



Master Gardener Newsletter

- Doña Ana County Cooperative Extension Service
- U.S. Department of Agriculture
- NMSU College of Agricultural, Consumer & Environmental Sciences

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◀ December 2010 ▶

Volume 11, Issue #12

Plant-of-the-Month

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PURSLANE

Is It A Weed or Produce?

Article Suggested by Sylvia Hacker, Certified MG

Purslane (*Portulaca oleracea*) is an annual succulent capable of reproducing from seeds and from stem pieces. Members of the *Portulaca* genus are hardy or half hardy annuals that can reach 6"-16" in height. *Portulaca* carry succulent leaves and bloom from summer to the second half of autumn and carry cup shaped flowers; these may be of yellow, red, pink or white. This plant is suitable for xeriscaping; self-sows freely; but deadhead if you do not want volunteer seedlings.

Purslane is also known as Little Hogweed, Pigweed and Pulsey, depending on what part of the country you live in. It is a single species in the relatively small *Portulaca* genus and belongs to the *Portulacaceae* family. These plants have a large distribution ranging from Australasia, the Middle East and into North Africa. Although they have been naturalized in the U.S. they are widely considered something of a weed. These plants may be creeping or branching, and consist of stalkless, paddle-shaped leaves that may be opposite or alternating, and bear red, prostrate stems.

Purslane has rosettes of fleshy, paddle-shaped leaves that are clustered at the stem ends and joints. Flowers have five parts, ranging up to 1/4 inch in size. The bright yellow flowers appear in early spring, late winter in warm climates, and continue into mid or late fall depending on the weather. Flowers open singly for a few hours during sunny periods. Purslane's flowers resemble Goat Head (aka puncture vine) flowers. The seedpods are quite small and are covered by a lid that opens when the seeds are ready.

Article Continued on Page 2

October 2010 Hotline Client Data

# Total Contacts	45	Subject of Inquiry	
# Telephone Calls	45	Animals	0
# Issues Addressed	71	Disease	3
		House Plants	0
<u>Geographic Area</u>		Insects	8
Chaparral	1	Irrigation	7
Doña Ana	2	Lawns	5
El Paso	1	Shrubs	20
Hillsboro	1	Soil	0
Las Cruces	36	Trees	15
Le Mesa	1	Vegetables	0
Organ	2	Weeds	5
Santa Teresa	1	Misc.	8

Nov. 2010 Hotline Client Data

# Total Contacts	33	Subject of Inquiry	
# Telephone Calls	33	Animals	0
# Issues Addressed	26	Disease	1
		House Plants	0
<u>Geographic Area</u>		Insects	3
Chaparral	3	Irrigation	3
Doña Ana	2	Lawns	2
El Paso	2	Shrubs	8
Hatch	1	Soil	0
Las Cruces	23	Trees	5
Le Mesa	0	Vegetables	0
Organ	2	Weeds	3
Santa Teresa	0	Misc.	1

Thank you to MGs Janie Elliott, Joan Lane & Valice Raffi for compiling the above data.

New Mexico State University is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer and educator. Doña Ana County, NMSU and USDA cooperating.

Purslane—Continued from Front Page

Purslane flowers open for a few hours in the morning sun. When harvested in the early morning, purslane leaves have ten times the malic acid content as when harvested in the late afternoon, and therefore has a significantly more tangy taste.

Its seeds are ovate to triangular, reddish brown to black and shiny. It is found in gardens and bare ground from June to October. It can be found growing in almost any unshaded area, including flowerbeds, cornfields, and waste places. Purslane can also be found growing in cold climate areas as well as warm areas such as the Caribbean.

Purslane has been used in salads and as a medicinal plant for hundreds of years. Called *Verdolaga* in Spanish, it is a vegetable green used in many Latin American countries. It is also popular as a salad green in France and other European countries. It is similar in taste and consistency to watercress. It can be eaten fresh or cooked and has no bitter taste at all. Since it has a mucilaginous (i.e., moist and sticky) quality it is great for soups and stews.

Although *Portulaca* are thought to be weeds in some regions, the attractive purslane plant has long been considered both beneficial and exceptionally tasty. Known since the time of Hippocrates, purslane has been used for its diuretic, anthelmintic (anti-parasitic) and cathartic (promotes bowel evacuation) properties. Purslane was used by ancient Egyptians for heart failure and heart disease.

Today, the purslane plant—which has a tangy flavor when eaten raw, and a slightly sour and salty taste when cooked—is used in a variety of ways, from salads to toppings, stews to soups and stir fries. (See page 3 for some sample Purslane Recipe websites.)

Purslane is also thought to be exceptionally useful for medicinal remedies. This is not surprising, as it contains a higher dosage of Omega-3 fatty acids than any other leafy vegetable. It also contains potassium, carotenoids and calcium, as well as vitamin A, C and B. In traditional Chinese medicine, these succulents have been used to treat dysentery and urinary tract infections; medieval herbalists considered them to be a "cold" herb which would help to counteract "burning" conditions such as liver and heart diseases; in Greece they were thought be a potent blood purifier, while in Mexico they are said to be useful to those who suffer from diabetes.

Purslane is now regaining its popularity, namely, that it represents edible landscaping at its best: it's free, and there's no work involved in growing it. The only thing keeping purslane from its rightful place in edible landscaping is an outdated logic that says, "Purslane is a weed; therefore, it must be eradicated from my landscape!"

[Article Continued on Page 3](#)

**PURSLANE FACTS**

Genus:	<i>Portulaca</i> Species: <i>Oleracea</i>
Other Names:	Verdolaga, Mexican parsley, pigweed, little hogweed, pusley, sun plant, rose moss or wax pink
Plant Type:	This is a non-native, annual succulent that has smooth, reddish, mostly prostrate stems.
Leaves:	Each succulent leaf is entire and the leaves are clustered at stem joints and ends.
Flowers:	Bright yellow flowers have five regular parts and are up to 0.25" wide; flowers open singly at the center of the leaf cluster for only a few hours on sunny mornings
Height:	Can reach up to 16 inches
Spacing:	12-15 inches apart
Sun Exposure:	Full Sun
Drought-Tolerant:	Suitable for xeriscaping; self-sows freely; deadhead if you do not want volunteer seedlings next season
DANGER:	Beware of spurge, a different-looking poisonous creeping wild plant that sometimes grows near purslane. Spurge's stem is wiry, not thick, and it gives off a white, milky sap when you break it. If you're careless, you may put some in your bag along with purslane, because they sometimes grow together on lawns, gardens, and meadows.
Bloom Time:	Blooms first appear in late spring and continue into mid fall.
Soil pH Requirements:	5.5 to 7; mildly acidic to mildly alkaline
Propagation Methods:	From herbaceous stem cuttings and seed; sow indoors before last frost or direct sow after last frost
Seed Collection:	Allow seedheads to dry on plants; remove and collect seeds in a bag; the tiny black seeds (shown above) are hardly larger than grains of salt.
Fruit:	Seeds are formed in a tiny pod the lid of which opens when seeds are ready.
Habitat:	Gardens and disturbed areas.
Range:	Almost all of North America
Invasiveness:	Considered one of the most noxious weeds worldwide; grows rapidly and is very aggressive
Companion Plant:	As a companion plant, purslane provides ground cover to create a humid microclimate for nearby plants, stabilizing ground moisture.

