanical Garden has been on the cutting edge of using low-water plants and rethinking the modern garden in the west. They have embraced the West as botanically interesting as the bulb gardens, roses, azaleas and rhododendrons of the east. If you are going to be in Denver several days they have more than one location they manage. Nice, easy-to-use website to plan your trip. [www.botanicgardens.org/](http://www.botanicgardens.org/)

Red Butte Garden is in Salt Lake City, Utah. I missed it all the times I traveled through Salt Lake City. Then again, I was a lot younger at the time and wasn't as interested in gardens. They have Monday family nights, campouts, a Halloween celebration: Garden after Dark, and other classes and events. [www.redbuttegarden.org](http://www.redbuttegarden.org)

I have been to the San Francisco Botanical Garden, but it has been so long ago, it won't even resemble what I remember, which may be good for a garden. I'll have to plan to see their magnolia bloom (in April) one of these days. Love magnolia blossoms! They have a camellia garden, a Southeast Asian Cloud Forest along with col-
lections from Australia, New Zealand and Chile. Besides, San Francisco is one of the great cities of the world. It is one of the few cities I actually want to visit again. (I’m not much of a big city person) They also have great public transportation so you don’t have to drive yourself around. www.sfbotanicalgardensociety.org

The Santa Barbara Botanic Garden, Santa Barbara, California; focuses on native plants. They have a Ceanothus (California lilacs) collection, a chaparral section, a manzanita collection and a redwood forest among the gardens. www.sbbg.org

The following garden didn’t make it on the top 20 garden list but thought I would add it.

The Huntington Library, Art Collection and Botanical Gardens, San Marino, CA has a rose garden, but what interests me is their desert garden. The pictures show an amazing collection of succulents and it doesn’t stop there. They have lily ponds, palm gardens, a Chinese garden even a Shakespeare garden. One of these days I’m going for a long drive! Then there is the art gallery. Can’t go wrong. Check out the webpage for a calendar of events. www.huntington.org

Lastly I would like to mention that there are many small and lesser known public gardens out there. If you travel, take the time to check them out. Portland, Oregon comes to mind as they have enough gardens to keep you busy for several days. One of the great things about the Internet is information is a few keystrokes away. Don’t forget Arizona has some great botanical gardens also. Explore, travel and see exciting things!

Searching Yavapai Gardens

Trying to find something in the back issues of Yavapai Gardens has always been difficult. There is a partial index available but I never seem to be able to keep it up to date. Steve Moody has finally figured out a way to do it and it works better than the U of AZ’s CALS search engine.

Go to: http://www.arizona.edu/search/google

In the search window type in: “Yavapai Gardens” (including the quotes) and the topic you are looking for. For example:

"Yavapai Gardens" tomato blight

The search engine retrieves all the issues with tomato blight information.

Thanks Steve, for figuring out how to make the newsletter a user friendly resource!

VERDE VALLEY FARMERS’ MARKET
JUNE 2ND - OCTOBER 6TH, 2012
Saturdays 8:00am - 12:00pm
Ramada next to Ft. Verde State Park
Camp Verde, AZ
Buy Local - Eat Fresh
Meet a Master Gardener: Steve Moody
by Steve Moody

Family has been a very big influence on my gardening life. My father grew up on a farm outside of Newark, Delaware and both my parents worked in the yard of our home near New Castle, Delaware. My first garden work was cutting lawns for my parents and neighbors. To this day I appreciate the appearance of a good lawn—outside Arizona. I also remember visiting Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania. For any Master Gardener visiting the Philadelphia area, DON’T MISS these gardens. Once the estate of industrialist Pierre S. DuPont II, Longwood has an affiliation with the University of Delaware College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

I went to the University of Delaware and received a BA in History and a MA in Economics. While working at the Federal Reserve Board in Washington, D.C., I met Sue, who became my wife and gardening companion. For most of my career, I was an economic and statistical analyst for consulting firms, government, and the private sector in the Midwest. Sue and I spent a lot of weekends planting and maintaining flowers, shrubs, trees, and occasionally vegetables in our homes in Chicago, Michigan and Wisconsin. It was very rewarding, and we enjoyed working together, but we were always glad to break from the work after the growing season.

On our first trip to Arizona in January 1994, we visited the Desert Botanical Garden in Phoenix. I didn’t think that I would like Arizona, but I did. It didn’t hurt that the wind chill in southeastern Michigan was 20 below during that trip. The trip to the Desert Botanical Garden opened my mind to how plants, and life in general, adapt to Arizona’s harsh climate. The Desert Botanical Garden is one of my favorite places in Arizona.

Sue attended the Desert Landscaper Course at the Desert Botanical Garden, and then she took the Master Gardener class in 2003. I learned a lot from her and those course materials, and I knew I needed to learn more. I remember well pulling up some small plants that I thought were weeds. I since discovered that those “weeds” were penstemons. So I signed up for the Master Gardener class in 2006, in Cottonwood. I liked learning more about botany, especially low-water-use landscape plants. When I took the Master Gardener class, I told Jeff Schalau that class day was “Science Wednesday,” after the National Public Radio program called “Science Friday.”

