**Events & Activities**

MG Recognition Picnic, Sept. 14, MG Meeting Sept 18.

Alta Vista Gardening Club, Prescott, fourth Tuesday of the month, 12:30 pm. Call 928-458-9508 for information.

Prescott Area Gourd Society, third Tuesday of the month, 6:30 pm, at the Smoki Museum.

Prescott Orchid Society, 3rd Sunday of the month, 2 pm at the Prescott Library, (928) 717-0623

Prescott Area Iris Society call 928-445-8132 for date and place information.

Mountain View Garden Club, Prescott Valley, Dewey area, 2nd Friday of the month, 1:30 pm, call 775-4993

Native Plant Society Meetings - Prescott. 2nd Thursday of the month, 6:30 pm. Attending the talk qualifies as Continuing Education. Non-members are welcome. Highlands Center for Natural History, 1375 S. Walker Rd. (928-776-9550).

The Verde Thumbs Garden Club, Cottonwood 2nd Tuesday, 6:30 pm at The Seventh Day Adventist Church. (928) 634-7172

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**Edible Desert Plants**

*From the Cochise County Master Gardener Newsletter, “High on the Desert”, September 2004 By Juliana Stangland*

**Vachellia farnesiana** *(Sweet Acacia)*

Description: The acacia is a spreading, usually short, tree with spines and alternate compound leaves. Its individual leaflets are small. Flowers are ball-shaped, bright yellow and very fragrant. The bark is a whitish gray color and its fruits are dark brown and pod-like.

Edible Parts: Its young leaves, flowers and pods are edible raw or cooked.

**Agave sp.**

Description: These plants have large clusters of thick, fleshy leaves borne close to the ground and surrounding a central stalk. These plants produce a massive flower stalk; however, they flower only once, then die.

Edible Parts: Its flowers and flower buds are edible. Boil them before eating.

CAUTION: The juice of some species causes dermatitis in some individuals.

**Amaranth sp.**

Description: Amaranth, which grow 90 to 150 centimeters (approximately 3-5 feet) tall, are abundant weeds in many parts of the world. All amaranth have alternate simple leaves. They may have some red color present on the stems. The plant bear minute, greenish flowers in dense clusters at the top of the plants. Their seeds may be brown or black in weedy species and light colored in domestic species.

Edible Parts: All parts are edible, but some may have sharp spines that need to be removed before eating. The young plants, or the growing tips of older plants, are an excellent vegetable. Simply boil the young plants or eat them raw. Their seeds are very nutritious. Shake the tops of older plants to get the seeds. Eat the seeds raw, boiled, ground into flour, or popped like popcorn.
**Cereus cactus species**

Description: These cacti are tall and narrow with angled stems and numerous spines. They have great displays of night-blooming flowers.

Edible Parts: The fruits are edible but some may have a laxative effect.

**Prickly Pear Cactus (Opuntia species)**

Description: This cactus has flat pad-like stems that are green. Many round, furry dots that contain sharp-pointed hairs cover these stems.

Edible Parts: All parts of this plant are edible. Peel the fruits and eat them fresh or crush them to prepare a refreshing drink. Avoid the tiny pointed hairs. Roast the seeds and grind them into flour.

CAUTION: Avoid any prickly-pear-like plant with milky sap.

**Banana Yucca (Yucca baccata)**

Description: This evergreen plant has coarse, light green foliage and grows to 4 feet tall. It has cream-colored flowers that are seen in the spring.

Edible Parts: the flowers.

**Soaptree Yucca (Yucca elata)**

Description: This evergreen plant has coarse green foliage and grows to 10 feet tall. It has white flowers that bloom in the spring.

Edible Parts: The leaves are edible and can be incorporated into salads.