Purslane—Continued from Page 2Medicinal & Nutritional Benefits (Continued)

Recently, it was found that purslane contains alpha linolenic acid, a type of Omega-3 fatty acid. Researchers see evidence that these substances lower blood pressure and cholesterol levels as well as make the blood less likely to form clots. And, purslane has only 15 calories per 100 gram portion.

Purslane contains more Omega-3 fatty acids than any other leafy vegetable plants, and may have positive effects on the brain and may aid in such conditions as depression, bipolar disorder, Alzheimer's disease, autism, schizophrenia, attention deficit disorder, hyperactivity and migraines.

The most common dietary source of Omega-3s is cold water fish like salmon. Omega-3s aid the body in the production of compounds that effect blood pressure, clotting, the immune system, prevent inflammation, lower cholesterol (LDL), prevent certain cancers and control coronary spasms. In addition recent studies suggest that Omega-3s may have positive effects on the brain and may aid in such conditions as depression, bipolar disorder, Alzheimer's disease, autism, schizophrenia, attention deficit disorder, hyperactivity and migraines. Though very beneficial, there are few good dietary sources other than seafood for Omega-3s.

Purslane is more than merely edible landscaping—it is a culinary delight! In fact, it is a succulent herb that provides a hint both to the weed's identification and the potential of this edible landscaping component for cooking recipes. Not only does purslane have leaves in Omega-3 fatty acid, but it also has stems high in vitamin C. Omega-3 fatty acids are instrumental in regulating our metabolism. Purslane contains a very high concentration of alpha-linolenic acid—several times the concentration in spinach.

Controlling or Getting Rid of Purslane, If You Must:

If you are trying to control purslane the number one rule is don't let it go to seed. About three weeks after you notice seedlings, the flowers and seeds will be produced. Also plant or plant pieces that are uprooted but not removed can root back into the soil. Running a tiller through purslane is called "purslane multiplication".

Not convinced of the virtues of purslane? If you must get rid of purslane, you can, of course, hand-pull it. Hand-pulling is easiest when the soil is wet. You can also use the pre-emergent herbicide, *Dimension*, if you're not committed to staying organic. Purslane germinates when soil temperatures reach about 60 degrees Fahrenheit, so you'll have to apply the pre-emergent herbicide by at least mid-spring. For important information on chemically treating purslane in your yard or garden, please refer to UC Davis' Common Purslane: Integrated Pest Management for Home Gardeners & Landscape Professionals—see website info in next column).

Now if you strive for a landscape with an immaculate lawn, it will still be understandable if you pull up all the purslane growing on it. That's the price you have to pay for perfection. But just don't throw it away! Eat it instead! Join the many who now treat purslane as edible landscaping. And if your purslane is growing on the edge of a garden, say, you might even consider pinching it instead of pulling it. That way, all summer you can enjoy healthful eating with this spicy succulent of edible landscaping. ■



Lamb Tagine with Purslane and Fava Beans

Sample of Purslane Recipe Websites

www.aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/archives/parsons/98promotions/april/recipes.html

Fried Purslane
Ham & Purslane on Rye
Pickled Purslane
Verdologo Con Huevos
Verdologo Con Queso

www.frenchgardening.com/cuisine.html?pid=12211182661164735

Lamb Tagine with Purslane and Fava Beans (photo shown above)

www.prairielandcsa.org/recipes/purslane.html

Anatolian Purslane, Lamb & Lentil Stew
Cucumber Purslane Yogurt Salad
Mexican Pork & Purslane
Mexican Purslane Stuffing
Oil & Vinegar Purslane Potato Salad
Spicy Purslane Potato Salad

www.prietanotes.blogspot.com/2009/06/verdolaga-weed-worth-eating.html

Purslane with Backbone Stew
Grilled Zucchini with Purslane & Tomato

SOURCES (Purslane Article):

Common Purslane: Integrated Pest Management

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PDF/PESTNOTES/pncommonPurslane.pdf>

Eat Your Weeds by Larry Miller For the Deming Headlight, 9/17/10

Edible Landscaping With Purslane Culinary Delight of Edible Landscaping by

David Beaulieu, About.com Guide at

<http://landscaping.about.com/cs/weedsdiseases/a/Purslane.htm>

Guide to Growing Purslane – Portulaca at [http://www.plant-](http://www.plant-biology.com/Portulaca-Purslane.php)

[biology.com/Portulaca-Purslane.php](http://www.plant-biology.com/Portulaca-Purslane.php)

How to Grow and Use Purslane by Barbara Fahs, eHow Contributor on

http://www.ehow.com/print/how_2341820_grow-use-Purslane.html

PlantFiles: Purslane, Pigweed, Wild Portulaca, Little Hogweed, Pusley,

Verdolaga Portulaca oleracea on Dave's Garden at

<http://davesgarden.com/guides/pg/go/242/>

Purslane (Portulaca oleracea): A Guide to Wild Edible Plants for Parents &

Teachers to Use with Children at

<http://www.wildmanstevebrill.com/Plants.Folder/Purslane.html>

Purslane (Portulaca oleracea) at <http://www.2bnthewild.com/plants/H186.htm>

Purslane on Wikipedia at <http://www.plant.photos.net/index.php?title=Purslane>

Purslane—Weed It or Eat It by Sandra Mason, Unit Educator, Horticulture & Environment, Campaign County, University of Illinois Extension, July, 2003

(Research and compilation of information for this article provided by
Ann Shine-Ring, Certified Master Gardener)



Pruning & Shearing Christmas Trees

Esteban Herrera, NMSU Extension Horticulturist &
 Jose M. Montano, Research Specialist, Mora Research Center
 NMSU Guide H-409

The authors state that, "Pruning and shearing planted Christmas trees must be done yearly to maintain a conical form and moderate density. This is accomplished by trimming the current growth of the terminal leader and side branches (shearing) and by thinning competing terminals, protruding side branches, and pruning suckers. Start training when the trees are not more than two feet tall and continue yearly if you plan to harvest trees."

Tools needed to train Christmas trees are hedge shears and hand pruners. Further, you are provided information on how to shear and prune to produce conically shaped trees that are dense on all four sides and have a well-developed basal handle.

Advice is provided on how to cut back trees with "double headers" and what time of year to shear pines in order to produce abundant buds on pines. Also there is instruction on how to shear/prune in growing seasons. Several photos/figures are provided to give the reader a visual idea of how to successfully accomplish appropriate pruning and shearing of Christmas trees planted in your landscape.

Instruction on pines as well as firs and spruces is given. The authors also address other cultural practices when growing conifers.

