



September 2024

A Publication for Members & Friends

<http://www.azherb.org>

My Dear Herbie Friends,

As we turn the page to September, I hope this letter finds you all staying as cool as possible amidst the relentless Phoenix heat. I'm amazed at our resilience and dedication to our gardens, even when the thermometer seems stuck on "scorching!"

September is always an interesting month in our gardening world. While the intense summer sun lingers, it's also a time when we look ahead and plan for the cooler months—so go ahead and get some seeds started inside and feel the anticipation for the summer heat to finally abate! Some of the most popular seeds to get started now for winter planting include leafy greens like kale and spinach and hearty herbs like chives (garlic and onion). Starting seeds indoors gives them a great head start for when the cooler temperatures arrive.

Looking ahead, we have some exciting events on the horizon that I'm thrilled to share with you. First up, mark your calendars for Saturday, September 21. I'm hosting an herbal workshop focusing on the Herb of the Month, Mexican Oregano, where we'll be joined by the always wonderful, Ashley Johnston, a trained herbalist. This will be a fantastic opportunity to deepen our knowledge of herbs, learn new techniques, and of course, enjoy each other's company. More info. on page 10.

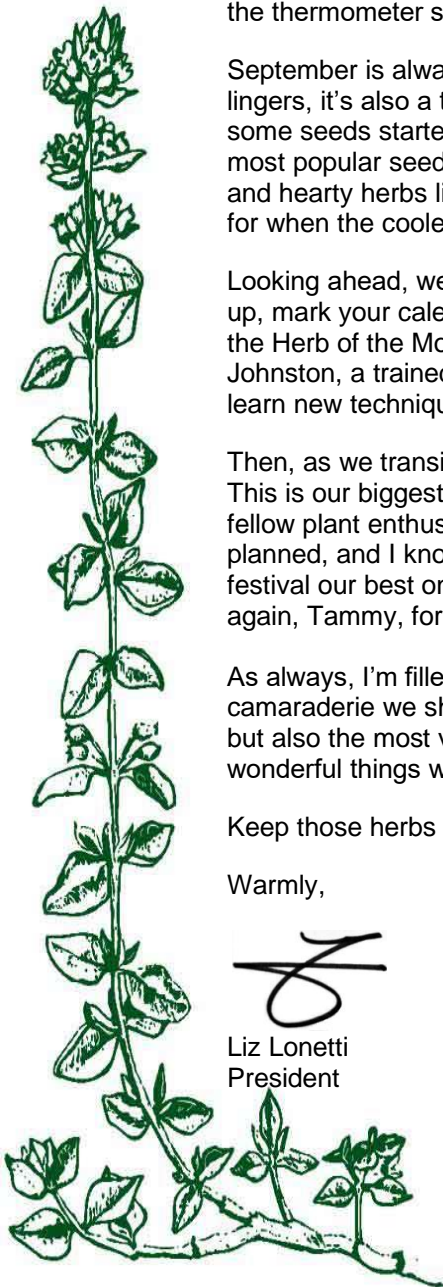
Then, as we transition into October, get ready for our annual Herb Festival on Saturday, October 12. This is our biggest event of the year, where we gather to celebrate all things herbal, connect with fellow plant enthusiasts, and raise some much-needed funds for our club. We've got great activities planned, and I know it will be a day to remember. So, start spreading the word—let's make this festival our best one yet! Tickets will be available to purchase via our awesome new website (thanks again, Tammy, for all your ongoing work with it!).

As always, I'm filled with gratitude for our incredible community. The passion, knowledge, and camaraderie we share make the AZ Herb Association not just the largest gardening club in the state, but also the most vibrant. I love being part of such an inspiring group, and I'm excited to see all the wonderful things we'll accomplish together this season.

Keep those herbs happy, stay hydrated, and I look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events!

Warmly,

Liz Lonetti
President



Calendar

September 2024

Thursday, September 5: General Meeting

Location: MCC Extension; Time: 7:00 p.m.

Topic: Best Practices for Growing an Edible Garden

Speaker: Nate Diemer, U of A Extension

Herb of the Month: Mexican Oregano

Presenter: Rebecca Senior

Saffron bulbs will be available – See page 7

Saturday, September 7: Weed & Feed

Time: 7:00 a.m.

Saturday, September 21: AHA Herbal Workshop

Topic: Mexican Oregano and Garlic to Boost Your Immune System

Presenter: Ashley Johnston

Details and Sign-up at <https://azherb.org/>

Saturday, September 28: Culinary Event

Hostess: Beatriz Cohen

Theme: Delicious Fall Dishes

Details and Sign-up at https://azherb.org

October 2024

Thursday, October 3: General Meeting

Location: MCC Extension; Time: 7:00 p.m.

Topic: TBD

Speaker: Students of JoAnn Sanchez

Herb of the Month: Dill

Presenter: Drew Templeton

Saturday, October 5: Weed & Feed

Time: 7:30 a.m.

Saturday, October 12: AHA Herb Festival

Where: U of A Extension site

Time: 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Featured Speaker: Angela Judd

Details on page 3

Saturday, October 19: AHA Herbal Workshop

Topic: Polish Dill and Potato Soup

Presenter: Ashley Johnston

Details and Sign-up at <https://azherb.org/>

Saturday, October 19: Nature Fest PHX

Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area

Time: 8:00 a.m. to noon

<https://www.corazonlatino.us/events2021/2024/10/19/nature-fest-phx>

Fall Plant and Seeds Sales!

See a listing on pages 8-9



September General Meeting

Join us on Thursday, September 5, 2024, for our next AHA meeting, (the first after our summer hiatus), when we will delve into the secrets of maintaining a thriving edible garden! Our speaker will be Nate Diemer of the U of A Extension Urban Agriculture Production, Small-Scale and Beginning Farmer Program.



