



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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◀ January 2011 ▶

Volume 12, Issue #1

Plant-of-the-Month

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DEVIL'S CLAW

(*Proboscidea parviflora*; *Proboscidea althaeifolia*)

Devils Claw is a native plant of the southern U.S. Its generic name *Proboscidea* is derived from the Greek word "proboscis", referring to the long claw or horn of the fruit. One plant may produce 50 or more of the curious pods that ripen by late summer and early fall. This plant belongs to the Martynia family (*Martyniaceae*), a small family comprising three genera and a dozen species, mostly of warm subtropical and desert regions of North America.

The Martynia family is closely related to the bignonia family (*Bignoniaceae*) and the blossoms

are strikingly similar to those of Catalpa, Jacaranda and Bignonia. Its sticky seedpod with a curved horn or claw is what makes this plant unusual. Its strange looking seedpods attach to the feet and legs of large animals. The thick body of the three to four inch seedpod ends in a curved horn the same length. When dry this horn splits into two sharp claws.

There are two primary species of Devil's Claw—one is a pink-flowered annual (*Proboscidea parviflora* ssp. *parviflora*) and the other is yellow-flowered perennial (*P. althaeifolia*) both of which are native to the southwestern U. S.

P. althaeifolia (see photo on page 3) is a sprawling perennial that appears during the hottest months of summer and it is one of the most spectacular of all North American desert wildflowers. During the hot summer months, both species form sprawling, pumpkin-like plants with clammy, sticky foliage, long after most other wildflowers have bloomed and gone to seed.

The throat of the Devil's Claw's corolla is mottled purple with two lines of purplish spots or not. The nectar guides are yellow. The fruits have beaks or claws and black seeds. Some of these native plants found in the desert have white seeds with claws long and is called var. *hohokamiana*.

Several additional annual species of Devil's Claw in three different genera are naturalized or cultivated in the Pacific states. *Proboscidea louisianica* ssp. *louisianica* has large pinkish-white flowers and is native to the southern U.S. It is sometimes grown in gardens, but the strongly-scented foliage is considered unpleasant and "overpowering" to some gardeners. *Proboscidea louisianica* ssp. *fragrans*, a similar Devil's Claw from Texas and northeastern Mexico with beautiful violet to reddish-purple flowers, is also grown in summer gardens. A robust, yellow-flowered species, *Ibicella lutea* (*Proboscidea lutea*), is occasionally naturalized in the Central Valley of California. It is native and cultivated for food in several countries of South America, from Brazil to Argentina. The dried seed capsule of the latter species is unique among Devil's Claw plants because the body is covered with short, prickly spines, thus making it a doubly effective hitchhiker for seed dispersal. The generic name *Ibicella* is appropriately derived from ibex, a Himalayan mountain goat with magnificent curved horns. *Article Continued on Page 2*

December 2010 & January 2011 Hotline Contacts Data to be provided in the February 2011 Newsletter

Devil's Claw—Continued from Front Page

The Devil's Claw fruit is technically a hanging capsule with a woody inner part surrounded by a fleshy layer. The rather sinister common name of "devil's claw" refers to this inner woody capsule that splits open at one end into two curved horns or claws. Each capsule contains about 40 to 50 seeds that are gradually released when the claws split apart. They are also called "elephant tusks" and readily cling to the hooves of grazing animals or your shoes if you happen to step on them. In some areas of the southwestern U.S. they have been a nuisance to sheep ranchers because these claws often become entangled in fleece.

Each half of the plant's seedpods has two rows of seeds. The inner rows of seeds fall out where the claws split apart. These seeds would be scattered as an animal with an attached claw walks around. The outer row of seeds will not fall out and can only be removed by breaking open the pod and prying them out. These seeds would be fertilized by a carcass or otherwise be spread when the pod is crushed.

Distribution: Found in disturbed dry places in deserts of Southwestern California to Arizona, Southern Nevada, to Western Texas and Northern Mexico. Seed capsules of the yellow-flowered Devil's Claw (*P. althaeifolia*) can be found in sandy desert areas, from San Diego County to the tip of Baja California.

Use By Native Americans: The fresh green pods (and dried black seed capsules) were important items in the cultures of many Native American tribes of the southwestern U.S. and are still used to this day for food and in basketry.

Claws of the plant's mature seedpods were collected in autumn, split and used to create black basketry designs by many tribes in Southern California and the Southwest. These tribes included the Chemehuevi, Kawaiisu, Owens Valley Paiute, Tubatulabal, Havasupai, Papago, and Pima. Because the claws of this plant are durable, they were often used to construct the base of baskets among the Papago and Pima.



The material is still gathered wild or plants are cultivated in home gardens by contemporary weavers. Certain varieties of *P. parviflora* have been selected by Native Americans to have longer claws in order to produce fiber for baskets.

The Papago used the young pods as food, while the Pima cracked the seeds between their teeth and ate them like pine nuts. Also used to treat rheumatic pains, the Pima broke off a small piece of the claw and pressed it into the flesh, then lighted it and allowed it to burn.

Article Continued on Page 3

**DEVIL'S CLAW FACTS**

- Genus:** Martynia Family (*Martyniaceae*); *Proboscidea*
Aka Unicorn Plant Family
- Species:** *P. parviflora* (pink-flowered annual)
P. althaeifolia (yellow-flowered perennial)
P. parviflora var. *hohokamiana* (white-seeded plant cultivated in desert areas & Arizona for centuries)
P. louisiancia (large pinkish-white flowers)
P. louisiancia ssp. *fragrans* (violet to reddish-purple flowers)
Ibicella lutea (South American variety of Devil's Claw sometimes grown in California's Central Valley)
Martynia annua (pink-flowered native of Mexico)
- Other Names:** Doubleclaw, Devil's Horn, Unicorn Plant, Arizona Devil's Claw, red devil claw, Aguaro, Cuernero or aphid trap
- Elevation:** 0 - 6500 feet
- Habitat:** Arizona to Texas, south to central Mexico; found in sandy washes and along roadsides.
- Leaves:** Simple, smooth to slightly lobed, spade-like in shape hairy and sticky up to 7" long.
- Flowers:** Five petal lobes that are 1 1/5" long and 3/4" wide. Shapes: tubular, pinkish to purple with a striped, yellow throat. They are difficult to see beneath the foliage. Depending on plant variety, pink, yellow, or violet to reddish-purple in color.
- Fruit/Seedpods:** Very distinctive growing to about 12" long with two long, curved green claws or prongs, giving it the name Devil's Claw; suckers are sharp and attach easily to passing animals/objects which lends to easy dispersal of its seeds; non-desert natives have black seeds—desert natives have white seeds.
- Bloom Season:** Flowers bloom from April to mid-October; during hot summer months forms sprawling pumpkin-like plants with sticky, clammy foliage.
- Height/Width:** Can reach up to 3 ft. tall and can grow to 3 ft. wide.
- Sun Exposure:** Full sun and hot weather desired
- DANGER:** Plants have very unpleasant smell—something like rotting gym socks. Leaves and stems are covered with a resinous slime that cannot be easily washed off. It gets on your clothes, hands and arms and on your garden tools.
- Propagation** From seed

Devil's Claw—Continued from Page 2

Use By Native Americans (Continued)

Devil's claws are one of the most interesting and unusual plants of North America. Although they are relatively unknown to most gardeners, they have been very important in the culture of many Native American tribes.