This publication is available in the MG Hotline Library and can also be downloaded at:

<http://morasc.nmsu.edu/docs/Pruning%20and%20Shearing%20Christmas%20Trees.pdf>



Poinsettias: Year After Year

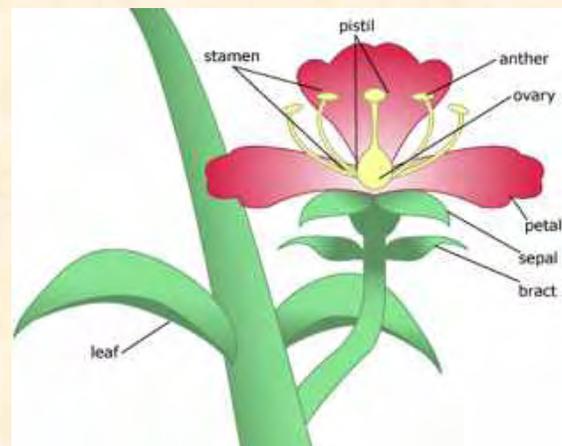
Revised by Curtis W. Smith, Extension Specialist
 Agricultural Science Center At Los Lunas, NM
 NMSU Guide H-406

Poinsettias (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*) are popular winter houseplants because they flower in mid-winter, and because their beauty is the result of bracts (persistent colored leaves) instead of flowers, their attractiveness is long-lasting. They bloom naturally under the long night conditions of winter, so it is easy for nurseries to bring them into color in time for winter holidays. The beauty of poinsettias can persist from Thanksgiving through Christmas, and sometimes even to Valentine's Day. Some gardeners are not satisfied with this long season of indoor beauty and attempt to save the plants to re-bloom the following winter. Poinsettias can be kept year after year, and they will bloom each year if you give them proper care.

Smith gives us an overview of how to care for the poinsettia year-round and gives us tips on, 1) how to grow this plant during the summer, 2) how to obtain a bushy plant, 3) propagating poinsettias, and 4) preparing the plant for the holidays.

This publication is available in the MG Hotline Library and can also be downloaded at:

http://aces.nmsu.edu/pubs/_h/H-406.pdf



Deadline for submitting articles and information for the January 2011 MG newsletter will be Wednesday, Dec. 27th

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Buying a Living Christmas Tree

Esteban Herrera, NMSU Extension Horticulturist
NMSU Guide H-421

If you are anticipating buying a live plant for your Christmas tree this year, then you should read this article.

Herrera states that a living Christmas tree will provide enjoyment long after the holiday season has passed and a containerized Christmas tree continues to grow and can be used repeatedly in the future. Or, it can be planted out-of-doors as an ornamental or for a privacy screen.

TREE SELECTION TIPS

- Avoid plants that show poor vigor or have been mishandled; do not buy a yellowing or browning plant or one with excessive needle shedding
- Choose a species that will thrive in your climate
 - Elevations below 5,000 ft (choose Aleppo Pine, Calabrian Pine, Afghan Pine, Canary Island Pine, Italian Stone Pine or Piñon Pine)
 - Elevations 5,500-7,500 ft (choose Southwestern White Pine, Austrian Pine, or Scotch Pine)
 - Elevations 6,500-8,500 ft (choose Blue Spruce, Douglas Fir, White Fir, or Bristlecone Pine)
- Take into account the rate of tree growth
- Evaluate environmental stresses, such as smog and soil alkalinity on your tree.
- Consider water requirements as some trees are more drought-tolerant than others.

CARING FOR THE TREE

- Avoid freezing of the tree's root ball
- Avoid excessive drying; water tree occasionally
- Place tree in large tub and keep soil moist.
- When moving tree from indoors to outdoors, do so gradually over a two-week period to allow the tree to adjust for the brighter outside light.
- Purchase your tree from a reputable grower or nursery.

This publication is available in the MG Hotline Library and can also be downloaded at:

Link: http://aces.nmsu.edu/pubs/_h/H-421.pdf



Site Selection and Preparation for Christmas Tree Planting

Esteban Herrera, NMSU Extension Horticulturist
NMSU Guide H-410

Herrera states that, "The land you select will determine the success of your tree-growing operation. Under natural forest conditions, trees sometimes grow on harsh sites where no other vegetation can survive. On a commercial scale, however, everything must be done to accelerate the growth of trees. The shorter the time from planting to harvest, the greater the potential profit.

The following environmental conditions need to be considered before trees are planted:

Elevation	This determines which type of plant will do best on your site.
Aspect	This determines the direction of the downward slope; south and west slopes generally face hot afternoon sun; soil moisture evaporates more rapidly on these slopes; there is less moisture loss on north and east aspects.
Slope	The incline from a horizontal plane; trees should be planted preferably on level or nearly level land.
Air Drainage	Refers to a site's capacity for air exchange; important during spring frosts
Soil Properties	Most important properties for your plant to thrive will be good drainage, water-holding capacity, texture, depth, inherent fertility and pH level.
Existing Vegetation	All perennial vegetation must be eliminated from the planting site.
Planning	If you are planting a commercial site, you must consider growing blocks to facilitate machine movement and harvesting.
Site Preparation	Site should be deep-plowed and disked a year before beginning commercial planting.

This publication is available in the MG Hotline Library and can also be downloaded at:

Link: http://aces.nmsu.edu/pubs/_h/H-410.pdf

**BRANIGAN MEMORIAL LIBRARY
"LUNCH & LEARN" PRESENTATION**

Date: Thursday, December 16
 Time: 12:00-1:00 p.m.
 Place: Branigan Memorial Library
 Location: Roadrunner Meeting Room
 Speaker: Sarah Hacker, NMSU Horticulture Major



Topic: **PLANTS & SYMBOLISM**
 Synopsis: The use of the floral language in art, literature and everyday life

This presentation has been approved for one-hour of education credit for all MGs attending.

*Information provided by
 Sylvia Hacker, Certified Master Gardener*



DECEMBER MG BIRTHDAYS

Tom Packard	December 15
Pam Crane	December 18
MaryVee Cammack	December 22
Clayton White	December 24
Christine Chavez	December 25
Velina Hames	December 26



DECEMBER EVENTS:

MESILLA VALLEY BOSQUE STATE PARK

Saturday, Dec. 4 and Dec. 11

Join a Park Volunteer on a guided bird tour. Learn about the birds that inhabit the Park. These tours will be 1 to 2 hours in length. Bring binoculars, a hat, water and sunscreen.

Saturday, Dec. 18

Learn how to become a birder. Park staff will point out the first steps in how to become a birder. Participants will walk the Park trails and learn what to look for to help identify birds and how to field guides.

Centennial Saturday, December 4th

Tamale Making 101—Corrine Luchini will demonstrate the art of making tamales. Her talk will begin at 10:00am in the classroom. Class size is limited, registration required at 532-4398

Time Travel—From 2:00-4:00pm, listen to Dr. Jon Hunner lecturer on statehood and visit with Teddy Roosevelt (played by Dr. Randy Milligan). Travel back in time with living historians and celebrate 100 years of New Mexico's statehood.

Dec. 11th—3:00-7:00pm, Second Anniversary Fiesta

Park staff invites you to help celebrate the Park's 2nd Anniversary! A birding tour will be begin at 3:00pm with a Park Volunteer. Join Park Staff for snacks, refreshments, entertainment and luminaries.

Dec. 18th—Frogs of New Mexico. Join Naturalist Richard Quick and learn about frogs we have here in the Mesilla Valley. The talk will be held in the Classroom at 10:00am.