Over the past six years, Nate has worked in numerous restaurants with renowned chefs learning how to utilize ingredients to their maximum potential AND growing food as a small-scale farmer. He has also worked with a variety of non-profits and farmers, striving to transform a food desert (i.e. South Phoenix) into a place where the community can source quality ingredients within their own communities.

Here at Cooperative Extension, Nate is excited to continue pursuing his dream of educating farmers, chefs, and local communities on how to use local systems to further nourish our bodies and minds with nutritious ingredients. Nate will share with us his expert insights on essential plants for your garden and how to implement succession planting to ensure a bountiful harvest all year long. We will also learn some practical tips and tricks for overcoming common gardening challenges. Bring your garden questions for our Q&A session after his talk.

Our Herb of the Month is Mexican Oregano, and Herbie and Extension Assistant Rebecca Senior will present.



Snacks are always appreciated for our meeting break; a recipe or ingredient list helps those with dietary concerns. Bring your own plate, beverage container and utensils to help us reduce waste.

If you can't attend in person, you can join us via Zoom at the link below.

Topic: September AHA General Meeting

Date: Thursday, September 5, 2024

Meeting begins promptly at 7:00 p.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89028660279?pwd=NHN0RitrZEFHTnAwc3I2dFhHTTdGdz09>

Meeting ID: 890 2866 0279

Passcode: 965232

And from Past President Pam Perry –

Hi Herbies! Let's bring some energy to the September meeting! In years past we have had a very informal book exchange, (not garden books, that is a different announcement), but a novel, mystery, or whatever you want to pass along. Not a huge pile, but a couple to share, and perhaps you will find a new read, too! We will put them on the back table and you can take home a new book, or perhaps the ones you brought if they had no takers...Let's get this going again; I bet most of us have a tome or two looking for a new reader!

Also, we will have some plants and saffron bulbs for sale, so get a head start on fall. Come and see what our plant shoppers found that might be on your want list! Use your Herbie Bucks to try one or two, or bring money or credit card. Money collected goes to our Jane Haynes Scholarship Fund.

Welcome New AHA Members:

Lisa Abeyta
Zip Code: 85233

Nadene Nystuen
Zip Code: 85298

Sonya Atencio
Zip Code: 85032

Kelly Harrison
Zip Code: 85254

Desi Kovacs
Zip Code: 85248

Jackie Rayla
Zip Code: 85045

Tammy Aragaki, Membership Committee



It's time for the 2024 Annual **AZ Herb Association Herb Festival!** Join us for a fun and exciting day of learning - all about our favorite Herbs! Our program includes:

- **Focus on our Favorite Herbs**
- **How to Grow and Use these Herbs**
- **Guided Tour of the Demonstration Gardens**
- **Cooking with these Herbs**
- **Hands on Herb Propagation Workshop**

Our main speaker will be Master Gardener and author Angela Judd from "Growing in the Garden." <https://growinginthegarden.com/about/>



This is the Arizona Herb Association's #1 event of the year! Proceeds will support the AZ Herb Association and our Jane Haynes Scholarship.

\$50 Ticket price includes continental breakfast, speakers, demonstrations and garden tour.

When: Saturday, October 12th, 8:30 am – 1:00 pm. Check-in starts at 8:00 am.

Where: University of Arizona Maricopa County Cooperative Extension

This event is rain or shine and portions of the morning programs are outdoors, so come prepared with a water bottle (refilling available onsite), sun/rain protection and layers.

Interest in this event is growing. Purchase tickets online or at our monthly meeting ahead of time to assure your spot. We sell out quickly! <https://azherb.org/activities/#!/event/2024/10/12/fall-herb-festival>

FOR MORE INFORMATION, contact Melissa Esbshade by email to: esbshade@gmail.com

Landscape Threats Managed with IPM

At our June meeting, Dr. Shaku Nair, Ph.D. in Entomology, and an Associate in Extension Community IPM, who works with a team through the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at the University of Arizona, discussed pest threats and how they can be mitigated with the use of Integrated Pest Management (IPM).



For the purposes of this talk she included “landscape pests” to include insects, diseases, weeds and wildlife, as well as structural pests such as rodents.

One of the problems that contribute to the proliferation of “bad” pests to the detriment of our landscape plants has been the prolonged heat that we have experienced in Phoenix. She showed us a chart from June and July 2023 when we had 22 consecutive days of temperatures over 110° F. and 38 consecutive days of 100° F. heat or higher.

In addition to the extreme desert heat, our plants and pests must deal with low water availability, wind, diverse animal and plant life and changes in the community’s environment in recent years.

She helped us to identify some pests we will find in our landscape including *Hemiptera* (**true bugs**) which have two pairs of wings that may be folded over the abdomen, half of the forewing ‘sclerotized’ (hardened). These bugs have piercing/sucking mouthparts. The adults and immatures can feed on plant material or other insects. The three sub orders of *Hemiptera* are *Auchenorrhynca*, *Sternorrhynca* and *Heteroptera*.

Why is the number of sucking insects increasing?

1. When both day and night temperatures are high, insects develop faster and there are more generations.
2. Drought stressed plants have a higher concentration of nitrogen-type compounds (amino acids/sugars) in their sap which the sucking pests find ideal.
3. The injury caused to the plant is worse. The bug’s saliva disrupts water flow and cell growth, which means the plants lose water and dry up quickly when there is low humidity.
4. Biocontrol is less. Fungi and viruses that naturally control sucking insects are badly affected by warm dry weather.

5. Insecticides have limits. UV light breaks down and pesticides don’t last long on foliage in warm weather. Residue levels drop. Pyrethroids work better in cool conditions. Also, insecticides wipe out beneficials, allowing mites to recolonize and rebound quickly.