Miscellaneous Uses of these Plants: The yucca plant can be used to make cords. Use the fibers from its stem. Some species of agaves have very fibrous leaves. Pound the leaves and remove the fibers for weaving and making ropes. The species that have sharp needle tips can be used for sewing or making hooks. The sap of some species contains a chemical that makes a suitable soap. The pulp of the Cereus and barrel cacti are a good source of water. Break open the stem and scoop out the pulp. Peel the prickly pear cactus before putting it in your mouth. The pulp of the prickly pear can also be used to promote healing. Apply pulp directly to the wound. (Ed. Note: I am not sure where the author got her information about barrel cactus but the pulp is full of alkali and not really edible. Cactus are protected species in Arizona and unless you are growing your own or are stranded in the desert with no water you should not be cutting up cactus to eat.)

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**Hi Yavapai Master Gardeners!**

Following is a message from Tara Celenta, Gila County.

I’m thrilled I got to visit Prescott for one of your master gardener meetings. You have a really well put together program! I just want to follow-up with information about the Arizona Highlands Garden Conference on Sustainable Backyard Gardening taking place on October 12th in Miami, AZ, that I presented to your group last week.

For those who don't know, Miami, AZ, is about 120 miles South on I-17 and 70 miles East on Highway 60, or, after I-17 you can take Highway 188.

The Gila County Cooperative Extension has teamed up with the community of Miami to restore the Bullion Plaza gym, which will be the main conference room. Our conference has served as a sort of catalyst to get grant money flowing in order to replace the roof, new kitchen appliances, bathrooms and gym floor. The Phoenix Suns have donated $75,000 to renovate the floor, and will be hosting a "meet the players" at the Bullion Plaza in November.

This year's Friday tours will be held at the Bullion Plaza Museum, Besh-ba-Gowah archaeological ruins, a Behind-the-Scene Reclamation Tour at Freeport McMoran (including a look at their butterfly gardens!), and Bird Watching and Medicinal Plant tours at the Boyce Thompson Arboretum.

The best places for lodging are at the Quality Inn in Globe, Days Inn, and Travel Lodge. If you choose to stay at the Quality Inn, please use the passcode "LAHG" to reserve a room.

If you'd like to view details about the conference, Friday Tours, and register, you can visit the Extension website at https://extension.arizona.edu/events/arizona-highlands-garden-conference.

Also be sure to "like" our facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/pages/Arizona-Highlands-Garden-Conference/368889986561739.

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**Congratulations for completing 50 hours**

Barbara McCurry—Mentor-Patrick Beatty

Jack Jackson—Mentor-Tom Konzem
Hard to believe but summer is nearly over and you should be planning or even planting your fall garden. Not only is this a good time to plant a variety of vegetables but trees and perennials can also be added to the garden.

Planting trees and shrubs now gives the plant time to establish a good root system. You want the roots to grow deep in order to be able to survive the hot summers. Most of you probably know the correct way to plant a tree, but a little reinforcement wouldn’t hurt. Dig the hole wide, not deep. The hole should only be as deep as the root ball. The tree should be planted to the same level as it grew in the container or the ground. Planting the tree too deep can cause the death of the tree. There is still discussion about what to do with the roots before planting. In some circles they advocate removing all the soil around the roots before planting, the idea being this encourages the plant to send out lots of new young roots. It hasn’t been tried in Arizona yet to any degree, but it could be interesting to try. If you don’t want to go to extremes, check your roots and make sure they aren’t circling (You should have done this before you bought the tree), but if the roots are tangled and crossing do some root pruning.

Perennial flowers can also be planted this time of year. Choose healthy plants and once again, dig wider than deeper. Like with trees you don’t want to plant too deep. Plant at the same level as the plant is already growing. You might take a knife and score down the root ball to encourage root growth. Mulch.

Cool-season vegetables and herbs can be planted to extend your season. There is a whole range of plants, including: arugula, beets, broccoli, brussel sprouts, carrots, cauliflower, chard, fennel, kale, kohlrabi, lettuce, onions (bulbing and bunching), bok choy, peas, potatoes, radishes, spinach and coriander among them. Garlic should be planted in the fall too. The plants will germinate while the weather is warm but since they prefer cooler weather they will thrive as are days shorten and temperatures go down.