Management: Traditionally, tribes in the Southwest saved seed from pods with longer claws and planted them apart from the others. The longer claws were highly desirable for basketry design material. Today, this white-seeded form with longer horns is different enough morphologically to be named as a special domesticated variety of *Proboscidea parviflora* var. *hohokamiana*.

Propagating Devil's Claw: If desired, this plant can be propagated by seed. Seeds should be soaked in warm water in a clean vessel for 8 hours prior to spring planting. After soaking, plant seeds immediately in full sun in a well-drained soil and at a depth that is the width of the seeds. Water the seeds, keeping the area slightly moist.

After seedlings have appeared, allow the surface of the soil to dry between watering. In areas with summer rainfall, only supplement watering is needed if rain is sparse. In areas without summer rainfall, mimic this rainfall pattern by watering once every 2 to 3 weeks. Once the seedpods have started to ripen, stop watering.

When the seedpods mature, collect them and shake the seeds to get them out of the pods and let them air dry in partial shade in a screened-in porch or indoors. Keep seeds in a container or paper bag on an open shelf at room temperature until the next planting cycle, the following spring. Devil's Claw does not need protection from wildlife.

So why grow these plants? Because you can. This plant is definitely not a houseplant—it should be planted in a garden or a very large pot. No special soil is required. Regular tap water is fine. Grow the plants like you would any long-growing season plant in your area. Take care of it like you would tomato or zucchini. Fertilize it if you dare. The main requirement is full sun and hot weather.

Do not ever let these plants or their seeds get out of your direct control. They can become invasive weeds and have the potential to kill wildlife.



Seedpods of Devil's Claw Plants



P. athaeifolia (yellow-flowered perennial)

Insects & Wildlife: Several species of bees frequent this plant's fragrant blossoms, which often have bright yellow nectar guide lines and reddish-purple flecks along the inner corolla tube. The two-lipped thigmotropic (i.e., contact movement) stigma of some species closes with the slightest touch, presumably capturing pollen as in several species of related wildflowers including *Mimulus* and *Diplacus*. In fact, *Proboscidea* annuals in cultivation readily cross-pollinate, resulting in an interesting array of intermediate floral characteristics.

These plants are nasty! In our area of the Southwest that has hot summers, expect plants to be at least 3 ft across. They have a rather unpleasant smell—something like rotting gym socks. The smell does serve as a warning to remind you to keep away. And keep away is something you may want to do. Leaves and stems are covered with a resinous slime that you can't easily wash off. It gets on your clothes. It gets on your hands and arms. It gets on your garden tools. It won't come off. And then there are the seedpods. Those suckers are very sharp. They are designed to snag onto animal feet and hold on until the poor beast dies and serves as fertilizer for the next generation of Devil's Claw.

The smell probably attracts insects such as small flies, gnats, and beetles that accumulate on the leaves. The insects do die. But the plant doesn't produce digestive enzymes and doesn't actively absorb nutrients. In fact the slime itself probably limits the nutrients the plant could gain from the rotting corpses. The slime is most likely a predator defense although these plants can be ravaged by moth larvae that don't seem to be bothered by the slime and like to hide inside the hollow stems.

Medicinal Uses: The two active ingredients in Devil's Claw are *harpagoside* and *beta-sitosterol*. It is claimed that these possess anti-inflammatory properties. The British Herbal Pharmacopoeia recognizes Devil's Claw as having analgesic, sedative and diuretic properties. Most studies involve chronic use rather than acute treatment of pain.

Devil's Claw is also claimed to be beneficial for treating diseases of the liver, kidneys, gallbladder and bladder, arthritis and rheumatism. It is said to help alleviate problems with and improve the vitality of the joints, as well as stimulating appetite and aid digestion, increase cholesterol and fatty acids in the blood. Devil's Claw has been recommended for treating diabetes, hardening of the arteries, lumbago, gastrointestinal disturbances, menstrual difficulties, neuralgia, headache, heartburn and gout. **Article Continued on Page 4**

Devil's Claw—Continued from Page 3

Medicinal Uses (Continued)

Several studies have been performed using *Doloteffin*, a standardized preparation of Devil's Claw. A series of small-scale studies completed in Germany found that *H. procumbens* was indistinguishable from *Vioxx* in the treatment of chronic low back pain, and was well-tolerated after more than four years of treatment of *H. procumbens* alone. *H. procumbens* also seems effective in the treatment of arthritis-caused hip and knee pain. Devil's Claw can also be used externally to treat sores, ulcers, boils and skin lesions.

Adverse Reactions

Devil's Claw may interfere with the action of *Ticlopidine* and *Warfarin*, and patients should consult with a physician before combining Devil's Claw with these medications. In addition, Devil's Claw promotes the secretion of stomach acid, leading to difficulties in those with peptic ulcers, gastritis or excess stomach acid. Care should also be taken for individuals with gallstones.

Cooking Devil's Claw:

Perhaps the most fascinating thing about Devil's Claw plants is their curious seedpods. Green fruits of the pink-flowered Devil's Claw (*Proboscidea parviflora* ssp. *parviflora*) hang on the branches in clusters and their fleshy fruits resemble bean pods or okra. They are cultivated in gardens of Native Americans throughout the southwest and are cooked and eaten as a vegetable. The nutritious dried seeds are rich in oil and protein and can be shelled and eaten. Some cooks have found the cooked fruits quite bitter, but perhaps the dishes were not prepared in the right way or not enough seasoning was used. In some parts of the U.S., Devil's Claws are grown and pickled like cucumbers and okra, either alone or with other vegetables. According to Dr. Robert A. Bye, Jr. of Chihuahua, Mexico, some Mexicans prepare a tea from the fruits of *Martynia annua* which is taken to relieve headaches.

Summary: Devil's Claws are one of the most interesting and unusual plants of North America. Although they are relatively unknown to most gardeners, they have been very important in the culture of many Native American tribes. There are many reasons for growing Devil's Claws:

- 1) Used as a dark strip for coiled baskets,
- 2) Used as a vegetable crop or substitute for cucumber pickles,
- 3) Used in art design for bizarre little creatures, or
- 4) Appreciated for their beautiful flowers and unusual seed pods.

Devil's Claws are guaranteed to make an excellent conversation piece in the home or garden of any plant lover. But perhaps they are best enjoyed as a unique North American wildflower that brightens up a desert on a hot summer day. ■



Proboscidea parviflora

SOURCES (Devil's Claw Article):

Devil's Claw, *Proboscidea parviflora*. Plant Guide. USDA on plants.usda.gov/plantguide/doc/cs_prpa2.doc

Devil's Claw: *Proboscidea parviflora* ssp. *parviflora* (Martynia parviflora) on <http://www.delange.org/DevilsClaw/DevilsClaw.htm>
Arizona Wild Flowers Photos

Devil's Claws: Hitchhikers on Big Animals on <http://waynesword.palomar.edu/ww0801.htm>

* *Ethnobotany of Devil's Claw in the Greater Southwest*, by P.K. Bretting and G.P. Nabhan in the *Journal of California and Great Basin Anthropology*, 1986, on <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/2dh2f8k2;jsessionid=C.B7AC0D4B7B30A6D843A55DE8F892BD3#page-1>

Growing *Ibicella* and *Proboscidea* on <http://www.carnivorousplants.org/seedbank/species/Proboscidea.htm>

Harpagophytum on <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harpagophytum>

How To Grow Devil's Claw on http://www.ehow.com/how_4482440_cook-devils-claw.html

Research & compilation of information for this article provided by Ann Shine-Ring, Certified MG

* This article, provided by Sylvia Hacker, Certified Master Gardener, contains a very interesting review of the Devil's Claw's role in the culture and history of Native American groups in the Southwest.