Winter Hours (Sept. 1 – March 31): Mon-Sun 8 AM – 5 PM

ADDRESS: 5000 Calle De Norte (physical address)

Phone: 575-523-4398 Fax: 575-523-0742

All Events are Free with a Valid Park Pass

Information provided by Sylvia Hacker, Certified Master Gardener

MANY THANKS FOR THE GOODIES

We appreciate your thoughtfulness

December Goodies

Jeanene Cathey

Linda Morgan

Beth Paris

Dixie's Honey-Do List for December



Many of our suggested garden tasks is information coming directly from [*Month-by-Month Gardening in the Desert Southwest*](#) by Mary Irish (2002). We wanted you to know that this is an outstanding gardening resource book.

Seasons Greetings To All

ORNAMENTALS

- Deadhead pansies and other cool-season flowering plants.
- Begin pruning shrubs; vigorous shrubs such as photinia and cotoneaster may be pruned by 30%. Evergreens are typically more temperamental so limit limb removal to 20%.
- Save evergreen cuttings for holiday decorations.
- Bring poinsettias into bright indirect light and keep them warm (above 65°F) and watered.
- According to Mary Irish, this is not a good time to plant any succulents outside.
- Consider a living holiday tree this year. Plant it in early January. (See Page 5.) "Christmas" type trees appropriate for our area include junipers, pines, deodar cedars, and arborvitae.
- Remove decorative wrap from holiday plants. Keep them away from heater vents.
- Begin transplanting materials that was root pruned with the fall.



FRUITS, NUTS, CITRUS & SHADE TREES

- Begin dormant-season pruning. Make sure tree is truly dormant. Make a small cut at the tip of a branch. If sap runs, then wait to prune until a cut weeps no sap.
- Do not top trees.
- Begin planting hearty bareroot trees as they become available at nurseries. Wait to plant cold-tender species.
- Continue harvesting pecans.

VEGETABLES, FRUIT AND HERBS

- Plant romaine, leaf, and head lettuce seed.
- Harden off lettuce transplants and plant later this month.
- Do not fertilize or prune this month.
- Most cool-season vegetables are unaffected by light frost, but be prepared to cover tender crops with light cloth, newspapers, or frost blankets on cold nights. If you have vegetables in pots, be prepared to cover them or move them into a warmer location on cold nights.



LAWNS / TURF / ORNAMENTAL GRASSES

- Continue regular management of cool-season grasses but discontinue fertilization.
- Do not plant either lawns or ornamental grasses this month.
- Water dormant warm-season species once or twice a month to a depth of 6–8 inches.
- If you haven't cut back ornamental grasses yet, do so early this month. Save any flowering heads for use in dried arrangements or holiday wreaths.

Dixie's Honey-Do List for December—Continued

ROSES

- Do not prune roses until late January or early February, but before Valentine's Day.
- Continue deadheading roses regularly. Also remove any dead or diseased canes.
- Be sure to keep the area around rose plants clean of debris and fallen leaves, particularly if powdery mildew has been a problem.
- In mild winter conditions, extend watering your roses deeply every 7-10 days depending on the weather.
- Begin to plan which new roses you'd like to plant in your garden in late March or early April after the danger of freezing has passed.



CACTI & SUCCULENTS



- This is not a good time to plant any succulents outside—wait until mid-January to plant even cool-season succulents.
- Other than Christmas cacti, do not fertilize cacti this month.
- Do not prune succulents this month.
- Cover the tips of sensitive columnar cacti with styrofoam cups.
- Use frost cloth or a blanket to cover aloes, citrus, and other sensitive plants when temperatures go below 28 degrees.
- Water sparingly this month. You can water cool-season succulents once during this month.

PESTS

It is always important to correctly identify any insect you suspect may have caused damage to your plants. If you do not know what the insect is, collect one in a plastic bag or small jar and take it to the Doña Ana County Cooperative Extension Office located at 530 N. Church in Las Cruces (located just north of the Main Post Office downtown.)

MISCELLANEOUS

- Clean your potting bench, garage, and shed; and reorganize gardening tools.
- On pretty days work up garden beds.
- Consider purchasing garden gifts for the holidays such as bulb planters, trowels, pruning equipment and gift cards.
- Remember to water established trees deeply at least once a month. Water newly planted material more often.
- Plan landscape changes such as enlarging beds and reducing turf areas.
- Peruse garden catalogs for spring-planting ideas.



Bird Suet Cakes (Birds Love Them!!)

1 lb lard (DO NOT substitute*)
 2 cups chunky peanut butter
 Melt the lard and peanut butter together. (I use a 4-cup glass measuring cup in the microwave)

Put the following ingredients in a large bowl:

2 cups oatmeal
 2 cups corn meal
 2 cups flour
 2 cups birdseed (optional)
 1 cup chopped dried fruit (optional- expensive, too)

- Pour the melted lard/peanut butter over dry mixture and mix well.
- Pour into 9x13 pan lined with plastic wrap. Cool and refrigerate overnight.
- Cut mixture into blocks that fit into suet feeder cages OR to fit into whatever you want to use to feed birds.

*NOTE: Lard has to be used as anything else will melt in the sun even in winter.

Buy the cheapest ingredients you can find as the birds don't care.

Recipe submitted by Alberta Morgan, Certified Master Gardener



Seed Propagation of Plants

Reviewed by Esteban Herrera, Extension Horticulturist
 NMSU Cooperative Extension Service
 Guide H-112

Herrera states that, "Seed propagation is often used to produce large numbers of plants inexpensively. Generally, plants grown from seed take longer to reach maturity than those propagated vegetatively, but the low cost may compensate for the time lost. Further, Herrera covers the following important topics in his publication:

- Testing Seed
- Preparing the germination mixture
- Sowing seeds
- Care of Seedlings

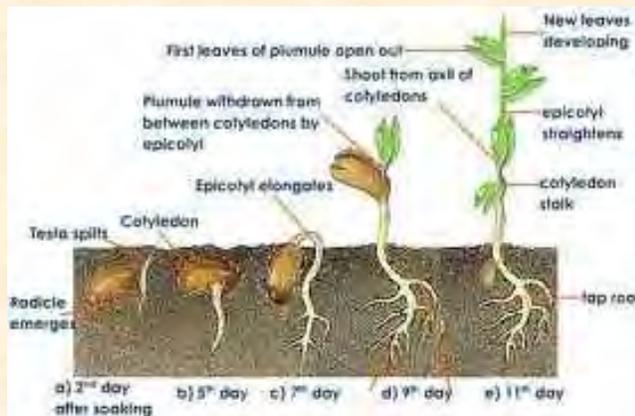
Important Tips to Remember:

"Once the true leaves have fully developed, the seedlings can be transplanted from the germinating container. The seedlings can be either spaced out in another flat or placed individually in 3-inch flowerpots. Use the same soil mixture described earlier for seed germination. If the young plants become pale green and have good root systems, apply a complete soluble fertilizer. This may be purchased at your local seed store or nursery.

Other materials, such as compressed peat pellets, peat blocks, peat pots, etc., are available through catalogs or garden supply stores."

This publication is available in the MG Hotline Library and can also be downloaded at:

Link: <http://aces.nmsu.edu/pubs/h/h-112.pdf>



Starting Plants From Seeds

By Erv Evans, Extension Associate &
 Frank A. Blazich, Professor
 North Carolina University, Dept. of Horticulture Science

The authors state that, "Growing your own transplants from seeds indoors can give you a head start on the growing season." In addition, they state that, "In some cases, it may be the only way to obtain plants of a new or special cultivar or variety that is not widely available through garden centers."