Another big pest found here can be *Thysanoptera*, **thrips**. These are small winged species with two pairs of thin strap-like wings that are fringed with fine hairs. Their elongated tubular bodies are only approximately 1 mm in length. These bugs have asymmetrical, rasping and sucking mouthparts. Adults and immatures feed on plant material, usually already stressed plants. If you put a piece of white paper under the flower of an affected plant and tap, thrips will fall out onto the paper.



(thysano=fringe, ptera=wing)

- Winged species have two pairs of thin strap-like wings fringed with fine hairs
- Elongated tubular body, ~ 1 mm in length
- Asymmetrical, rasping mouthparts
- Adults and immatures feed on plant material
- Singular and plural is ‘thrips’

Thrips

Mites, another bug causing more problems in the last few years are a diverse group, with an arachnid-like body plan and retractable mouthparts. They are not considered insects, but rather are related to spiders. Mites THRIVE in hot and dry conditions. The continuing drought and relatively mild winters have extended favorable conditions for mite populations. Mites have a role in many complex plant diseases and disorders and mite damage is often confused with damage done by insects or use of herbicides. As an example of this, Dr. Shaku mentioned “Witch’s broom” has been found on blue palo verde trees. The virus causing this disease is vectored by eriophyid mites.

An example of a parthenogenic pest are **aphids** which give live birth to pregnant daughters without even mating. These types of pests also do well in warm, dry weather. She cautioned that spraying an insecticide in June could lead to a spider mite outbreak or higher aphid population in a few weeks because the beneficials are also wiped out.

Beetles (Order Coleoptera) are borers. Included in this group are bark beetles. Adult bark beetles bore

through the outer bark of a tree to the inner cambial layer and channel out galleries in which they lay eggs. The larva hatch in these galleries and may excavate additional channels as they feed. Beetles introduce blue-stain fungi, which grows in the wood, interfering with the tree's water transport system. Tree deterioration and eventual mortality result from two factors: 1) the tree girdling caused by gallery excavation and 2) the spread of blue-stain fungi.

The largest recorded bark beetle outbreak was in northern British Columbia, where winters used to be too cold for these beetles to survive. There are about 500 species in North America, affecting every native conifer in the Southwest. Ponderosa pine have over a dozen bark beetle species that can attack them. ID is difficult because their damage is often confused with other activity, like drought, diseases and woodpecker damage and multiple borers can attack the same tree.

The **Mediterranean Pine Engraver** is a non-native borer pest that was discovered in Metro Phoenix in 2018. It attacks stressed trees. Why do we care? Mediterranean Pine Engravers generally attack distressed trees by boring holes in the bark and cambium layer. Tunnels created by the beetles block the tree's ability to transport water and nutrients, effectively killing the tree. Healthy pines have a natural defense against bark beetles – they ooze out a thick resin when beetles try to gain entry, pushing the beetles out and trapping them in sticky pitch. Stressed trees, however, produce little or no resin and become susceptible to MPE beetle attack. In addition, even apparently healthy trees may not be able to fend off MPE if beetle populations are abnormally high.

The **Emerald Ash Borer** is an invasive insect, native to Asia. It has killed untold millions of ash trees (*Fraxinus ssp*) in the Midwestern and Eastern United States. It was first identified in 2002 in southeast Michigan and Windsor, Ontario. It is currently present in 35 states, as well as six Canadian provinces. It is not in Arizona records yet, but it is coming soon. The nearest known location is Boulder, Colorado, where it was first observed in September 2013. It is expected that the Emerald Ash Borer will ultimately kill almost every unprotected ash tree presently growing in North America.

Lastly, Dr. Shaku talked about the problems with **Pallid-winged Grasshoppers** which are typically encountered in spring (April and May). They feed on shrubs, herbaceous flowering plants and grasses. Eggs laid the previous year hatch in early spring. The young hoppers feed on many rapidly germinating spring plants. The USDA tracks and

reports grasshopper populations because of the immense potential for agricultural impact.

Dr. Shaku warned us that the exact impacts of climate change on pests are uncertain. However, with the basic IPM practices such as monitoring, record keeping and choosing economically and environmentally sound control measures, even emerging pest problems in our landscapes may be managed.

A good long-term strategy is to diversify the plants in your garden. Different insects like different plants as sources of food and shelter. IPM increases the beneficial insects in your landscape. And, she added, wait out the heat! Once this heatwave breaks, many insect populations typically dip back down to non-noticeable levels.

June Herb of the Month: Lavender By Past President Katherine Tarr

Our Herb of the month for June, presented by Past President Katherine Tarr, is one that is wildly popular for many reasons.



There are 45 species of lavender and over 450 varieties. Katherine's focus was on the varieties that grow well here for us which include:

Lavandula dentata – French or Fringed lavender
Lavandula stoechas –

Spanish lavender
Lavandula pinnata – Fern Leaf lavender
Lavandula x heterophylla – Sweet Lavender
Lavandula x intermedia – Grosso or Provence lavender
Lavandula x ginginsii – Goodwin Creek Gray

History: Lavender has been used for eons. The first recorded usages date back 2500 years to ancient Greece, Rome and Egypt. Roman soldiers used lavender for wound care.

The Egyptians used it in embalming and in beauty products. Cleopatra is said to have used the scent to seduce both Mark Anthony and Julius Caesar.

The Greeks used this herb for its sweet smell, as a dye and also as a medicinal herb.

Propagation: Lavender may be propagated from seeds, cuttings or nursery plants. Plant lavender in full sun in an area that gets six to eight hours of sun each day. Lavender is fussy about wet roots so make sure your soil has very good drainage. While lavender needs water to get it started, be sure to back off and let the soil dry out once the transplant has been established. Lavender likes good air circulation. It is a Mediterranean herb and can grow in poor, alkaline soil. In a container, use cactus mix with added pumice to provide adequate drainage.