As a result of the class, I’ve learned to plant cacti and agave without injuring myself badly. It helps to wrap old carpet padding around those plants. I also spend more time identifying plants I see on our property and on my hikes. I volunteer most Monday afternoons for the Master Gardener help desk on the Verde Valley side of the mountain.

In the future, I’d like to become better at plant and problem identification, and I’d like to propagate native plants that are appropriate for Sedona’s climate. I also want to advance my macro (close-up) photography of plants and flowers. I’m an avid photographer and Photoshop CS user and a member of the Sedona Arts Center, the Sedona Camera Club, and the Sedona Visual Artists Coalition. I love Sedona-area hiking trails and I carry my camera everywhere to be prepared when I encounter “a scene that stops me in my tracks.”

The best piece of advice I could give to a gardener who is new to the area is to read the Newcomer’s packet available from the Yavapai County Cooperative Extension Service. Go for native, low-water-use plants. Tending native plants is less work than trying to sustain plants not adapted for this climate. Xeriscape can be very attractive. Avoid lawns. Don’t overextend yourself.

We all have heard the phrase “Caveat Emptor—let the buyer beware.” There is a lot of information on the Internet, but it’s a matter of “Caveat Lector—let the reader beware.” In Master Gardener classes Jeff taught us the importance of “peer reviewed research.” Jeff’s Backyard Gardener column archives are the first place I look for answers. The Yavapai County Cooperative Extension Service publications and those from the University of Arizona are also good. Rather than “Google” your plant questions, try E-Answers: http://e-answers.adec.edu/ E-Answers searches Extension Services throughout the United States. I’ve discovered very good information for our climate from Extension programs in Nevada, Colorado, and New Mexico.
Do you have some extra room in your garden or flowerbeds? Want something interesting and beautiful to grow? How about an artichoke? When I see artichokes in stores they seem like a lot of work, but when you pick them fresh out of the garden, it is worth it. Even if you are not a big artichoke eater, they are dramatic plants to have in the garden and produce big beautiful flowers.

Artichokes are a thistle. I don’t know why someone tried to figure out how to eat a thistle but they have been around a long time. While the origins of artichokes are lost in time, it is thought they came from North Africa. Seeds from cultivated artichokes have been found in Egypt dating from the Roman period. There is a variety called cardoon that is native to the South Mediterranean although not much is known of their history either. Ancient Greeks cultivated them in Sicily, improving on the wild variety. Sometime later, perhaps in the 9th century, artichokes were being grown in Italy and France. Artichokes came to England, via the Dutch, where King Henry VIII grew them in his gardens. It wasn’t until the 19th century that they came to the United States, brought by French immigrants to Louisiana, while the Spanish brought them to California. Today California grows the entire US crop.

It’s easiest to just buy a couple of plants at the nursery. These are huge plants and need a lot of space. You can start them from seeds. They can be grown as annuals although technically they are perennials. Growing as an annual only gives you a limited harvest but if you live in colder areas that might be the only way to do it. The plants are not winter hardy. A variety called “Imperial Star” has been developed for annual growth and “Northern Star” should overwinter in some colder locations.

Treat them as you would most vegetables, with good watering practices and feeding periodically. If the plant overwinters, your crop should improve the second year. After 2 to 3 years, production drops so replace the plant or remove the oldest-largest part of the plant and let one of the suckers take over. Artichokes produce in the spring although they will produce throughout the summer usually with smaller buds. When harvesting, cut the bud with about an inch of stem. If you don’t harvest artichokes to eat, let them bloom; they have a spectacular purple thistle flower, which can be dried.

Facing down a prickly flower bud is a daunting moment, but it is actually very easy to prepare and eat artichokes. You can pick and eat artichokes right away but they will also handle cooking and eating at another time. They keep well in the refrigerator.

Cut the stem close to the bottom of the bud. Cut away the top scales by a quarter. Scissors probably work best unless you have a very sharp knife. Then boil or steam until tender. Leave the lid off of the pan. Covered artichokes will turn an unappetizing brown. A bit of vinegar or lemon juice can help prevent that. While cooking, prepare a hollandaise sauce, mayonnaise, aioli or just melt some butter. Pull off a leaf; dip the thick end into the sauce and then into your mouth. Use your teeth to gently scrape the soft end off. Once you get to the center, remove the thistly portion and then you can eat the soft heart. If that doesn’t appeal to you, try a jar of pickled artichokes. They are great in salads and stuffings. Before you give up on them keep in mind that artichokes are very high in antioxidants.