Deadline for submitting articles and information for the February 2011 MG newsletter will be Friday, Jan. 28th

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"Brandy" Hybrid Tea Rose

Tips For Pruning Roses

By Ann Shine-Ring, Certified Master Gardener
Doña Ana County Master Gardener Program

1. First, be sure that the blades on your pruning shears are sharp so that they make clean, crisp cuts. Also remember to clean off your shears with a mild bleach solution after you prune each rose bush so that you do not transfer any disease from one rose bush to another. Or why not try using disinfectant wipes, they are much less messy to use.
2. Be sure to cut the canes on your rose bushes at an approximate 45% angle just above a growth bud.
3. When you need to remove an entire cane, be sure to make your cut flush to the bud union. Otherwise, if you leave a stub, it will die back into the union and will allow an entrance for disease.
4. In the Las Cruces area, the best time to prune your roses is late January through mid-February, but before Valentine's Day.
5. Start the pruning process by cutting all canes on the rosebush down to just three feet high. Then, prune all canes on the bush that are smaller than the diameter of a pencil.
6. Next, cut off all dead, diseased or damaged canes or canes that cross through the center of the rose bush. Also remove all sucker growth.
7. Choose four or five good canes that form a vase shape and keep these and cut off the rest. Now, cut these remaining canes down to 18-24 inches above the outward facing node.
8. Remember, unpruned roses will result in a tangled mass of branches that attract pests, reduce airflow through the rose bush that can promote disease and/or spider mites, and reduce the chances of your rose producing good blooms.
9. Removing more wood from a rose bush can result in fewer but larger blooms. Less pruning results in a greater number of smaller blooms.

Sources: Doña Ana County Master Gardener Program, Ortho Books, "Rose Pruning Guide", and "Growing Roses" Guide H-165, New Mexico Cooperative Extension Service.

This handout is also available in the MG Hotline Library



"Hot Cocoa" Hybrid Tea Rose

A Rose Calendar for Las Cruces & El Paso

By Ann Shine-Ring, Doña Ana County Certified Master Gardener
& Jack Makepeace of the El Paso Rose Club

- ☼ Mid-February through April is our first rose-blooming season
- ☼ May and June is our "fore-summer" season
- ☼ July, August & September (hot and humid summer with thundershowers)
- ☼ October and November is the second rose season (warm days and cool nights of autumn)
- ☼ Six to eight weeks (max.) of winter with nights in the low twenties (roses lose their leaves and will go dormant)

You can plant roses in late winter to early spring (late January, February and March), and again in the fall (September and October).

Pruning: Start pruning roses in late January if you like, but finish by Valentine's Day. You can prune again in August for fall blooms. Use Elmer's glue to seal cut ends of canes. Borers will cause dieback.

Soils, Mulching, Fertilizing: Start watering and fertilizing from mid-February through the first of May, and then the rose season is usually over until fall. Fertilize again in August and/or September. You may have roses until Thanksgiving (or even Christmas and New Year's!)

Insects, Diseases, Spraying: Aphids, thrips and mildew are minor problems in the spring. Rose books and magazines describe spraying every 7 to 10 days to control black spot and other fungus diseases. In May, leafcutter bees often appear cutting half-moon shapes out of your rose leaves. Roses usually recover within a month by producing new leaves. There is no known remedy for these bees.

Watering: Drip irrigation works very well in Las Cruces and El Paso. Keeping roses together in a special bed (space bushes at least two feet apart). This will allow you to manage watering and fertilizing more easily. Raised beds and creating "well rings" around roses also work well.

Article Continued on Page 8

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

Date: Thursday, January 20
 Time: 12:00-1:00 p.m.
 Place: Branigan Memorial Library
 Location: Roadrunner Meeting Room
 Speaker: Jeff Anderson, Dona Ana Co. Ext. Agriculture Agent



Topic: Designing Beautiful Landscapes with Cacti and Succulents
 Synopsis: Learn how to create a landscape that requires low water input yet can inspire your neighbors with its beauty. Jeff will show you the beauty and sculptural qualities of these plants that may change your mind forever about these plants.

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

*Information provided by
 Sylvia Hacker, Certified Master Gardener*



**JANUARY EVENTS:
 MESILLA VALLEY BOSQUE STATE PARK**

Saturdays: Jan. 8, 15 & 22 (8:15-10am)

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, Jan. 29 (10am in Classroom)

Frogs of New Mexico. Join Naturalist Richard Quick and learn about frogs we have here in the Mesilla Valley.

Saturday, Jan. 29 (8:15-10am)

Becoming a Birder: Park Staff will point out common birds found in the park this time of year. Participants will walk the park trails and learn what to look for to help identify birds and how to use field guides.

Fees: Regular Entrance Fee

Contact: LuAnn Tafoya 575-523-4398

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



JANUARY MG BIRTHDAYS

Lynn Moseley	January 4
Laurie Davidson	January 12
Charles Deems	January 28
Jeanine Castillo	January 29

MANY THANKS FOR THE GOODIES

We appreciate your thoughtfulness

January Goodies

Linda Schukei
 Sherry Hulsey
 Dick Hiss

February Goodies

Laurie Davidson
 Tom Packard
 Ann Palarmo

Dixie's Honey-Do List for January



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.

Happy New Year To All

ORNAMENTALS

- Plant corms of gladiolus and dahlias this month.
- Sow seeds of spring and summer annuals indoors now for transplant outdoors in a couple of months.
- Plan new plantings. Order seeds and garden "odds and ends".
- Plant and tend pansies, stock and other winter annuals. Keep them watered and deadheaded.
- Native annuals do not need fertilizing, but to speed up blooming and increase the number of flowers, fertilize annuals late in the month. Use a balanced formula that has high phosphorus but relatively low nitrogen content. Too much nitrogen will make plants grow leaves lushly at the expense of flowers.



FRUITS, NUTS, CITRUS & SHADE TREES

- Plant bareroot, balled and burlap and container grown specimens. Bareroot plants should become available soon and must be planted before they break dormancy.
- Time for dormant season pruning. Remove dead, crossing, diseased and damaged limbs.
- Use horticulturally-sound pruning practices leaving branch collars when removing limbs.
- Do not "top" trees.
- Do not fertilize any fruit tree that has not been in the ground for a year. Use a well-balanced granular fertilizer, and water well before and after applying it.
- Wait to prune stone fruit trees and spring flowering shrubs.
- Vigorous shrubs such as photinia and ligustrum may be pruned by 30% while junipers by no more than 20% at one time.
- Clean up crepe myrtles and oleanders by removing seed heads.
- Spray deciduous trees and shrubs prone to insect damage with dormant oil.
- Deep water established trees, shrubs and succulents once a month during winter.

VEGETABLES, FRUIT AND HERBS

- Plant cool season crops such as carrots, onions, parsnips, radishes, English peas, snow peas, fava beans, garbanzo beans, lettuces and other green leafy vegetables after mid-month.
- Start seeds of summer vegetables indoors then transplant outdoors when threat of frost has passed.