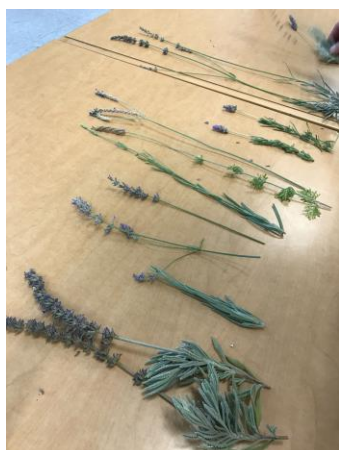
For success growing lavender, be sure to avoid the following: 1) over watering, 2) overhead watering (water the soil instead of the plant), 3) applying excess nitrogen and 4) crowding lavender.



Spanish lavender is known for its tufted flowers and is native to the Mediterranean area, but found especially in Portugal and Spain. It is an evergreen shrub that usually grows 12" to 39" high. The leaves are long and have a grayish/green color.

Photo by Mike Hills

Lavender is well known for its medicinal qualities. These include calming, anti-depressant and antiseptic properties. However, lavender also has many other uses. It makes a good bug repellent, but if stung you may rub it on bites and stings to reduce pain and inflammation. It has been used as a companion plant for cabbage and is helpful in keeping deer out of your garden. Lavender attracts bees and increases honey production. It has extensive culinary uses, is often found as an ingredient in beauty products and is used in crafting.



Samples of lavender from our own herb garden at Extension demonstrate the many looks of different varieties of lavender that grow well here.

This photo and the one of Katherine Tarr by Lee Ann Aronson.

Other Fun Facts:

- The symbolic meaning is purity, devotion and love.
- Lavender is a member of the mint family.
- Lavender was once used as currency in Medieval France.
- Bulgaria is the worldwide leader in lavender exports.
- Lavender is second in popularity only to Basil.

Lavender Aromatherapy Soothes People, Horses and Dogs

(This article was written by Stephen Scott of Terroir Seeds and is reprinted with permission.)
<https://underwoodgardens.com/>



Lavender has been used to soothe and heal people for a long time, dating back to at least the Egyptians where it was commonly used in daily life. Not only does the fragrance refresh and soothe our senses, but the scent or aroma molecules pass to the limbic area of the brain directly from the nose. The limbic area deals with instinct and emotion, as well as many of the body's autonomic systems, such as the immune system. This is one of the primary ways that inhaling lavender essential oils helps to calm us down and restore a sense of peace. This aromatherapy is also highly effective with the animals with whom we share our lives.



Aromatherapy is the use of specific plant essential oils to enhance physical and psychological well-being. As a therapy, it has been proven with use dating back thousands of years. Essential oils are distilled from specific plants and

are 100% pure aromatic oils. Some oils are especially potent and are highly valued for their benefits. Lavender from Provence, France is one such oil, as it is grown in high altitude and harsh climate; the lavender plants respond to the environmental stresses by producing higher than normal amounts of protective oils, which give us benefits when the flower buds are harvested and distilled. Another source of high-altitude lavender oil from the United States is Red Rock Lavender, grown outside of Concho, AZ, with a climate that is very similar to Provence. The essential oils produced in Concho are the second most potent in the world, behind that from Provence.

It must be noted that there is some confusion due to exceedingly clever marketing on aromatherapy oils. As a result, many people have the mistaken idea that any kind of perfumed scent is aromatherapy. This is not true. Synthetic oils, often labeled "fragrance oils," are not the same as essential oils. There is no therapeutic effect on the body like with true distilled essential oils. If you are buying essential oils, make sure to source them from a reputable company and that the oils are true, therapeutic grade essential oils and not fragrance oils.

Another approach is to grow your own lavender. It is a hardy perennial in most parts of the United States, with several different varieties that are suited to different climates. You can buy starts and transplant them or start your own from seed. Once your lavender plants are established, you will have an abundance of lavender sprays for many uses!

Aromatherapy is a little different for animals than for humans; animals have a much more acute sense of scent than we do, so the amount of oil or scent will need to be reduced by 2/3 for a start to see how the response is. It is much better to increase the amount bit by bit than to overwhelm their nostrils on the first whiff!

A word of caution is needed here, as some essential oils can be toxic to cats. Certain essential oils naturally contain phenols and should never be used with cats. Their liver does not produce the enzymes to digest these compounds, allowing them to build up to toxic levels in their systems. It is safer to avoid using aromatherapy with cats, unless you are working with a skilled aromatherapist with experience and knowledge in working with cats.

Lavender is well known for its effectiveness in calming people, horses and dogs. There are many studies that show the immediate and intermediate positive effects that lavender has on sensitive, stressed, anxious animals. Both horses and dogs respond very well to the scent of lavender with decreased heart rate and respiration, a calmer posture, less shaking and pacing or other nervous behavior. Spray some essential oil on a cloth or the dog's bed before a car trip to ease stress, just before thunderstorms and for separation anxiety. You can also put a few drops on a cloth and tie it to the dog's collar for a longer-lasting effect. For horses, a cloth with a couple of drops to introduce the new scent to them will usually have a beneficial effect. After they are used to the aroma, it is easy to let them inhale the scent off of a cloth that is kept for that purpose. They can benefit from a cloth hung in the trailer before a trailer loading session, before and during a

road trip – adding a few drops of oil if needed during fuel or rest stops.

One other benefit of lavender essential oil - it is a highly effective insect repellent for both horses and dogs. The same properties that make it a pleasing and relaxing aroma for us and our animals make it the ideal insect repellent. Just add 10 – 15 drops of lavender essential oil to a spray bottle and fill with water, shake well and apply! Make sure to avoid the eyes, but all other parts of the body are ok.

Saffron bulbs are here!



The saffron crocus bulbs have arrived! We will not have saffron plants as hoped for, but the bulbs will be available for purchase at our September meeting. Come and get em!