**Easy lamb tagine with artichokes & lemon**

400g (14 ounces) diced lamb shoulder
1 onion, finely chopped
1 garlic clove, crushed
Pinch of saffron
¼ tsp ground ginger
1 tbsp olive oil
Vegetable stock
Squeeze of lemon juice
Peel from 1 preserved lemon from a jar, finely chopped
A few artichoke wedges from a jar
2 tbsp each chopped coriander and parsley
Couscous to serve

Trim excess fat from the lamb shoulder, put in a pan with the onion, crushed garlic clove, saffron, ground ginger, olive oil and enough vegetable stock to just cover. Cover and simmer for 1 hour 30 minutes, stirring occasionally, until meat is tender, adding splashes of water to keep meat covered. Add a squeeze of lemon juice, the finely chopped peel from the preserved lemon and a few artichoke wedges. Cook for another 10 minutes then stir in the chopped coriander and parsley. Spoon over couscous to serve. Recipe from olive magazine, October 2009.
This time of year, the weeds seem overwhelming. Sometimes it’s so easy to just ignore them and hope they go away. My advice (although not always taken by me) is to make sure you keep at it. Anytime you can reduce the number of weed seeds being let loose in your garden it is a good thing.

Realistically it is hard to do. Your shoes drag in seeds, pets gather them up and deposit them. The neighbors, their pets and strays and wildlife do the same thing. Birds and wind also do their bit to cover your yard in weeds. Once the seeds get in your yard they can survive an incredibly long time, creating a seed reservoir just waiting for the right conditions and add to your work load.

In 1879, William James Beal of then Michigan Agriculture College (Michigan State University today) experimented with seed viability. He took seeds from 20 common weeds and buried them in bottles three feet below ground. Every 5 years he would dig up samples and test the viability. Michigan State kept up the project when Beal retired. 120 years later many of the seeds would still germinate. In this case the common moth mullein had the best record but seeds that are hundreds of years old will still germinate. Several have been confirmed to be over a 1000 years old have germinated. One was a 2000 year old date palm seed found in Israel, along with a Chinese lotus dated to 1400 years old. One interesting example were the seeds found in the papers of the Dutch merchant, Jan Teerlink. Teerlink’s ship was captured by British privateers around 1802-3 on a return trip from the Far East via the Cape of Good Hope, South Africa. His papers ended up at the National Archives in London where the seeds were eventually found. Two legumes and one protea species germinated (apparently germinated around late 1990’s, early 2000).

Normally the key to seed survival seems to be low temperatures and low moisture. Seed banks dry their seeds to between 4% and 6% moisture and store them at -20°C. Wheat kept at a constant 16°C is estimated to save one seed out of a thousand after 236 years. Now our yards aren’t going to have those conditions but with our low humidity, seeds are better able to survive from season to season which is what in most cases is all they need to do. Then we come along and disturb the soil, add water and we have weeds. The key to reducing the weeds is reducing the seeds they produce. Good luck with that.
**Master Gardener News**

**New Master Gardeners**

Instead of a speaker for May 16th meeting we will be welcoming the newest class of Master Gardeners. All MGs are encouraged to attend and meet the new members.

**Monsoon Madness**

Now is the time to be potting plants for our Monsoon Madness sale. If you need supplies or advice on how to divide, pot, etc. contact Sherry Morton, sherrymorton@cableone.net, 776-4620.

Please let Cathy Michener, caasam@cableone.net know what you plan to donate. Anything yard related, all tools, etc., in addition to plants are needed.

Sign-ups for volunteer positions will begin in May – watch for the e-mail message.

**Farmers Market Tables**

Chair positions for the Sedona and Camp Verde markets are still open. Contact Mary Barnes, mcbarn1@cableone.net, 583-0889.

**Iris Rhizome Sale**

Prescott Area Iris Society (PAIS)

Our annual iris rhizome sale has hundreds of Iris for sale, all colors of the rainbow. Proceeds used to purchase educational materials for library and maintain Iris beds at Yavapai College Sculpture Garden.

For information call Judy (928) 776-7217 or Dan (602) 300-5791. Visit our web site at http://www.prescottirissociety.org.

Three locations and dates:

Sharlot Hall Museum  
415 N. Gurley Street, Prescott, AZ  
Saturday, July 21, 2012 11:00AM to 5:00PM  
Sunday, July 22, 2012 12:00PM to 4:00PM

Lavender Tea House  
1097 N. James, Chino Valley, AZ  
Friday July 27, 2012 10:00AM to 2:00PM

Dan’s Garden  
17618 Foothill Road, Yarnell, AZ  
Saturday, July 28, 2012 10:00AM to 2:00PM

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  
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Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture,Jeffrey C. Silvertooth, Associate Dean & Director, Economic Development & Extension, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, The University of Arizona. The University of Arizona is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution. The University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, or sexual orientation in its programs and activities.
Next Meeting
May 16, Cottonwood, 6:30pm

Master Gardener Class Welcome
Instead of a speaker for May 16th meeting we will be welcoming the newest class of Master Gardeners. All MGs are encouraged to attend and meet the new members.

Cottonwood Recreation Center
150 S. 6th St.
Cottonwood, AZ