Evans & Blazich recommend that, "to obtain vigorous plants, start with high-quality seed from a reliable source. Select cultivars which provide the plant size, color (flower, foliage, or fruit), and growth habit you want. Choose cultivars adapted to your area. Many vegetable and flower cultivars are hybrids. They may cost more than open pollinated types, but they usually have more vigor, more uniformity, and better growth than non-hybrids.

Purchase only enough seed for one year's use, because germination decreases with age. The seed packet label usually indicates essential information about the cultivar, the year in which the seeds were packaged, the germination percentage, and whether the seeds have received any chemical treatment.

If seeds are obtained well ahead of the actual sowing date (or are surplus seeds), store them in a cool, dry place. Laminated foil packages help ensure dry storage. Paper packets are best kept in tightly sealed containers and maintained around 40° F in low humidity. A good storage location would be an air-tight jar or a sealed, Zip-Lock-type bag in the refrigerator. Some gardeners save seed from their own gardens, but these may not produce plants similar to the parents; this is especially true of hybrids."

In this article, the authors provide direction on a variety of issues important to effectively growing plants from seed.

Germination (A Table of Germination Information is provided)

--Seed must be viable

--Internal conditions of seed must be favorable to germination

--Environmental conditions for germination

Water

Temperature

Oxygen

Light

Germination Media

Containers for Germination & Growth

Sowing Seeds

Watering

Transplanting

Hardening Plants

Further Reading Resources

This publication is available in the MG Hotline Library and can also be downloaded at:

Link: <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/hort/hil/hil-8703.html>



SEED COLLECTING & STORING

By Nancy Pollard, Horticulture Educator &
Steven G. Ganavis, Master Gardener
University of Illinois Extension, Cook County, 2007

Why Collect Seed? Collecting and sowing your own seeds can be a fun and gratifying experience for the home gardener. At first, the details may seem overwhelming, yet as you gain experience, and are rewarded with new seedlings, you may find yourself inspecting your flowers closely in anticipation, and seed saving could become second nature to you.

Home gardeners can collect their own seeds from their own plants. Information that is normally found on commercial seed packets can be located in books or websites. While your choices are limited by how many plants grow in a particular garden area, joining a seed exchange group increases the availability of saved seed for your future planting. The joyful thought of watching seeds magically sprout next year, or the great disappointment if they fail, encourages us to look into best practices for collecting and storing plant seeds.

How to Collect Seed The first step is to choose healthy plants with high quality seedpods and fruits for seed collection. Healthy plants show vigorous growth, exhibit resistance to pests and diseases, produce good quality fruit, and produce high yields. As the chosen plants finish flowering, look for swelling seedpods or ripening fruit. Wait until they are fully mature. It is important to collect only fully mature or ripened seed. Sometimes, nearly mature seeds may ripen off the plant, if they remain in their seedpods. If picked too early, the embryo will not survive the drying out process, or if picked too late, the wind may blow away the seed.

Fine, nylon-mesh bags work universally well for collecting seeds and seed structures. Paper bags work well for seeds, cloth bags for panicles or dry fruit, and open baskets for fleshy fruit but be sure not to squash the fruit. Do not let seeds become hot or moldy.

Seed propagation preserves and promotes genetic diversity which is the result of the sexual union of flower parts (male and female). Each seed contains an embryo, a packet of energy and a protective coating. Some annual flowers and vegetables have been developed to duplicate as true to type as possible from seed, others will result in a wider variety of offspring types. Plants reproduce either by seed or by vegetative parts. Asexual or vegetative propagation duplicates exact copies or clones of a given plant resulting in no genetic variation. Vegetative propagation includes layering, division, cuttings, grafting, budding and tissue culture.

Dry Seed Pods With dry seed pods, extract the ripe seeds by hanging them upside down over a paper bag in a shaded, dry, airy place and wait for the seeds to fall. An occasional gentle tap will help. Cut clustered seed heads such as those of marigolds whole and lay on a newspaper to dry. Whenever you harvest your own seed, remove as much of the chaff and other vegetable material as possible before storing. This material, if sown along with the seed, tends to rot and may encourage fungal diseases.

Moist Fruit For moist fruit, such as ripe tomato or cucumber, the seed is surrounded by mucilage. When the fruit is fully colored and ripe, scoop out these seeds and wash them in a fine sieve under running water to remove the mucilage. Allow them to dry in the shade.

If the mucilage is difficult to dislodge, then with a gloved hand gently rub the seed against the wire mesh screen of the sieve. Once the mucilage is removed, place the seeds to dry in a single layer on absorbent newspaper in the shade. Turn over so both sides dry or dry both sides at the same time by suspending the seed between layers of mosquito netting. Label batches of seed to keep track of what is drying where.

How to Store Seed

Clean & Dry Only clean and well-dried seed should be stored. The two deadly enemies of stored seed are warmth and moisture. So, inspect the seed one last time before it is stored. Is it the very best you could collect? Is it clean, dry, and free of chaff and other debris? To keep stored seeds cool and dry, store them in clean, airtight containers or in small paper bags in the bottom drawer of your refrigerator. Paper bags, unlike plastic, allow the moisture to escape from the seed, so mold and rot is less likely. The cool refrigerator temperature slows down the natural respiration and deterioration of the seed. Clearly label the containers with the name of the plant and the date and place of its collection.

Cool & Dry How long seed lasts in storage depends on the type and quality of seed saved and the storage conditions. Some deterioration is inevitable. Aim to use all stored seed next year or within two or three seasons from the time of collection, as sprouting or germination rates will go down with time. In general, the lower the humidity and temperature in storage, the longer the viability of the stored seed. ■

This article is available at the MG Hotline Library and can also be downloaded at:

<http://web.extension.illinois.edu/cook/downloads/8584.pdf>





WEED WATCH: AFRICAN RUE
Zygophyllaceae (Caltrop family)

African Rue is a many-branched perennial that has an aggressive woody root system. It is also known as harmal, isband, ozallaik or ruin weed. It infests disturbed areas such as roadsides, open fields, and ditches, as well as semi-arid desert areas. If ingested, all parts of this plant are toxic to humans and livestock.

African Rue's height rarely exceeds 1 to 1.5 feet. Its stems are fleshy and when crunched, the stems have a bitter, acrid taste and a disagreeable odor. Its flowers consist of five white petals and the plant has a many-seeded capsule.

Origin: North Africa. The first reported infestation in the U.S. occurred near Deming, New Mexico in the 1920's.

Key Characteristics:

- Bushy growth habit
- Fleshy stems and leaves
- Five-petaled, white flower
- Fruiting structure is a capsule; its seeds remain viable for up to two years
- Flowers in July; produces seed from August to September
- Roots can grow to a depth of 20 feet
- Extremely drought-tolerant
- Contains toxic alkaloids that can be lethal to cattle
- Produces chemicals that retard the growth of other vegetation

Distribution: Primarily found in the southern New Mexico counties, but isolated populations have been documented in central and northwestern counties as well.