SAFFRON CROCUS (*Crocus sativus*) - In desert gardens of Arizona, these bulbs should be planted during September, October and November. Plant about 2 to 3 times deeper than the bulb is tall, in well loosened prepared soil. (Example: if the bulb is about 1 inch tall, there should be about 2 to 3 inches of soil above the top of the point of the bulb when planting is finished) These bulbs can be planted in well-maintained garden soil, or used in rock garden plantings on loosened native soil.

Be sure that you put a visible marker where you plant your saffron bulbs, as these plants naturally disappear underground for many months, and



should not be disturbed while they are dormant and resting. Small, thin leaves will appear in the fall shortly after planting, along with your first blooms in shades of purple, lilac and lavender. The leaves will remain green until the coldest part of winter, when the plant will go dormant and the leaves disappear back into the soil - DO NOT DIG UP!

In mid-spring, the bulbs may occasionally re-bloom, and a few leaves will appear and remain green and growing for several months before again going dormant for the hot summer. While the flowers are fully open, pluck the 3 red stigmas out of each bloom, and dry them in the



shade with good air circulation, before storing in your herb cupboard for later culinary use – DO NOT dry in an oven or microwave as this will harm the delicate flavor. For best results, it is important to leave these bulbs where you first plant them as the clumps will enlarge over the years, with increasing side bulbs and more blooms as the clumps mature.

Thank you to Pam Perry for the news about the saffron bulbs being available. Planting guide by Mike Hills (reprint of a 2007 article).

Ways and Means News from Katherine Tarr

AHA will be participating in Nature Fest Phoenix to be held on Saturday October 19, 2024. We will be giving out free seeds and informing the public about the benefits of herbs at the Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area, 2801 South 7th Avenue, in Phoenix. Let Katherine know if you would like to volunteer for this event.

CELEBRATE URBAN WILDLIFE AND COMMUNITY IN THE VALLEY!

Nature Fest PHX
An Urban Wildlife Conservation Day and Rio Reimagined Event

FREE SEEDS FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

DATE: Saturday, October 19, 2024

TIME: 8 a.m.-12 p.m.
7 AM- BE A RIVER HERO AT A SALT RIVER CLEAN-UP!

LOCATION: Rio Salado Habitat Restoration Area
2801 S. 7th Ave.
Phoenix, AZ 85003

EVENT ACTIVITIES:

- Annual "Walk for the Wild"
- Wildlife Encounters
- Planting for Pollinators
- Kids ArtZone
- Community Partner Booths
- Interactive Public Art
- Nature Photography Walk
- Food Trucks

...AND MORE!

**COMING SOON
MORE DETAILS AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**
PHOENIX.GOV/NATUREFESTPHX

THANK YOU TO OUR EVENT PARTNERS

City of Phoenix ASU Audubon The Rio Reimagined CORAZON LATINO

Event: Fall Seed Swap
Where: Chandler Sunset Library
4930 W Ray Road
Chandler, AZ 85226
When: Saturday, September 14
Time: 9:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Fall planting season has arrived! Visit the Chandler Sunset Library and share seeds, seed starts, and plant cuttings with your neighbors. Meet local gardeners, Master Gardeners, and other community members with the expertise to help you start or maintain your desert garden, conserve when and where you can, and more! You can participate even if you do not bring seeds. It's the perfect opportunity for new Arizona residents who want to establish a garden of their own. Envelopes and markers will be

provided. Everyone and all ages are welcome! There will be a prize raffle to win a desert gardening book! Kathy Eastman and Lee Ann Aronson will host a table for AHA.



Fall 2024 Plant and Seed Sales!

Event: Great American Seed-UP
Where: North Phoenix Baptist Church
5757 N. Central Ave, Building B
Phoenix, AZ 85012
When: Friday, October 11, 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
When: Saturday, October 12, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.



This is an opportunity to purchase adaptable, non GMO, and heirloom seeds in bulk
More info & tickets: <https://greatamericalseedup.org>

Event: Fall Plant Sale
Where: Desert Botanical Garden
1201 N. Galvin Parkway
Phoenix, AZ 85008
When: Thursday, October 17 – Sunday, October 20
Thursday, October 17 – Members only
Friday, Oct 20 – Sunday, Oct 20 – general public
Time: 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
Reservations required
<https://dbg.org/events/fall-plant-sale/2024-10-18/>

Event: Master Gardener Fall Festival
Where: Metro Tech High School
1900 W Thomas Road
Phoenix, AZ 85015
When: Saturday, October 26
Time: 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

This festival is a great place to get plants and garden related merchandise. Anyone can have a booth. Do you have plants or garden art you want to sell? Contact the Extension office for details. The Master Gardeners are also requesting garden related items for their raffle. If you have something to donate, contact myarnoldgethealthy@gmail.com

Event: Arizona Rare Fruit Growers Sale

Where: Lehi Montessori School
2415 N Terrace Circle
Mesa, AZ 85203

When: Saturday, October 26

Time: 9:00 a.m. to noon

This is a chance to get plants and trees propagated by AZRFG members. AHA will not be selling herbs at this event as we will be at the MG Fall Festival.

**Treasurer's Report
(as of August 26, 2024)**



Cash on Hand

Wells Fargo Checking	\$ 5,437.29
Wells Fargo Savings	\$ 1,000.59
Cash Boxes (2)	\$ 300.00
TOTAL	\$ 6,737.88

Fiscal Year

7.1.23-6.30.24	Fundraising Income	\$11,721.76
	Expenses	\$16,193.04
	Net Loss	(\$ 4,471.28)

Explanation of the additional expenses this fiscal year: We purchased a commercial grade Tuff Shed from the UofA Cooperative Extension on September 7, 2023, for \$3,937.59 (this is half of the shed invoice, the Extension paid the other half; the invoice total was \$7,875.18). We spent an additional \$507.44 to outfit the interior of the shed. We used \$4,176.46 of our savings to cover this expense. Total spent on the shed was \$4,445.03.