LAWNS / TURF / ORNAMENTAL GRASSES

- Relax— warm season grasses are dormant and cool season grasses are quiet; no need to mow or fertilize.
- Water lawns at least once a month; twice a month may be preferable depending on soil type, temperature, wind, rain and quality of turf desired.

Dixie's Honey-Do List for January—Continued



ROSES

- Do not prune roses until late January or early February, but before Valentine's Day.
- Continue deadheading roses regularly. 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.
- Unless you have been fertilizing on a six-week schedule during the winter, do not fertilize roses this month.
- 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.
(Be sure see to read the two articles on [Rose Care](#) on Pages 9 & 10 in this newsletter)

CACTI & SUCCULENTS

- This is not a good time to plant any succulents outside—wait until mid-January to plant even cool-season succulents.
- Do not prune succulents this month.
- Do not fertilize cacti this month.
- Even if plants experience severe cold damage, do not prune affected stems or leaves until the weather warms in February. The only exception is flowering stalks on aloes, which can be removed anytime.
- 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

- Turn over garden beds adding organic matter.
- Add extra mulch to established plantings and seedbeds.
- Control weeds before they set seed.
- Plan landscape changes such as enlarging beds and reducing turf areas.
- Peruse garden catalogs for spring-planting ideas.

A Rose Calendar for Las Cruces & El Paso (Continued from Pg. 5)

Summer Care of Roses:

1. Provide steady soil moisture throughout the heat. Water your roses only in the early morning to prevent "burning" of leaves.
2. Regularly rinse aphids off your roses but do this only in the early morning so the leaves will have time to dry before the heat of the day.
3. Replenish mulch to keep roots cool and shaded. (3 or 4 inches deep isn't too much.)
4. Use slow-release organic fertilizers such as alfalfa pellets (they also serve as mulch).
5. If you have a problem with cats using your rose garden as a toilet, apply used coffee grounds to your mulch. Also the coffee grounds will add nitrogen to the soil.

This handout is also available in the MG Hotline Library



Gardening With Kids

By Melinda Myers in [Birds and Blooms](#), Sept. 2010

Kids love playing in the dirt, so wouldn't it be nice to make playtime more constructive? Here are some ideas to involve energetic youngsters with a passion for dirt. And who knows? It might be more fun than you think.

The whole family can enjoy gardening with these twelve imagination-inspired ideas.

- #1 **Brighten It Up!** Researchers at the Michigan State University found kids love color in the garden. Look for plants with colorful leaves, flowers, fruits, and stems. Many houseplants as well as outdoor plants fit the bill.
- #2 **Let Them Choose.** Kids get excited if they get to plant a flower or vegetable they picked out. It may not be your first choice, but the goal is to get them pumped up about gardening.
- #3 **Pick Plants With Fun Names.** The eyeball plant (*Strobilanthus*) and the bat plant (*Cuphea*) look like their names and are a lot of fun for kids. For example, spaghetti squash may not taste exactly like pasta, but kids love the "noodles" inside.
- #4 **Use Quick Growers.** Lettuce, spinach, and radishes all mature in 30 to 45 days. Or how about trying some micro-greens that can grow on your windowsill and are ready to eat in less than a week? This will give impatient kids a faster return.
- #5 **Plan A Child-Size Space.** Make it easy for kids to plant and weed with narrow beds and small areas. Also try raising the plant beds a few inches to keep little feet on the paths and out of the garden.
- #6 **Turn The Garden Into A Playground.** Make a maze or a playhouse out of sunflowers. Imagine a garden based on your favorite story tale or storybook. Hansel and Gretel eggplants and Sleeping Beauty hostas are a fun plant choice.
- #7 **Transform Garden Tasks Into Fun.** Make up garden games where everyone is a winner. Bug hunts, weed-pulling races and compost-filling relays are just a few ideas.
- #8 **Let Each Gardener Shine.** Every child has a special talent. The artist in the group can design plant tags, the fitness fan can be in charge of the wheelbarrow and the detail-oriented helpers can lay out a plan for the garden.
- #9 **Take Time To Explore.** Kids are great at making us slow down and enjoy simple pleasures. Look for the wishbone in blooms of *Torenia* (wishbone plant), or hunt for caterpillars that will turn into beautiful butterflies.

- #10 **Give Gifts From The Garden.** Help your young ones to save money and win points with friends and family by making gifts from their gardens. Herbal vinegars, pressed-flower cards and garden photos are sure to please.
- #11 **Host A Garden Party** Invite friends and family over to enjoy the fruits and flowers of your labor. This is a chance for all the gardeners in the family to show off their talents.
- #12 **Visit Other Gardens.** This will give you lots of ideas and adventures! Many botanical gardens and arboreta have family-friendly activities and tours. Or make your own fun with a scavenger hunt and a picnic lunch. ■

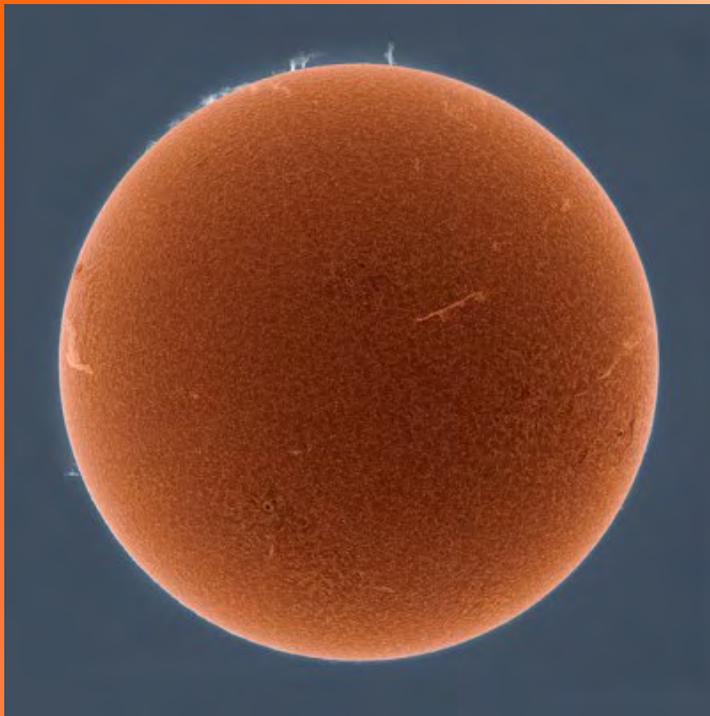


Community & School Gardens Report –December 2010–

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 Darrol at darrols@earthlink.net

Respectfully,

Darrol Shillingburg
Community Garden Project Coordinator



A Mind-Blowing Sun Photo

Featured In Wired Science, Story By Lisa Grossman

This stunning photo of the sun was taken by Alan Friedman who shoots the sky from his backyard in downtown Buffalo, NY. That means the usual celestial candidates—galaxies, nebulae, distant star clusters—are washed out by the glow of the city. But the sun is fair game, as long as the sky is clear and turbulence-free. “I don’t care about sky glow at all,” Friedman said. “I just need atmospheric steadiness.”

On October 20, 2010, Friedman hooked his telescope to a hydrogen-alpha filter, which selects a tiny slice of the visible light spectrum. Hydrogen, the chief component of the sun, radiates strongly in this deep-red light, letting both the sun’s outer layers and the feathery filaments that extend away from the disk show up in sharp detail.