Management Controls:

- Prevention and early detection most effective control methods
- Physical removal effective if most/all of root system is removed

Information Sources:

Troublesome Weeds of New Mexico by Mark Renz & Frank Sholedice, NMSU 2006

New Mexico's Invasive Weeds by Richard D. Lee, NMSU 1999

Southwest New Mexico Cooperative Weed Management, Grant/Hildago County Noxious Weeds brochure, NMSU (www.weeds.nmsu.edu)

Article Continued on Page 12



MISTLETOE:

Integrated Pest Management, UC Davis Publication 7437
Broadleaf mistletoe (*Phoradendron macrophyllum*) is an evergreen parasitic plant that grows on a number of landscape tree species. Hosts of broadleaf mistletoe include alder, flowering pear, ash, birch, box elder, cottonwood, locust, silver maple, walnut, and zelkova. Conifers are less often attacked by broadleaf mistletoes, but white fir (*Abies concolor*) is significantly infested in mountainous areas. Dwarf mistletoes (*Arceuthobium* spp.) infest pines, firs, and other conifers in forests, and can be a problem in forested landscapes.

Lifecycle and Biology: Mistletoe plants are either female (produce berries) or male (produce only pollen). The berries of the female plant are small, sticky, and whitish (shown in photo above); they are very attractive to birds such as cedar waxwings, robins, and others. The birds feed on and digest the pulp of the berries, excreting the living seeds that stick tightly to any branch on which they land. In most cases, the initial infestation occurs on larger or older trees because birds prefer to perch in the tops of taller trees. A heavy buildup of mistletoe often occurs within an infested tree because birds are attracted to the berries, and may spend a good deal of time feeding on them. In addition, seeds may fall from mistletoe plants in the upper part of the tree, creating new infestations on the lower branches. The rapidity with which mistletoe spreads is directly related to the proximity and severity of established infestations, and newly planted trees can be quickly infested if they are growing near old, heavily infested trees.

After the mistletoe seed germinates, it grows through the bark and into the tree's water-conducting tissues, where root-like structures called haustoria develop. The haustoria gradually extend up and down within the branch as the mistletoe grows. Initially, the parasitic plant grows slowly; it may take years before the plant blooms and produces seed. Broadleaf mistletoes have succulent stems that become woody at the base. Old, mature mistletoe plants may be several feet in diameter, and on some host species, large swollen areas develop on the infected branches where the mistletoe penetrates. If the visible portion of the mistletoe is removed, new plants often re-sprout from the haustoria. leaves.

Damage: Broadleaf mistletoe absorbs both water and mineral nutrients from its host trees. Healthy trees can tolerate a few mistletoe branch infections, but individual branches may be weakened or sometimes killed. Heavily infested trees may be reduced in vigor, stunted, or even killed, especially if they are stressed by other problems such as drought or disease.

Article Continued on Page 12



More Resources on African Rue Control

African Rue: Biology and Management, Texas A&M Extension, Charles R. Hart

African Rue: Identification & Management, Colorado Dept. of Agriculture

African Rue Control: Ground Applications: Individual Plant and Broadcast Spray Treatment for African Rue Control, NMSU Cooperative Extension Service, by Kirk McDaniel and Keith Duncan, Extension Brush and Weed Control Specialists

Article Suggested by Russ Boor, MG Intern

Mistletoe IPM—Continued from Page 11

Management: In newly developed areas or in older established areas where trees are being replaced, the ideal method of controlling or preventing mistletoe is to plant trees believed to be resistant or moderately resistant to mistletoe. Avoid trees like Modesto ash, known to be especially susceptible to mistletoe infestation. Where many new trees are being planted, control mistletoe in any surrounding infested trees to reduce the infection of new trees.

For treatment of existing trees it is important to remove mistletoe before it produces seed and spreads to other limbs or trees. Mechanical control through pruning is the most effective method for removal. Growth regulators provide a degree of temporary control but repeated applications are required. Severely infested trees should be removed and replaced.

Resistant Species: Some tree species appear resistant to broadleaf mistletoe. Bradford flowering pear, Chinese pistache, crape myrtle, eucalyptus, ginkgo, golden rain tree, liquidambar, sycamore, and conifers such as redwood and cedar are rarely infested. These or other resistant species should be considered when planting in infested areas, or when replacing infested trees.

For more information, you can download the complete publication from:

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7437.html>



Community and School Gardens Report
-November 2010-

The report on Community and School Garden activities is suspended through the winter season, unless something happens. We will resume with the gardening season. However, if you have questions or comments please contact either Christine at chrchavez@las-cruces.org or Darrol at darrols@earthlink.net

Respectfully,

Christine Chavez
School Garden Project Coordinator

Darrol Shillingburg
Community Garden Project Coordinator



THE BOLSON TORTOISE

The Bolson Tortoise (*Gopherus flavomarginatus*) also called the Mexican Giant Tortoise, Mexican Gopher Tortoise, or Yellow-Margined Tortoise is the largest North American tortoise species. It lives in North Central Mexico in the states of Chihuahua, Coahuila and Durango around the Bolsón de Mapimí, a large geologic feature.

It is a terrestrial tortoise with a high-domed brownish upper shell. The front legs have heavy claws and are flattened for digging. The back legs are stumpy. Males are slightly larger than females. Male tortoises have a concave plastron (i.e. belly), while females have a flat plastron. The scutes (feet) often have grooved concentric rings. The head is small and rounded. The tail is short.

Environment: Bolson tortoises live in colonies of up to 100. They feed during the early morning and evening. They hide in burrows during the heat of the day. They dig burrows in the sand with their forelimbs. In winter, they hibernate in their burrows.

Food: Bolson tortoises feed mainly on wiry Tobosa bunch grass.

Breeding: Bolson tortoises lay 12 to 15 eggs. Their lifespan has been estimated at up to 70 to 100 years.

Range: The Bolson Tortoise was discovered as recently as 1959. The legend is that a group of biologists working in the Bolsón de Mapimí area were at a ranch and saw chickens eating out of a large tortoise shell. They inquired about the origin of the shell and the locals responded by saying that it was, "la tortuga grande del desierto," the big turtle of the desert.

Declining Population: The most recent research, published in 1991 from data collected in 1983, estimates that fewer than 10,000 of these tortoises remain in the wild. Populations have declined mostly due to overcollecting for food and the pet trade. The incursion of roads, railroads and agricultural development has also accelerated the decline of the species in the last 40 years. In the central portion of its range locals are keenly aware of the tortoise's protected status and aid in its conservation. However, in the northeastern portion of its range, near La Sierra Mojada, populations of the tortoise are low. It is believed that tortoises are still collected and eaten in this area. Additionally, extensive brush clearing operations are conducted to make way for cattle grazing. In 2008, following the construction of federally subsidized ethanol plants, extensive corn farming operations began within the Mapimi Biosphere Reserve. Farms have been tilled in tortoise habitat, despite its protected status.

Appleton Tortoises: In the fall of 2006, twenty-six Bolson Tortoises were translocated from the Audubon Appleton-Whittell Research Ranch in Elgin, Arizona to Ted Turner's Armandaris Ranch in south-central New Mexico, a Chihuahuan desert environment within the prehistoric range of this species. These tortoises also known as the Appleton tortoises (in commemoration of Ariel Appleton, a champion of Bolson tortoise conservation) were originally brought to Arizona from Durango, Mexico by Dr. David Morafka in 1973. Four tortoises from the Appleton population were established at the Living Desert Museum in Carlsbad, New Mexico. Both locations have active breeding programs in place.