Chris George
AHA Treasurer

June Culinary Dinner

On Saturday, June 8, twenty plus Herbies gathered for the last dinner before our summer break. Huge thanks to hosts Nancy and Jerry Greenberg for coming to the rescue when our original hosts came down with Covid at the last minute! Our theme was Some Like it Cool! and everyone came up with delicious items for us to enjoy!

To start us off, Katherine Tarr made a fruity Sangria, and Pam Schuler prepared tasty Stuffed Dates.

Drew and Todd Templeton made Chilled Cucumber Soup while Kathleen McCoy took a spicier route with Gazpacho.

We had salads galore: Judy and Larrie Bates brought her favorite Pasta Salad, Rachel Diamant



Our spur-of-the-moment-and-very-accommodating hosts, Nancy and Jerry Greenberg.

made Quinoa Salad, and Kathy Eastman came up with a unique Blistered Cucumber Salad with Peaches. Nancy and Jerry provided Crunchy Vietnamese Cabbage Salad, and Donna and Keith Lorch made a Farro Salad.

Janet Coleman and Zac brought amazing Beet-Cured Salmon, Feta with Roasted Lemon. and Cream Cheese Dill Spread. Nancy also baked her Eggplant Parmesan, Pam Schuler brought Enhanced Rice, and Pamela Posten made our top favorite: PF Chang's-style Vegan Lettuce Wraps!



You can find that recipe here [PF Chang's Inspired Vegetarian Lettuce Wraps - Drive Me Hungry](#)

Culinary photos by Drew Templeton

The meal was rounded off with

Tami and Tim Phillips' delicious little Lemon Bars and Susan and Eric Adamczyk's refreshing Lemon Sorbet!

Join us September 28th at Beatriz Cohen's for Delicious Fall Dishes. Go to the membership calendar at <https://azherb.org> to sign up.

[Charlie Bird's Farro Salad Recipe \(nytimes.com\)](#)
[Crunchy Vietnamese Cabbage Salad With Pan-Seared Tofu Recipe \(nytimes.com\)](#)

Drew
Drew Templeton, Culinary Chair

September Herbal Workshop

September 21, 2024 11am-1pm

→ 6631 N 31st Street
Phoenix, AZ 85014



→ As summer winds down & fall approaches, cold & flu season is just around the corner. We're excited to kick off our Fall workshops with Kitchen Witchin! This month, we're focusing on Mexican Oregano, & we'll be making a delicious Mexican Oregano & Garlic soup. Join us in the kitchen to explore the medicinal benefits of this herb & discover fun, practical ways to use it.

Saturday, September 21: AHA Herbal Workshop
Topic: Mexican Oregano and Garlic to Boost Your Immune System

Presenter: Herbalist Ashley Johnston
\$20.00, More Details and Sign-up at:
<https://azherb.org>

The Black Dalea

A Botanical Butterfly and Harbinger of Fall

Feeling a little summer fatigue? Lift your spirit; Black Dalea blossoms (*Dalea frutescens*) are on their way. Fall is the only time these showy purple blooms will appear, lasting for the next few weeks. The tiny flowers will have you thinking of refreshing nights on the back porch and harvesting cool season crops.

The little plum flowers emerge somewhat like a cluster of magnificent purple emperor butterflies huddling atop a thornless gray woody stem. Attached in dense bundles, these small violet flowers present a welcome spot of color in an autumn garden and the promise that autumn has arrived.

The black dalea, in the *Fabaceae* or legume family, is a member of the subfamily *Papilionoidea*. Papillon means butterfly. Aptly named, our harbinger of autumn has bilaterally symmetrical flowers that, with a little imagination, resemble butterflies.

This compact deciduous shrub is dressed in autumn colors, with up to eight pairs of one inch long, dark green leaflets on reddish tan stems. Requiring little maintenance, black dalea prefers full sun and well-

drained soil. Slightly acid soils, whether in limestone, sandy, or clay variations, can be home to the black dalea. This shrub, reaching approximately three feet high and wide, forms a small compact mound from which it rarely wanders. Neither extremely hot nor cold weather conditions affect this deciduous shrub. In winter most or all leaves will drop. With supplemental watering during the growing season and severe pruning in late winter, the black dalea will grow fuller and flower more. *D. frutescens* is a moderately fast-growing shrub.



<https://www.505outside.com/2022/05/31/black-dalea-dalea-frutescens/>

A magnet for hungry bees and the few lingering fall butterflies, the flowers produce an excellent nectar and pollen source. Deer and rabbits are fond of foliage so protect as needed. This ornamental plant has a high tolerance for heat and drought, making it a perfect member of a xeriscape landscape. Shrubs can also provide erosion control in areas of reflected heat and rocky inclines.

As for medicinal contributions, the black dalea has not specifically been studied, but other members of its extensive subfamily are surfacing as potential new sources for medical treatments. Comprised of over 172 species, *Dalea L* genus, mainly found in hot dry habitats, plants its roots from Canada to Chile. Not surprisingly, with an abundance of many varieties spread throughout the new world, ethnomedicinal studies have reported uses of *Dalea* spp. by native tribes to treat many different ailments.

Indigenous people in California and the Colorado desert employed *Dalea polyadenia* to treat smallpox. Dermatological conditions were treated by the Yucatecan Maya with *Dalea carthagenensis* var. *barbata* as an anti-inflammatory. Several other tribes in Mexico also used *Dalea carthagenensis* to combat gastrointestinal infections. The Apache and Dakota populations found North American species to treat illnesses like headaches, heart disease, rheumatism, and pneumonia. Pharmacological studies have corroborated these traditional medical uses of the Dalea species, which have led to important implications for medical practice.

Not limited to medicinal uses, other daleas have been used as an insecticide (*D. caerulea*), and to dye fibers for baskets and animal skin (*D. emoryi*, *D. polyadenia* and *D. tinctoria*).