Until a few years ago, Friedman says, this kind of filter was only available for research-grade telescopes. They’re still not cheap—he got his for around \$5,000. Friedman’s telescope is small but mighty. The light-collecting aperture is about 3.5 inches wide. Instead of just snapping a photo, Friedman took 90 seconds of streaming video and selected only the sharpest frames. In two separate 90-second videos, Friedman zoomed in on the edge of the solar disk to capture wisps of gas arcing along loops of the sun’s magnetic field, plus sunspots and the detailed churning of the sun’s atmosphere. Then he inverted the images, making all the dark spots light and the light spots dark. This is an unusual thing for solar photographers to do, he says, but it gives a more authentic view of the sun.

Friedman’s camera shoots in black and white, so he also had to add in some color. Although generally he tries to keep his astro-photos as true to science as possible, he took some artistic liberties with the color choice.

“This was a Halloween image,” he said. The sun couldn’t be anything but orange. You can see the full article along with additional photos at:

<http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2010/10/making-a-sun-photo/>

Article Provided by Dale Petzold, Certified Master Gardener



HIGH ON THE DESERT 18th Annual Gardening & Landscaping Conference

Link: www.ag.arizona.edu/cochise/mg

When? Thurs/Fri, Feb. 17 & 18, 2011

Where? Conference Center, Sierra Vista, AZ
Windemere Hotel, 2047 South Hwy 92

Costs? Full Conference \$100*; one day \$65*

* Register by Feb. 4th or late fees charged

PRE-REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED

(Registrations include: breakfast, lunches & closing reception.)

General Sessions:

The Hot Garden (Scott Calhoun)

New Plant Pest Problems (USDA Inspection Service)

“Know It All Panel Discussion”—Q & A

Session Topics Include:

Chihuahuan Desert Gardens

Permaculture Guild of Phoenix

Basic Integrated Pest Management

Pruning Trees & Shrubs

The Healing Garden

Ants and Your Plants

Ten Steps to Vegetable Gardening

Bullet-Proof Plants

Basic Drip Irrigation

Plants For Attracting Hummingbirds

Controlling Weeds

What You Need to Know About Greenhouses

Plant Root Establishment

Huachuca Mount Plant Key

Penstemons for the High Desert

Microbes in Your Food

Sponsored By:

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Cooperative Extension: (520) 458.8278 Ext. 2141



NAGA VIPER— THE WORLD'S HOTTEST CHILE PEPPER

Fiery food mavens seeking to one-up each other now have to gear up for a whole new test of culinary bravado: the world's hottest chile pepper.

Yes, the Naga Viper, the latest claimant to the world's-hottest-pepper crown, outdistances its predecessor, the Bhut Jolokia by more than 300,000 points on the famous Scoville scale of tongue-scorching chile hotness. Researchers at Warwick University testing the Naga Viper found that it measures 1,359,000 on the Scoville scale, which rates heat by tracking the presence of a chemical compound. In comparison, most varieties of jalapeño peppers measure in the 2,500 to 5,000 range milder than the Naga Viper by a factor of 270.

You might think the Naga Viper would hail from some part of the world with a strong demand for spicy food, such as India or Mexico. But the new pepper is actually the handiwork of Gerald Fowler, a British chile farmer and pub owner, who crossed three of the hottest peppers known to man including the Bhut Jolokia to create his Frankenstein-monster chile.

"It's painful to eat," Fowler told the Daily Mail. "It's hot enough to strip paint." Indeed, the Daily Mail reports that defense researchers are already investigating the pepper's potential uses as a weapon.

But Fowler who makes customers sign a waiver declaring that they're of sound mind and body before trying a Naga Viper-based curry insists that consuming the fiery chile does the body good. "It numbs your tongue, then burns all the way down," he told the paper. "It can last an hour, and you just don't want to talk to anyone or do anything. But it's a marvelous endorphin rush. It makes you feel great."

A member of the Clifton Chili Club -- a group of Brits who travel around sampling chiles -- decided to try one of Fowler's Naga Vipers on camera. You can watch his less-than-pleasurable experience at this website:

<http://cliftonchilliclub.moonfruit.com/#/videos/4542506410>

Article written by Brett Michael Dykes was posted on Yahoo News

Dick Hiss, Certified Master Gardner, provided us with this article



NMSU GOES "GREEN" WITH RED CHILE RESEARCH

NMSU Dept. of Plant and Environmental Sciences faculty members have come up with a new, "green" method for extracting red dyes used in foods and cosmetics from chile peppers. The red pigments extracted from chile are added to many processed foods and to some cosmetics to enhance their appearance. They are also believed to be a healthier, more economical coloring agent than synthetic red dyes. About five years ago, NMSU faculty members Mary A. O'Connell and Laura Hernandez began the research process to find a more environment-friendly method to extract the pigment using more varieties of chile.

The old extraction method, using the chemical *hexane*, only allowed for mild, non-pungent varieties of chile to be used. *Capsaicinoids*, the compounds responsible for the heat or pungency of chile, are readily soluble in *hexane*. To produce a pigment sample with no pungency, only mild, non-pungent red-pigmented fruit can be used.

The new method, included in the research published online by HortScience by O'Connell, Hernandez et al, is the supercritical fluid extractions method, which uses the non-hazardous materials ethanol and carbon dioxide. The SFE method is more environment-friendly and allows pungent or hot varieties of chile to be used for pigment extraction. "Being able to use more chile varieties is one of the really neat advantages of this new method," said Richins, laboratory manager for the Dept. of Plant and Environmental Sciences.

The SFE method may present new opportunities for local farmers and add to its importance as a staple crop in NM, Richins said. "It's challenging anymore for farmers to make much of a profit from chile, and a lot of it is being imported from other countries," he said. "The overall chile acreage in NM has been declining. These findings may open up more options for our farmers."

O'Connell, Regents Professor for the Dept. of Plant and Environmental Sciences, said the new method also reduces contamination from dried leaves that may be mixed in during the harvesting and drying processes. "It's a 'green' approach and doesn't generate hazardous waste," O'Connell said. "The fewer noxious materials you have to use, the better off everyone is." The research, A 'Green' Extraction Protocol to Recover Red Pigments from Hot Capsicum Fruit, is published in the July edition of HortScience, a publication by The American Society for Horticulture Science. "We hope this research will help ensure that chile continues to be an important crop in New Mexico and helps extend the uses for chile," O'Connell said.

(Published in the Las Cruces Sun News, Sept. 2010)

A Useful Re-Use of Plastic Bottle Caps



The guy who first thought of the idea must be given an award for originality !!! Very clever! Wow, what a fantastic idea! You will not have to grapple with rubber bands that are tied too tightly. How to seal a bag and make it air tight

Cut up a disposable water bottle and keep the neck and top as shown in this photo.



Insert the plastic bag through the neck and screw the top and then seal.



The bottle is made to be air-tight, so that water will not leak—the secret lies with the top and screw! This is a great idea to share. Good for us and good for the environment!

Found on: <http://www.re-nest.com/re-nest/hot-tip/a-useful-reuse-for-plastic-bottle-caps-128400>



STORING PECANS & OTHER NUTS

During the holiday season, pecans and other nuts are commonly given as gifts or purchased for holiday cooking. Nuts can quickly lose quality if not stored properly. Excessive water loss can lead to shriveled nutmeats, and the fats and oils in nuts can quickly spoil by developing an off-flavor or rancid taste.