Rewilding: The Bolson Tortoise was recently brought to the world's attention when in August 2005 a provocative article on "Pleistocene rewilding" appeared in the journal *Nature* (Donlan, et al., 2005) proposing that mega fauna that went extinct in North America at the close of the Pleistocene (~12,800 years ago) be reintroduced to the continent to create a Pleistocene Park. The Bolson tortoise was the first species proposed for this restoration effort. The tortoise is unique in that, unlike mammoths, sabre-toothed tigers and giant ground sloths, it is not extinct. The Turner Endangered Species Fund, that re-introduced the tortoise to New Mexico, has made it clear that the restoration of the tortoise to the Southwest is an endangered species recovery project and not a "rewilding" project, although elements of rewilding exist. ■

Sources:

The Bolson Tortoise on <http://www.wildlifeforthamerica.com/Reptile/Bolson-Tortoise/Gopherus/flavomarginatus.html>

The Bolson Tortoise on http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bolson_Tortoise

VEGGIES: A To Z



LETTUCE (*Lactuca sativa* L.)
Compositae Family

Lettuce is considered by most to be a cool season crop best planted in early spring and again in late summer or fall in more southern climates. That is a good practice, but if you enjoy green summer salads, you can now grow lettuce year round by changing varieties and culture methods.

HERITAGE

Cultivated lettuce originates from the wild ancestor *Lactuca scariola*, today found widely scattered around the world. Its original home is the trans-Caucasus Mountains of Iran and Turkistan. Its not as old as many other cultivated edibles, but Greek and Persian writers wrote about lettuce in the 6th, 5th and 4th centuries BC and Roman writers described a dozen distinct varieties with many of them quite common.

Lettuce also shows up in Chinese writings in the 5th Century BC. There's even a description of a wild "stem lettuce" harvested for its tall fleshy edible stem. "Stem lettuce" seed is available today in specialty catalogues and can be grown in the home garden. However, if you want something similar, let your lettuce plants bolt and eat the bloom stalk (delicious when baked!).

Lettuce was a well-established crop throughout Europe by the time of Columbus's second voyage (1493) and settlement (Isabella) on the north coast of modern-day Dominican Republic. He introduced lettuce there, but it did not grow well in the hot moist climate. The first record of lettuce in New Mexico dates to the Juan de Oñate's settlement expedition in 1598.

Varieties matter when growing lettuce on a year-round schedule. During the cooler seasons when daytime temperatures remain below 90°F nearly all lettuce varieties will grow well and remain sweet until they bolt. However, during late spring and summer when daytime temperatures exceed 90°F only those varieties that are bred to be heat tolerant will deliver edible lettuce. I have grown the following heat tolerant varieties and I am satisfied with their growth and taste:

Nevada – Batavia	Jericho – Romaine
Red Sails – Loose Leaf	Buttercrunch – Batavia
Matchless – Bibb	Sweet Red – Butterhead
Red Butterworth – Looseleaf	Torenia – Butterhead

GROWING IN SUMMER

During summer you will need to start seed under lights and set out transplants when about 3 weeks old – do not delay transplanting beyond 4 weeks for best results.

Space transplants on a 12-inch grid, allowing more root space than for cool season plantings. These plants require more water to cool off through transpiration. Based on water use experiments I did last July and August each plant needs about a gallon of water daily when full grown. Since even heat tolerant lettuce varieties can become bitter with water and/or nutrient stress – grow them in rich soil with plenty of root space.

Ideal timing for summer lettuce is 20 days from seed to transplant and 20–30 days from transplant to full head development. There can be 10-20 days difference in growing time depending on variety as some summer varieties are quick to bolt and some are slower. For more information about growing lettuce during the hot season refer to the article [Summer Lettuce](#).

GROWING IN COOL SEASONS

You can grow both "cut and come" and heading lettuces during the cool season. For "cut and come" sow seeds closely and shallowly, then harvest individual leaves at about 3 weeks and two successive times after that. Eventually those plants will begin to grow leaves that are tough and make poor salads.

You can sow seeds in "stations" on an 8-inch grid and harvest the outer leaves as the plants grow, and/or let the plants come to maturity before harvest. During the cool seasons, you can also start lettuce under lights and set out transplants – but it is not necessary to do, as the seed will germinate easily with soil temperatures below 80°F.

Remember to sow seeds very shallowly, barely covered, as lettuce seed needs light to germinate.

BIOLOGY AND NUTRITIONAL NEEDS

To grow quickly and well until mature, lettuce roots need soil that has plenty of available nitrogen, phosphorous, potassium and calcium. Our soils are generally high in potassium, but may not contain adequate available calcium for maturing lettuce. The last two weeks prior to full growth and while holding in cooler weather your lettuce may develop tip burn or browning on the outer edges of the older leaves. Uneven watering and calcium deficiency can be the cause. During this time, lettuce stops growing new rootlets, which are the most efficient at calcium uptake. Adding bone meal before planting will usually prevent the problem.

With minimal space and effort and a little knowledge you can "grow your own" lettuce year-round. Your garden space can be pots on the balcony or any space that receives at least six hours of direct sunlight daily throughout the year.

Till next month,
Good Gardening and Good Eating

Darrol Shillingburg
Doña Ana County Extension Master Gardener

MASTER GARDENER MATTERS

—Monthly Meeting, November 10, 2010—

▣ **WELCOME**—Jeff Anderson started off the meeting by noting those MGs who were celebrating birthdays in November.

▣ **COMMITTEE/PROJECT REPORTS**

MG Hotline—(Sylvia Hacker) Sign up sheets for the Hotline were available at the back table. December assignments were wide open, so people who still needed hours were requested to sign up. Our 2011 Hotline assignment calendar has been ordered and will be available at our December 8th meeting.

Sylvia stated that she has been organizing the Hotline office: 1) flowcharts now show how to handle various situations, and the required paperwork, 2) there is a notebook containing phone numbers and contacts for other MG programs and other institutional resources, and 3) how to access publications online. Sylvia also revised the specimen tracking system which is in a new notebook with easy-to-read directions, and flow charts. Also, a new “pending” folder has been created for all those contacts that are still in process waiting for lab results. The magazine tower is now in use with one side for material waiting to be picked up by clients and the rest for frequently used handouts.

MG Volunteer Hours—(Pam Crane) Next to the Hotline sign up sheet was a printout with everyone’s hours up through Sept. 2010. MGs were asked to check to see if their hours were correct. Additional comments by Jeff & Juliet: Normally, the “Year” for hours for Certified MGs and MG Interns is October through September, but if Interns need a few more hours to get their certification, they can count hours worked in October through December. Also, under extenuating circumstances, Interns can take two years to complete their hours for certification.

Joan Lane asked if there is a way to check on our hours throughout the year. Pam stated that she will try to bring quarterly printouts to MG meetings. Also, there will be a box for turning in timesheets at our monthly meetings.