At least we hope they go down. Most will tolerate pretty cold weather. If you live in an area where the temperatures are extreme you might want to use some protection.

Let’s not forget the flowers. Vegetables sustain the body, flowers all the other parts. In fact you can tell fall is coming because the pansies show up pretty darn quick around here. Not my favorite, maybe because that’s all you can find sometimes and they are so short, but they are reliable bloomers and will go through the winter.

Try some of these flowers:

- Calendula’s are usually orange but there are some softer shades of apricot, cream and soft yellows now.
- Candytuft makes great filler in the garden. Low growing and bright white, or pink they will bloom in the fall and the spring.
- The Iceland poppy might grow well here.
- Nemesia is a small perennial that you could grow as an annual. It grows up to 2 feet tall and 1 foot across. The leaves are bright green and the colors bright. It likes well-drained soil, sun and regular watering.
- Not really a flower, (it’s really a vegetable with bright colorful leaves) ornamental kale can brighten up any garden with its lavender, rose white and creamy yellow leaves. They hold the color throughout the winter into spring. They like full sun to light shade; water regularly to keep them healthy and beautiful.
- Don’t forget the snapdragon. Like the pansy they are everywhere but they do really well here, sometimes lasting through the summer and reblooming the following year. Snapdragons come in a wide range of colors and sizes. I like the old-fashioned tall ones but most of what you find these days are the shorter dwarf versions.
- Stock are a beautiful, reliable plant for our climate. This is one of those great flowers that we have forgotten about and breeding has turned them into faint shadows of their past. They grew these by the acre in the flower gardens on Baseline Road in Phoenix. If you don’t remember them you have missed out on something that was great. Anyway they grew tall with a rich scent of cloves. They came in a range of colors—reds, purples, whites and yellows. Most of the ones you buy today are the dwarfs. Not as interesting or as nice but they are reliable bloomers and should do well.

Set all these plants out in the fall or winter. Deadhead to prolong the bloom.

So don’t stop gardening now, there is an entire new season to plan for.
Real Gardening Volunteer Opportunities

Real dirt under your fingernails—gardening opportunities are available in many established public gardens in our area. If you have the itch to volunteer, consider some of the following.

Community Gardens

Many of the local community gardens subscribe to a half and half format where half the garden space is for growing produce for people who need it; the other half are private plots. The Master Gardener’s role is as consultant: “what’s eating the lettuce?” “How often should you fertilize squash?” “when should I plant fava beans?” MGs do not need to belong to the community garden organization, although many do. Helping grow food that will be given away to people that need it strikes a responsive volunteer chord in many. Volunteering can be on a regular basis or occasional. Seasonal program.

Our Prescott Valley Community Garden; contact David Sawyer MG, sawyertile18@yahoo.com
YMCA Community Garden, Prescott: Cathie Martin MG, cornerstonecathie@gmail.com
Prescott Community Garden; contact Steve McIntyre MG, zpsteve@yahoo.com

Sharlot Hall Museum

Sharlot Hall Museum in Prescott has nearly 4 acres of gardens. Many visitors come just to view the gardens because of their beauty and historic value. Of particular interest is the Territorial Rose Garden with many old-fashioned heirloom varieties. Master Gardeners are responsible for keeping the gardens groomed, planting specialty plots such as the farmstead herb garden and caring for the lush greenery around the historic buildings. Volunteer hours are variable to suit the individual; the Museum is looking for commitment to preserve the historic gardens of this valuable community asset. Year-around program.
Contact Kathy MacCauley, MG, prescottgirl@qwest.net

Veteran’s Greenhouse, Prescott.