Store shelled (or unshelled nuts) in the refrigerator, or preferably the freezer. Nuts quickly absorb flavors from other stored products, so store them in a tightly sealed container so they won't lose water or absorb flavors from other fruits or vegetables.

A solid plastic container with a tightly fitting lid is preferred. You can use a heavy grade resealable plastic bag as well. If nutmeats are tightly sealed, they can be stored in a freezer for up to one year, but using them within six months is preferred.

Article found on Gardening 123 and written by the Kansas State Research & Extension.

Dale Petzold, Certified Master Gardener, provided this article.



WEED WATCH: Malta Starthistle

Centaurea melitensis

Malta Starthistle is a noxious winter annual weed (occasionally a biennial) that infests disturbed areas such as roadsides and open fields, rangelands, grasslands, open woodlands, pastures and crop fields. It is also known as Tocolote and Maltese Starthistle.

Although it is not toxic, if baled in hay, livestock may refuse to eat it. However, its cousin, Yellow Starthistle, is toxic to horses.

Origin: Europe

Distribution: Commonly only found in southern NM counties.

Key Characteristics:

- Flowers in April through September
- Produces 2-3 yellow flowerheads sometimes closely clustered
- Has a winged stem
- Foliage is grayish-green
- Seeds remain viable for several years
- Produces 1--60 seeds per seedhead; 1--1,000 per plant.
- Is a hairy, spiny and unpalatable weed
- Has a simple taproot that penetrates soil only to 2-3 feet.
- Has stiff purple or brown bracts located under flowers.

Treatment:

- ... Chemically treat, mow or cultivate in late bud or early bloom stage to inhibit seed production
- ... Burning is also effective if done before seeds are produced.
- ... Re-seed with competitive species to fill niche left is essential to inhibiting invasion of this weed.
- ... Large infestations will require herbicides that are effective.
- ... Put all flowers/seedheads in double plastic bags and close securely
- ... Successful management is the prevention of seed production and spread.

Information Sources:

New Mexico's Invasive Weeds by Richard D. Lee, NMSU 1999
Noxious Weed Alert, Chaves Soil & Water Conservation District
Southwest New Mexico Cooperative Weed Management,
 Grant/Hildago County Noxious Weeds brochure, NMSU
www.weeds.nmsu.edu

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



WEED WATCH: Yellow Starthistle

Centaurea solstitialis

Yellow Starthistle is long-lived winter annual weed (occasionally a biennial) that infests disturbed areas such as roadsides and open fields, rangelands, grasslands, pastures and crop fields. It is toxic to horses if consumed (responsible for chewing disease in horses). It is also known as Golden Starthistle, yellow cockspur, and St. Barnaby's Thistle.

Origin: Eurasia; introduced to California in 1850 via South America.

Distribution: This weed is a serious problem in California and Idaho. UC Davis states that this weed now infests 10-15 million acres in California. In New Mexico, it has been found in isolated small populations and only a few major population. It is usually found below 7,500 elevation in dry areas that have 10-60 inches of rainfall annually.

Key Characteristics:

- Germinates either in spring or fall
- Grows to a height of 6 inches to as high as 5 feet.
- Basal rosette leaves are deeply lobed.
- Foliage is blue to gray-green
- Produces as high as 30,000 seeds per square meter. Most seeds germinate with a year of being dispersed, but some can remain viable in the soil for up to 3 years.
- Has a deep, vigorous taproot.
- Stems and leaves covered with loose, cottony wool that gives it a whitish appearance.

Treatment:

- ... Chemically treat, mow or cultivate in late bud or early bloom stage to inhibit seed production
- ... Burning is also effective if done before seeds are produced.
- ... Large infestations will require herbicides that are effective.
- ... Successful management is the prevention of seed production and spread.

Information Sources:

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

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

Yellow Starthistle, Integrated Pest Management, UC Davis, Publication 7402, 2007



English or House Sparrow



European Starling



Pigeon

Controlling Nuisance Birds in New Mexico

By Jon Boren, Extension Wildlife Specialist & Brian J. Hurd, Extension Research Specialist
NMSU Guide L-212

Boren and Hurd state that, "House sparrows, starlings and pigeons can cause problems for people in urban and suburban areas of New Mexico. Although all three species are common throughout the state, none are native to New Mexico.

There are a variety of health concerns and damage issues associated with house sparrows, starlings and pigeons. They can transmit diseases to humans and are host to a variety of parasites and insect pests. For example, *Salmonella* is found in about 2 percent of pigeon feces and accounts for frequent cases of food poisoning in humans. Pigeon nests also can create fire hazards and clog drainpipes. Droppings can deface and ruin property as well. In addition, starlings compete for nesting sites with native cavity-nesting birds, such as bluebirds, flickers and woodpeckers."

The authors provide a brief overview for each nuisance bird:

- **House Sparrow**—"The English or house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*) is a brown, chunky bird about 5 3/4 inches long (shown above). The male has a distinctive black throat, white cheeks, a gray crown and chestnut-colored feathers on the upper wings. The female and young have plain, dingy-gray breasts, distinct, buffy eye stripes and streaked backs.

The house sparrow, which was introduced from Europe, has spread across the U.S. and is found almost everywhere in New Mexico. It is an aggressive, adaptable bird that nests in or around manmade structures, such as building vents and window ledges, as well as in trees.

Although house sparrows primarily are grain eaters, sparrows in urban areas have adapted to feed at garbage cans, backyard bird feeders and home gardens."

- **European Starling**—"European starlings (*Sturnus vulgaris*) are about the same size as a robin and have short, square tails. They generally are chunky and hump-backed in appearance. The wings have a triangular shape when outstretched in flight. Adults are iridescent black with light speckles on the feathers (shown above). The bill of both sexes is yellow during the reproductive cycle (January to June) and dark at other times.

The starling was introduced to New York from Europe in the late 1800s and now occupies the entire country. It is an aggressive, adaptable bird, common in urban and suburban areas. It nests in any suitable hole or cavity in birdhouses, buildings and trees.

Starlings eat a variety of foods, but prefer seeds and fruits. They also feed on insects during the spring and summer when insects are numerous."

- **Pigeon**—"The pigeon or rock dove (*Columba livia*) typically has a bluish gray body and wings, a dark head, a whitish rump, two dark wing bars, a broad black band on the tail and red feet (shown above). Body color can vary from gray to white, tan and black. It weighs approximately 13 ounces and is about 11 inches long.

The pigeon was introduced from the Old World and is now found throughout the United States. In fact, pigeons are very common in many urban and suburban areas of New Mexico. Pigeons are highly dependent on humans for food and roosting, loafing and nesting sites. They are found commonly around farms, grain elevators, feed mills, parks, city buildings, bridges and other structures.

Pigeons are primarily grain and seed eaters. However, they also feed on garbage, insects and food materials provided by people."

Topics addressed to limit prevention and damage control from these birds are addressed on Page 15

Controlling Nuisance Birds in New Mexico (Continued from Page 14)

Boren & Hurd state that, "Controlling of nuisance birds can be both difficult and frustrating. The most effective way to control problem birds is to remove or exclude their daily requirements. A variety of methods are discussed to help homeowners control nuisance birds and prevent bird damage. Remember, it often is necessary to use a variety of methods simultaneously to control nuisance birds, because birds easily become accustomed to single control practices."