There was some discussion about what counts as Hotline hours:

- 1) Does working the info table at the Garden Expo count? There was no clear resolution to this issue, but currently working at the Farmer’s Market table does count as Hotline hours. Some expressed concern that MGs and Interns should sign up for the Hotline duty first and that since the Hotline is a critical part of the Master Gardener Program’s community service, we should limit what other activities count toward Hotline hours. It was noted that Hotline duty includes documentation of our contacts via the Contact Sheet.
- 2) Kristee West mentioned that December is usually a very easy month to work and the hours are only 9-12.
- 3) Valice Raffi suggested we create a form for logging community interactions at our Info tables so those contacts are recorded as well. Jeff stated that if volunteer hours are to be counted as Hotline hours, the contacts must be documented, so probably situations like working at the Info table at the Hatch Chile festival would not count as Hotline hours. More discussion followed.
- 4) Jeff asked us to let him know confidentially if there are issues about working the Hotline. Jeff will make a determination about whether the time spent at the Farmer’s Market table will continue to count as Hotline hours if we do not fill out Contact sheets there.

MG Newsletter—(Ann Shine-Ring & Darrol Shillingburg) The December plant-of-the-month will be purslane, which is viewed as a weed, but it is also very eatable and nutritious. There will also be reviews of articles on caring for living Christmas trees, mistletoe and poinsettias.

Farmer’s Market—(Dixie LaRock & Barb Sallach) Barb asked if we wanted to have a booth in January and February. The consensus was that there will be no booth in those months as they are usually very slow.

Lunch & Learn Presentation—(Sylvia Hacker) Next Thursday’s presentation, November 18, will be on pumpkins with Karim. Next month’s presentation (Dec. 16) will be on the use of floral language in art, literature and everyday life.

Mentoring Program—(Sylvia Hacker) This week is the hotline orientation for the “newbies”, so be prepared for questions.

2012 State MG Conference—(Dale Petzold) Next month we will start signups for up to ten Committees to plan the Conference. Dixie asked people to keep in mind that we will be needing items for the auction and door prizes, so keep should keep our eyes open for things to donate. Jeff suggested that we give out tree seedlings. Sylvia suggested that we could donate items that we make. She volunteered to do a workshop on making items for the auction like planters and other yard art. Barb Sallach talked about a class done in Oregon on making yard art with painted rocks. There seemed to be interest in having a crafts day to make yard art. Dale also asked for suggestions for workshops and/or presenters for the Conference that is tentatively set for Thursday June 7–June 9, 2012 at NMSU.

Graduation and Awards—(Valice Raffi) The event’s menu is set and the cost will be \$12 per person, except for graduates. Checks are to be made out to: NMSU with the memo noting “MG 2011 Graduation”. We will use the Trails West Clubhouse again on Jan 15, 2011 for lunch. Catering will be by Lorenzos de Mesilla. The Committee met briefly after this meeting. (See page 16 for more info on this event.)

Other Discussion—(Jeff Anderson & Juliet) Jeff talked about plant propagation and his interest in teaching what he knows to others interested in going into the nursery business with native plants. Jeff also mentioned he needs documentation of where our new brochures about the Master Gardener Program are being distributed for his reports.

Juliet introduced the MG students attending our meeting. She also mentioned that 2010 is the Tenth Anniversary of our MG program in Doña Ana County. John White, Curtis Smith and Jackye Meineke who have worked with our Program throughout these years will be attending the January 15, 2011 Graduation Ceremony. *MGM Continued on Page 16*

MASTER GARDENER MATTERS-Continued

—Monthly Meeting, November 10, 2010 Continued —

Education Program Committee—December's Program will be "My Favorite Things", so please bring your favorite garden-related items to "show and tell". Also please write down websites, resources, etc you like. If you have ideas for 2011 educational programs, please let Joan Woodward (email: jhirschman@csupomona.edu) or Darrol (email: darrols@earthlink.net)

MG Finance Committee—(BettyThompson) Betty reported that Mr. Nesbit may not be able to meet with us again, but someone else from the NMSU Finance Office will give us a presentation on how our budget works on November 30, 9:30 at the Extension office. Anyone interested is invited to attend this meeting

▣ NEW / CONTINUING BUSINESS

- A. Pecan Field Day – Nov. 4, 2010 Jeff stated that this event was great.
- B. Other: Jody Richardson was hosting an event at her home on Sat. Dec 4, 11-3. Ann Shine-Ring agreed to send out a group email on this event.

▣ EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATION:

School Gardens & Master Gardeners, presenters were Councillor Olga Pedroza of District 3 and Christine Chavez, Water Conservation Coordinator & MG Intern from the City of Las Cruces

Meeting Snacks Thank you to Linden Ranel, Ann Shine-Ring, and Mary Thompson for our delicious snacks today. Next month, Jeanene Cathey, Linda Morgan, and Beth Paris will be our "goodie makers".

Next MG Business Meeting—Wednesday, December 8, 2010

Bonnie and Juliet



DOÑA ANA COUNTY MASTER GARDENER PROGRAM'S TENTH ANNIVERSARY 2001-2011

Graduates of the 2011 Master Gardener Program,
Interns from the 2010 Class receiving their Master Gardener Certification and
Re-Certified Veteran Master Gardeners
Are cordially invited to a Ceremony & Luncheon in their honor

11:45 - 3:00pm
Saturday, January 15, 2011
Trails West Club House
1450 Avenida De Mesilla
Las Cruces, NM 88005

Interns, Master Gardeners and Guests: \$12/ea

To secure your reservation, checks must be received in the County Extension Office by
January 6th 2011

Make checks payable to NMSU and on the memo line write "MG 2011 Graduation"

Questions: Contact Valice Raffi at 541-0444 or valice@g.com

Thank you to Jodi Richardson for providing this information

THE VALUE OF MASTER GARDENER PROGRAMS

2009 Extension Master Gardener Programs National Survey*
(Numbers are from 42 states and the District of Columbia)

Total Current Extension Master Gardener Volunteers
94,865*

Total Annual Volunteer Hours
5,197,573*

Value of Volunteer Hours
\$101.4 Million*

Personal contacts (e.g. hotline calls, e-mails returned,
live audience presentations, and site visits)
(38 responding states)

4,850,285 Contacts

* Conservative Estimates

Source: www.extension.org/

Thank you to Sylvia Hacker, Certified MG, for providing this important data



ADDITIONS TO OUR HOTLINE RESOURCE LIBRARY

Mary Thompson has donated a copy of the most recent edition Dr. Kelly Allred's book, [A Field Guide to the Grasses of New Mexico](#). The book is currently being kept in the drawer with the other guarded texts. A new copy of the [National Audubon Society's Field Guide to North American Insects and Spiders](#) has also been donated. It's on the main bookshelf in the [Insects Section](#) in the Hotline Office.

Lastly, the Hotline now has it's own copy of the latest soil survey of Doña Ana County. It's located on the main bookshelf in the [Soils Section](#). There is also a laminated DAC basic soils map posted on the small bulletin board above the bookshelf.

Mentors and Interns Working Hotline Together

Mentors, please be communicating with your Intern concerning Hotline sign ups. Starting in January, you will need to work the Hotline with your "seedling" the first few times she or he is there. A new Hotline calendar has been purchased and it will be available beginning with the December 8th monthly MG meeting. Availability will be on a first come-first serve basis as usual. If you are unable or unwilling to work Hotline with your Intern, please let me know as soon as possible (slh303@yahoo.com) so a replacement may be found. Thanks!

Notice Provided by Sylvia Hacker, Certified MG