Until more research is available, the low mounding, southwest Black Dalea will keep its future medicinal uses a secret. For now, we are thrilled with its purple pendant flowers announcing the return of fall.

Kathleen McCoy
Herbie, Master Gardener, Master Naturalist

Our Summer Weed & Feed

This summer has not been that hot...right? As a longtime resident of Arizona I am encouraged by the recent cool-ish mornings, even with the weak monsoon this summer. Despite the heat, we had nice support from our Master Gardener and community volunteers turning out to work in the garden with our dedicated Herbie volunteers. New friendships were made over garden chat; we shared the labor, endured the heat, and ate some delicious snacks.

Garden chores over the summer included clearing out dead plants, thinning our always dense populations of Black-eyed Susans and Lance-leaved Coreopsis, plus excess Hollyhock volunteers. And weeding, weeding and more weeding!!! Even with our mulch layer to reduce weed seeds from sprouting, some weeds always manage to sneak through and try to set seed before we can find them. Most of our weed species are regulars, species that we see every year in summer in the demonstration garden and your home gardens. But we are also seeing some normally winter/spring weeds still alive and setting seeds in the heat of summer – weeds are adaptable, much like humans.

We did manage to plant some new seeds and even a few pollinator-friendly transplants that were too tempting to pass up. With extra water and some shade from nearby plants, we can still have success starting new plants in our summer herb and pollinator gardens. This is easier in your home garden, when you can keep an eye on new seedlings and plants; we enjoy success thanks to the diligence of Pam's weekly Tuesday garden crew who checkup on the herb garden while they work on vegetable demo garden projects. Watch for updates as these new plants settle in.

Other favorite plants that thrived in our Low Desert summer conditions included: sunflowers, milkweeds,

queen's wreath, passion vines, myrtle, bay, Mexican evening primrose, alfalfa, rosemary, gomphrenas and our lemon-scented *Lippia* "vine." We even harvested and taste-tested some early ripening pomegranates. Varieties 'Agat' and 'Desertnyi' ripen earlier than the traditional 'Wonderful' variety, and do not turn red inside when ripe, remaining a pale ivory color with sweet and juicy arils. Garden volunteers took home extra fruit, as well as some excess seedlings from the garden.



Mindy found this gall on our Creosote bush in the demo garden. Photo by Mike Hills

Pots on drip irrigation were inspected each month and given some TLC by our volunteers. A little compost to feed them, and some needed adjustments to our irrigation lines in the pots. Make sure that your irrigation is in the center of the pot, not hitting the sides, which lets much of the water drain straight out. Pam and I have been very pleased with the success of using garden pots in various sizes and materials to grow herbs and pollinator plants. With regular irrigation and some afternoon sun protection, you, too, can be successful at home in a small garden or on an apartment or condo balcony.

New Herbies George and Danielle worked with us on irrigation repairs – great ears, listening for telltale sounds of leaks. And this time the leaks were not from our hardworking crew of volunteers. Thirsty rabbits from the local neighborhood have been enjoying some snacks in the garden and nibbled holes in our irrigation lines for a drink in the heat. This is a regular problem with home gardens too, so always check for leaks and perhaps find ways to put out water supplies for the local wildlife to share.

Saturday, August 3, was not only our AHA Weed & Feed workday, but also National Sunflower Day! *Helianthus annuus* or common sunflower is an easy to grow summer bloomer, with many benefits for pollinators, wildlife and humans. All sunflowers originated in North America, where indigenous peoples in some areas of Mexico, Canada and the USA collected the small ripe seeds as a food source. Several tribes in the Upper Midwest US and Canada also farmed sunflowers on a limited acreage as a food source.



Early European explorers and plant collectors sent seeds back to Europe, where they were introduced initially as decorative garden flowers. Breeding and selection continue today, giving us many new floral varieties and colors, as well as larger seeded edible varieties and higher oil content varieties. In Low Desert gardens in Arizona, we can plant sunflowers all year to keep a continual cycle of blooms for

pollinators and people to enjoy. Our sunflower plants are regularly visited by multiple species of native bees and butterflies, plus finches and lovebirds feast on the ripening seeds. Painted Lady butterflies lay their eggs on sunflower leaves for their caterpillars to grow healthy before pupating. Finches feed chewed up leaves to their fledglings each spring, along with digested seeds and some insects.

A common sunflower plant grows about five to six feet tall and two to three feet wide, producing 50 to 100 blooms by the end of its lifecycle.

We hope that you are able to come down and share in the FUN on Saturday, September 7, as we work on our regular garden maintenance. Bring a plant or insect problem with you for more learning and fun. Plus, this next Weed & Feed will include more seed cleaning, and even some seed packaging, to get our seed inventory ready for AHA's participation in various fall events.

By Past Presidents Pam Perry and Mike Hills,
Demonstration Garden Captains

For Herbs, Our Fall Becomes “Spring” Planting Time

(Editor's Note: This article by Catherine Crowley, the Herb Lady (posthumous), was originally printed in the Desert Home & Garden section of the Tribune September 28, 2002.)

It's spring in the desert. Well, not really spring, but for gardeners in the Valley, fall is our “spring” – planting time to achieve optimal success in growing herbs year round.



October through February is the best planting time for perennial herbs in the desert. Some years ago an experiment was performed. Two identical shrubs were planted: one in October, the other the following April. By July, the plants looked identical above the ground. By summer's end, the October-planted shrub was two to three times the size of the other one, and the April-planted shrub was struggling to stay alive.

What happened? Most gardeners know that factors such as the amount of daylight and soil temperature directly affect top growth of the plants. While you will not see a lot of top growth on your fall plantings, our mild winters permit the plants to develop strong,

deep root systems, enabling the plants to maximize their growth rates when spring temperatures warm the soil.