- **Habitat Modification**

- ...Choose plants that do not produce edible nuts, fruits and berries.
- ...Trim and prune trees and shrubs that may reduce the amount of space available for nesting and roosting.
- ...Change the type of food offered in bird feeders; for sparrows feed them straight sunflowers instead of a seed mixture.
- ...Use tubular feeds without perches; in some cases, homeowners may want to discontinue using bird feeders altogether in the spring, summer and early fall.
- ...Especially where starlings are a problem, remove unnecessary water from the garden and landscape.

- **Exclusion**

- ...Block access to indoor roosts and nesting areas by closing all openings greater than 3/4 inch to exclude sparrows and 1 inch to exclude starlings.
- ...Block openings to lofts, steeples, vents and eaves with plywood, sheet metal, masonry, 1/4 inch wire mesh or plastic or nylon bird netting.
- ...Hang clear plastic strips from barn and shed doorways will prevent most birds from entering structures, while still allowing easy entry for people, machinery and livestock/pets to pass through.
- ...Nylon or plastic netting can also be used to cover fruit crops; "porcupine wires" (i.e., Cat Claw or Nixalite) can be used to prevent birds from nesting or roosting on ledges or rafters.

- **Frightening Devices**

- ...These can be alarm and distress calls, hawk or owl silhouettes, automatic gas or shell exploders, tethered balloons with big eyes painted on them, water sprayers, aluminum pie plates and flashing lights. These devices are more effective with starlings.
- ...These visual and sound devices must be moved frequently or the birds will become accustomed to them. Also, it usually takes 5 to 7 nights or more for these frightening devices to have an effect.

- **Repellents**

- ...Use of soft, sticky repellents made of non-toxic materials can often be use to discourage birds from roosting in areas. Since these repellents can be messy and collect dirt, they must be reapplied several times a year.

- **Trapping**

- ...Live trapping can be another alternative for controlling nuisance birds. Such methods include: funnel traps, automatic and triggered traps, nest-box traps, decoy traps and mist nests.
- ...Be sure to terminate any birds caught in any trap in a humane manner. Releasing such birds back into the "wild" is often impractical.

- **Other Control Methods**

- ...Depending on local ordinances, some success can be achieved by shooting these nuisance birds.
- ...Homeowners can also remove bird nests at a two-week interval during the spring and summer. Be persistent though—birds will keep trying to reestablish their nests in the same location. Nests should be collected and removed to eliminate nesting material for rebuilding.

This research guide can be downloaded at http://aces.nmsu.edu/pubs/_l/L-212.pdf and is also available at the MG Hotline Library.

Also available is the research guide entitled, Controlling Nuisance Woodpeckers in New Mexico—NMSU Guide L-211 also written by Boren & Hurd. It can be downloaded at http://aces.nmsu.edu/pubs/_l/L-211.pdf and is also available at the MG Hotline Library

VEGGIES: A To Z



Peas (*Pisum sativum*)

Leguminosae Family

Peas in history date back to the beginnings of agriculture and beyond – at least 9,000 years. Of course, today's varieties barely resemble those early cultivars. When we think of peas, it is usually the fresh green stage with or without edible pods. Those early peas had a much lower sugar content than the cultivars we grow today.

Peas are thought to have been first cultivated in the region that is today northern India and were grown for drying and storage – often referred to as “pulses” they were the staple food for many.

VARIETIES

Terminology in pea varieties differs some from catalog to catalog, but usually falls into three basic categories.

Shelling Peas – Varieties developed for producing fresh green peas (shelled). They can also be left to maturity, shelled and dried for storage. They are best harvested when the seeds are fully developed or slightly before. Shelled peas are a little like corn – the sugars turn to starch quickly, so don't store them long in the frig.

Edible Pod or Sugar Peas – Varieties developed to produce edible fruit – seeds and pods. They are best harvested when the seeds are forming, but before fully developed in the pod.

Snow Peas or Chinese Peas – Varieties developed to produce an edible pod. They are best harvested when the pods are fully formed, but the seeds are just beginning to show. When the pods begin to curl their flavor declines.

Within these categories, several growth form choices range from tall to short to dwarf forms. Selecting the varieties that fit you gardening situation may require some trial and error.

PLANTING & TIMING

Spring: Although peas seeds will germinate at 40°F, you will have much better germination in soil temperatures between 55-65°F. For a spring crop, plant peas in mid-February, which will give you the 60-70 days required until harvest. By May temperatures can get to the upper 90's which reduces the flavor of most varieties. The shelling pea variety “Alaska” holds its flavor in the heat and produces well here. The edible pod pea variety “Cascadia” holds its flavor even into June, and grows well here.

Fall: For a fall and winter crop of peas, begin planting in August. Mulch the soil well to reduce temperatures and conserve soil moisture in the upper levels.

Peas seeds germinate best when sown 1-1/2 “deep and 3” apart. Providing trellis support even for short varieties will increase yields considerably and prove well worth the effort.

For fall and winter crops you might want to explore some of the “powdery mildew” resistant varieties – as that can be a problem here in late summer to early fall.

If you have not planted peas in the space before, you will have a much better harvest if you inoculate the seed before planting. Be sure to purchase inoculants for peas, not for beans or clover or some other legume type. If you have grown peas in the space before, inoculating again is not important.

DOWN BELOW – PEAS AND ROOTS

Besides being tasty and easy to grow, peas are good for your garden soil. As a member of the Legume family, they form special associations with bacteria in the soil that enables the plants to fix nitrogen—to take nitrogen from the air trapped in the soil pores and convert it into a form that the plants can use. These *rhizobia* bacterial enter the hair roots and reproduce forming nodules within the roots. Therefore, if you see bumps on the roots of peas and beans, it is most likely *rhizobium* nodules and not root-knot nematodes nodules. However, root-knot nematodes will infect legume roots.

Soil temperatures above 80°F will reduce nodule formation, as will water stress. Although peas can send roots down to 4 feet, most of the root growth is in the top 12” of soil, so peas can become water stressed very easily—particularly in late spring.

If your soil is nitrogen rich and the plants have enough, they will not form an association with the *rhizobium* bacteria and grow nodules.

For a food that is easy to grow, easy to eat and good for the soil, try one or more of the many varieties of garden peas showing up in the annual flood of seed catalogs.

Good Gardening and Good Eating,

Darrol Shillingburg
Doña Ana County Extension Master Gardener

MASTER GARDENER MATTERS

—Monthly Meeting, December 8, 2010—

▣ **WELCOME**—Juliet Williams called the meeting to order at 9:10am.

▣ **COMMITTEE/PROJECT REPORTS**

MG Hotline Library—(Ann Shine-Ring) Ann reported she will be updating the blue binders and topic indices located in the MG Hotline office. Katrin Sumter and Linda Schukei will be refilling and updating the file cabinet drawers.

MG Newsletter—(Ann Shine-Ring) Ann stated that the January plant-of-the-month will be Devil's Claw. There will also be articles on tips for pruning roses, caring for roses throughout the year and gardening with kids. The article on wildlife will feature nuisance birds and the weed article will discuss Malta and Yellow Starthistle.

Farmer's Market—(Barb Sallach) Barb Sallach reported there are openings available, contact her for more info.

Lunch & Learn Presentation—(Sylvia Hacker) The Dec. Lunch & Learn presentation will be on "Plants & Symbolism".

Mentoring Program—(Sylvia Hacker) Sylvia asked for mentors to be coordinating Hotline duties with their Interns.