Located on the grounds of the Prescott VA Hospital, the well-established greenhouse and gardens are part of the horticultural therapy program. Vets raise herbs, flowers and vegetables in raised beds and in the greenhouse. Master Gardeners keep things blooming in the greenhouse where plants and flowers are propagated and raised for patient’s rooms and common areas. Year-around program.
Contact: Bob Busch MG, rmbusch@cableone.net

Additional dirt-under-your-fingernails volunteer opportunities exist with on-going Master Gardener programs at the Miller Valley School garden, Prescott, and the Chino Valley High School garden. Call the Master Gardener Helpline, 928-445-6590 x222 for contact information.
**Arizona Highlands Garden Conference** (see pg. 2 also)

Make your reservation before Sept 20th to get the $90 rate for the 2013 conference in Miami, AZ, on Oct 12th.  [https://extension.arizona.edu/events/arizona-highlands-garden-conference](https://extension.arizona.edu/events/arizona-highlands-garden-conference) or call (928) 474-4160.

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**2014 MG Conference**

Yavapai County is hosting the 2014 AHGC. The steering committee is being assembled. If you’d like to help plan the conference contact Mary Barnes, mcbarn1@cableone.net, 583-0889.

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**2014 Master Gardener Class**

If you’d like to be a class assistant for the 2014 class, which will be held in Camp Verde, contact Mary Barnes, mcbarn1@cableone.net, 583-0889.

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**Master Gardeners Featured for Two Very Different Landscapes**

Virginia Mullen’s cottage garden recently received the “Garden of the Month” award by the Alta Vista Garden Club. Virginia and husband Peter are restoring the cottage garden of their recently acquired historic home in Prescott.

Judy Mannen’s landscaping efforts have received acclaim for a different reason. She and husband Dion’s gardens were recently featured in Phoenix Home & Garden for incorporating the “art and science of firewise landscaping”.

Congratulations from your fellow MGs.
I wrote the following back in 2003:

It was the year of the zucchini. Well, it seemed like a year rather than just one summer. My parents owned a piece of property on the far reaches of the world. Today Tucson has grown out to its edges and has begun to engulf it. It had a well with the best tasting water in the world. We did a lot of swimming in the slimy, algae-coated tank, sharing the water with frogs and tadpoles.

Aside from that, my dad, years after leaving the farm in Wisconsin, still had a bit of farmer in his heart. One summer he planted rows of vegetables. The only plants that survived all the wildlife were the zucchinis. This wasn’t in the days of elegant baby zucchini. No, these were giant zucchini and lots of them. That summer we ate more zucchini than I thought possible. What I would have given for that recipe for chocolate zucchini cake I now have. Oddly enough, I still eat it—not as often as that summer and I cook it differently—but that summer of zucchini overload did not ruin my taste for it. I vaguely recall we blew some of it up with firecrackers, but that may be wishful thinking.

Well, all these years later they are still making jokes about zucchini. I think people still drop bushels of zucchini at neighbors’ houses where they ring the bell and run. It’s a vegetable that doesn’t get much respect but we must be eating a ton of it because we keep planting it. So below are a few recipes just in case you have a surplus. If you can’t give it away or can’t use it all at one time, you can shred it and freeze it, then use it in cakes or breads.

### Baked Crispy Zucchini

2 medium zucchini (about 1 pound total)
1 tablespoon olive oil
1/4 cup freshly grated Parmesan (3/4-ounce)
1/2 cup plain dry breadcrumbs
1/8-teaspoon salt
Freshly ground black pepper

**Directions**

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F. Coat a baking sheet with cooking spray.

Slice the zucchini into 1/4-inch thick rounds. In a medium bowl, toss the zucchini with the oil. In a small bowl, combine the Parmesan, breadcrumbs, salt, and a few turns of pepper. Dip each round into the Parmesan mixture, coating it evenly on both sides, pressing the coating on to stick, and place in a single layer on the prepared baking sheet.

Bake the zucchini rounds until browned and crisp, 25 to 30 minutes. Remove with spatula. Serve immediately.