Take advantage of the fall to start your herb garden. You will be rewarded with plants that fairly leap out of the ground in the spring while allowing some harvesting during the fall and winter.

You can grow herbs year-round in the desert, if you mimic the Mediterranean-type conditions most of them favor. Essentials are well-draining soil, appropriate watering, planting/light location, air circulation, appropriate planting times and something I call “enlightened neglect” – don't over-nurture.

The soil here, as you may have already discovered, is not your loamy forest mulch, Jersey tomato secret or Midwest guaranteed harvest soil. It is heavy in clay. If the drainage is good, it is because there is enough gravel and sand to start your own commercial operation, and if you put it in a small pot, you learn what adobe is. Excellent soil is by thirds sand, clay and organic matter. If there is too much clay or sand, amend.

Clay soil holds moisture well – too well. It allows for an accumulation of minerals, binding together to form caliche. If you look at a concrete curb, you will be looking at the equivalent of caliche. Herbs need fast-draining soil with some organic matter to prevent soil compaction.

Test your soil – put a 6-inch sample in a jar, fill with water, shake vigorously and let sit for several hours. This will settle into sand/gravel, clay and organic layers. Amend by working in up to 8 inches of organics such as well-rotted manure or compost. Never use fresh manure unless the ground will sit idle for three to six months.

Most herbs need four to six hours of sun a day. This means full or all-morning sun. Overwatering is fatal for many herbs. A water meter is worth its weight in gold – and plants!

Banner Photos (from left to right) feature summer blooms of white Vitex, Caltrop Poppy, Gomphrena, Cleome and Skullcap in our demonstration garden. Photos were taken by Mike Hills during summer Weed & Feed workdays.

Harvesting Your Herbs

(An excerpt of an article written by Jane Haynes for the November 1992 AHA newsletter.)



Nothing equals the flavor of fresh herbs in food. But, out of season, even dried herbs will provide flavor, fragrance, texture and color. The secret to achieving dried herbs of almost cutting-day fragrance, taste and color – months after they are stored – is harvesting them at the right time, with speed and meticulous handling.

Even though kitchen-door herbs are cut anytime they are needed for cooking, when drying for storage it is best to cut them just before the plants flower, as the flower buds are about to open. The herb has then reached its peak of flavor and none of its volatile oil is wasted to produce the flowers. (Exception: Mints peak when in full flower.) Cut the herb on a dry, sunny day, early in the morning before the sun has robbed away the oils. Cut only part way down the stem, including leaves that are fresh and new. The plant will be stimulated to grow bushy and you will probably be able to harvest again.

Now is no time to tarry in the garden. The herbs should be rushed to be washed – not left in a heap to wilt. If a friend gives you herbs and you are some distance from home, don't put them in plastic unless with wet towels. Cut herbs can be placed loose in paper where they can get air, even though they wilt somewhat. It is best to take along a bucket with a couple of inches of water. Stand the herbs up in this to keep them fresh during the trip home. Or wrap them in wet paper, or put them with ice cubes in a cooler. Once herbs have started to overheat, in plastic or in a heap, they might as well be tossed out. Flavor and color are gone.

Speed is needed to retain as much of the color and flavor as possible. Wilted herbs will not wash well or taste as good as fresh herbs. Nor will soaked herbs taste as well. Never leave them lay in the wash water. The flavor will steep into the water.

NEVER assume that herbs are clean. Dust and grit are ever present, hidden away among the fine hairs which cover a great many herbs. Before starting to wash your herbs, take each sprig and look it over, picking off damaged, yellowed or dry leaves and those with insect holes. Look for spiders and worms, feathers and animal hairs. Use a magnifying glass to see if aphids

are on the back of any leaves. Look for leaf miners, especially on basil. Discard all but the most perfect leaves before they are put into water. By tending to all of this before washing, the job is much easier and faster than when everything is wet. Now, only the soil or dust needs to be washed out. Use a white bowl or sink to see well.

Then, unless the herb is terribly muddy, wash swiftly and gently in slightly tepid water. (In summer, tap water here in Arizona is almost too warm!) Three rinse waters will probably do the job. But no matter, wash until you'd be willing to drink the last water. This will assure a really clean product.

Once the herb is carefully washed, with care not to bruise the leaves, shake off the excess water. Lay out one sprig or leaf thick on a screen, tray or paper towels to dry. The drying area should be clean, dark, well ventilated with low humidity, and ideally a temperature of 70 to 90 degrees. Arizona, with so little humidity, makes for ideal drying. Darkened, air-conditioned rooms are perfect. Never dry herbs in sunlight.

Many times herbs are hung to dry. Unless you are decorating with them, it is best not to do this, as they are usually left too long and dust collects on them – We just washed that off! However, they can be hung in paper bags which have been given vents for the air to circulate. Gather a bunch, not too thick, with a rubber band; it contracts as the herb dries and still holds. Attach a string and hang, bag and all. Seeds can also be dried this way.

When the leaves are very dry, crisp as cornflakes, strip them from the stems. If there is any doubt that they are dry enough, let dry longer. In monsoon weather, they

may stay slightly damp. A very low oven will help. Turn the oven on as low as possible and when the oven light goes off, turn the oven off. Put in the herbs and leave the oven door partly open. As the oven cools, it dries the herbs. Doing the whole drying process in the oven is not recommended.

When the herb is dry, crumble the leaves somewhat. If the leaves are

left whole, they take up too much room; if crushed too fine, the flavor won't last as long. When using, crush them to your liking.

After herbs are bottled and tightly capped, label them and store in a dark place, NOT above the stove. When using, dump a bit into your hand or a spoon, then into the pot. Steam, heat and moisture rob them of flavor. Properly stored, herbs will last a year or longer. Taste and smell will be your best guide.



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Inside this Month's Issue:

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Creating your own urban farm is as simple as planting your flowerbeds with edibles.

Greg Peterson
<https://www.urbanfarm.org>