2012 State MG Conference—(Dale Petzold) Dale brought sign-up sheets for several committees for the June 7-9, 2012 statewide MG Conference that will be held in Las Cruces.

Graduation and Awards—(Valice Raffi) Valice asked for a show of hands of which MG's are planning on attending and who has already paid. She requested that those who wish to attend to please pay for their meals as soon as possible. She also announced a short Graduation Committee meeting to be held after the MG meeting.

Finance Committee—(Mary Thompson) She reported on two meetings concerning MG finances:

The first meeting was with Charlie Seipel, Karim Martinez, Jeff Anderson and interested DAC MG's. Karim supplied copies of NMSU requirements and restrictions concerning MG funds. An outcome of this meeting was a shown need for protocols, forms and budgets for funding MG projects and events. It was also mentioned that Charlie had commented on the need for more and improved communication concerning financial issues within the MG unit.

The second meeting was with the newly formed MG Finance Committee. Results were: 1) development of preliminary MG 2011-2012 budget guidelines, and 2) a funding request form and two items for MG purchase approval. Items for approval are a large commercial coffee pot to replace the aging one at the Extension Office and a sturdy easel to hold the whiteboard at Farmer's Market and other MG events. Both items were approved by MG's present at meeting.

A motion was made and seconded that we should avoid bringing the purchase of items before the total MG meeting. In the future, the Finance Committee should handle requested purchase items. During the following discussion concern was raised that the motion would negatively affect communication within the MG unit. A second motion was made and seconded to table the previous motion until the 2011-2012 MG budget was presented for approval. It will be reconsidered at that time.

Other Discussion— Two requests were made: 1) at future monthly meetings, everyone will be asked to assist in setting up the meeting room when necessary and 2) people bringing refreshments for our meetings are asked to collect and return the bin of eating utensils from the Extension Office.

▣ **NEW / CONTINUING BUSINESS**

Chile Conference: Jan.31-Feb.1-not as many MG volunteers will be needed this year.

High on the Desert MG Conference: Feb. 17-18, no information about this conference was on website yet (Update: See page 10 of this newsletter).

Pecan Conference: March 2011-no definite dates set as yet, it was noted there will be no pecan judging contest this year.

Quarterly MG Coordinators Meeting: Jan. 5, 2011, 9:00 a.m. at Extension Office.

Other: Leigh Matthewson expressed an interest in having MG T-shirts for the unit. Other MG's voiced interest in polo shirts or vests as an alternative to T-shirts. Leigh volunteered to explore the issue further and report her findings at a later meeting.

Announcement: Marcella Newman had young begonia plants to give away at the meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:10am.

Meeting Snacks Thank you to Jeanene Cathey, Linda Morgan, and Beth Paris who were our "goodie makers". Next month. Linda Schukei, Sherry Hulsey and Dick Hiss will bring our meeting refreshments.

Next MG Business Meeting—Wednesday, January 12, 2010

Bonnie and Juliet



Our Educational Presentation on Sharing Our Favorite Gardening Things Continued on Page 18

MASTER GARDENER MATTERS-Continued

—Monthly Meeting, December 8, 2010 Continued —

▣ EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS: Sharing of Our Favorite Gardening Things

Name	Your Thing	Source
Mona Nelson	Red Pig Tools	www.redpigtools.com
	Mumz gloves	1-800-995-Mumz (6869)
	Common SW Native Plants (book)	COAS Bookstore
Joan Woodward	Seymour Tall Weeder	RTD Hardware
	<u>Garden & Climate</u> by Chip Sullivan (book)	Amazon.com
Darrol Shillingburg	Porous clay capsule	Homemade
Juliet Williams	Tool with adjustable handles	Sutherland's
Yvonne Kinn	Tweezers-forceps	www.rainbowgardensbookshop.com (Tucson, AZ)
Mary Thompson	Fiskar-gearred loppers	Home Depot (est. \$35)
	Trenching shovel	
Sylvia Hacker	Circle hoe	
	Fiskar Power Pruners	Home Depot (est. \$30)
	Hori Japanese gardening knife	Purchased @ Bonsai Conference
	Corona tool sharpener	Est. \$20 @ any Garden Center
	Bug Database (http://bugguide.net/node/view/51415)	
Linda Schukei	Ergonomic trowel	
	Detachable Fiskar scissors	
Ina Goldberg	Cobra head weeder	
Marcella Newman	Pasta tongs for cactus/succulents	
Dixie LaRock	Soil probe	
Laurie Davidson	<i>Ipomea batata</i> ornamental sweet potato	
Nancy DeLouise	Japanese garden books	
	Corona hand clippers	
	Hula hoe	
Alberta Morgan	http://leevalley.com/ (tools)	
Tom Packard	Favorite garden websites	
	www.plantinfo.umn.edu	
	www.davesgarden.com	
	www.kitchengardeners.org	
Ann Shine-Ring	Great Gardening Books	
	<u>Landscaping With Native Plants of the Southwest</u> , by George Oxford Miller (Amazon.com)	
	<u>New Encyclopedia of Gardening Techniques</u> , American Horticultural Society (Amazon.com)	
	<u>Small Garden Design Bible</u> , by Tim Newbury (Amazon.com)	
	<u>Southwest Kitchen Garden</u> , by Kim Nelson (Amazon.com)	
	Sunset's <u>Western Garden Book of Edibles</u> : Complete A to Z Guide to Growing Your Own Vegetables, Herbs and Fruits (Amazon.com)	

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

Remember that in January, the Hotline hours are 9am-noon. Also, please remember to be present on your assigned date for the Hotline. If another Master Gardener forgets, please give him or her a "reminder" call. Thank you.

MG Hotline Assignments for January

Tuesday, January 4	Pam Crane Mary Andrews (I) _____ (I)
Friday, January 7	Alberta Morgan Bonnie Eisenberg Jill Klann (I) _____ (I)
Tuesday, January 11	Dixie LaRock Dick Hiss Rosanne Weeks (I) _____ (I)
Friday, January 14	Mary Thompson Jodi Richardson Jana Melvin (I) _____ (I)
Tuesday, January 18	Janie Elliot Ina Goldberg Maryann Pribillo (I) _____ (I)
Friday, January 21	Linda Schukei John Nelson (I) _____ (I)
Tuesday, January 25	Janie Elliot Sharon Cunningham (I) _____ (I)
Friday, January 28	Linda Schukei Bonnie Hosie (I) _____ (I)

MG Hotline Assignments for February

Tuesday, Feb. 1	Ina Goldberg Maryann Pribillo (I) _____ (I)
Friday, Feb. 4	Alberta Morgan Ina Goldberg Maryann Pribillo (I) _____ (I)
Tuesday, Feb. 8	_____ Certified MG Mary Andrews (I) _____ (I)
Friday, Feb. 11	Linda Schukei Bonnie Hosie (I) _____ (I)
Tuesday, Feb. 15	Dixie LaRock Dick Hiss Rosanne Weeks (I) _____ (I)
Friday, Feb. 18	_____ Certified MG John Nelson (I) _____ (I)
Tuesday, Feb. 22	_____ Certified MG Sharon Cunningham (I) _____ (I)
Friday, Feb. 25	Mary Thompson Jana Melvin (I) _____ (I)

Next Monthly Meeting of the
Doña Ana County Master Gardeners
(We are now meeting on the 2nd Wednesday of every month)
* * *
Wednesday, February 9th @ Branigan Library
Roadrunner Room, 2nd Floor
9am-11am