**Per Serving:**

(Serving size, 1/2 cup)
Calories 105; Total Fat 6g (Sat Fat 2g, Mono Fat 2g, Poly Fat 0g); Protein 5g; Carb 8.5g; Fiber 1.5g; Cholesterol 1mg; Sodium 222mg

### Chocolate Zucchini Cake

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for the pan
1/2 cup plus 1/3 cup semisweet chocolate chips
1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder (not Dutch process)
1/8 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg or allspice
1 1/4 cups sugar
1/2 cup plus 1 teaspoon extra-virgin olive oil
2 large eggs
1/2-teaspoon vanilla extract
1 medium zucchini, grated and squeezed dry
1-teaspoon honey

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Butter the bottom and sides of a 9-inch-square cake pan. Dust the pan with flour, tapping out the excess.

Toss 1/2 cup chocolate chips with 1-tablespoon flour in a small bowl. Whisk the remaining flour, the cocoa powder, salt, baking soda and nutmeg in a medium bowl; set aside.

Beet the sugar, 1/2-cup olive oil, the eggs and vanilla in a large bowl with a mixer on medium speed until smooth and pale, about 3 minutes. Add the flour-cocoa mixture; beat on low speed until combined, about 2 minutes (the batter will be thick). Add the zucchini and beat until combined, about 2 more minutes. Fold in the flour-coated chocolate chips with a wooden spoon.

Transfer the batter to the prepared pan and bake until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, 30 to 35 minutes. Transfer to a rack and let cool completely.

Make the glaze: Combine the remaining 1/3 cup chocolate chips, 1 teaspoon olive oil and the honey in a microwave-safe bowl. Microwave on medium-high power in 30-second intervals, stirring, until the chocolate is melted. Spread over the cake, and then cut into pieces.
MGA Recognition Picnic

Date: September 14th, 11:30am
Place: Heritage Park Hilltop Ramada, Prescott

Please make reservations by Sept 7th with Cathy Michener, caasam@cableone.net, 541-9341. Let her know how many are coming and what side dish or dessert you plan to bring. The MGA will provide BBQ main dish, drinks, paper products, and parking passes. It is important that we know how many are coming for the BBQ order, and we want to be sure we have purchased enough parking passes.

Wear comfortable shoes, as some of the parking spaces are down the hill from the ramada.

Directions

If coming from the Verde area, Dewey, Prescott Valley, etc.
From Hwy 69 take Fain Road; stay on Fain Road and it becomes 89A; stay on 89A and it becomes Pioneer Pkwy. From Pioneer Pkway, turn left on Willow Creek Road. Turn left at the first signal, Heritage Park Rd (one of the Embry Riddle entrances will be on your right).

If coming from Prescott, From Willow Creek Road – right on Heritage Park Rd. After turning on to Heritage Park Rd you will see the following sign. Turn right at the sign. Pass the zoo entrance (on your right). You will go past a ticket machine and a ticket booth. Stop at one of those points to get a parking pass from the Master Gardener who is directing traffic. Proceed to stop sign and turn right (toward the Hilltop Ramada). You will pass a ballpark on your left. Take the first right – the Hilltop Ramada is straight ahead. There are some parking spaces in that area. If you’d like, you can pull up to the ramada to unload passengers/food and someone will direct you to another parking area.

Here is a link if you’d like to get directions from your home. http://www.cityofprescott.net/services/parks/parks/index.php?id=5

Searching the MG Newsletter on the Extension Website

Trying to find something in the back issues of Yavapai Gardens has always been difficult. There is a partial index available. Steve Moody has 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.

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
The meeting site is the Superior Court Building off of Hwy 260 in Camp Verde.

2840 N. Commonwealth Dr.

MG Recognition Picnic, Sept. 14, Prescott, see page 7

Next Meeting
September 18, 6:30 PM - Camp Verde