



Arizona Herb Association

April 2025

A Publication for Members & Friends

<http://www.azherb.org>

Dear Herbies,

Spring has arrived...and then it hasn't...and then it has again. By the time this letter is published, I'm guessing the days will be quite warm and the danger of frost will be well past. Spring always gives me confidence in my gardening abilities, (then summer comes to make sure I stay humble) and makes me want to try new things. At our last meeting, Cindy Jepsen brought in some lime thyme, a new one to most of us. What new thing will you plant, or taste, or try this month?

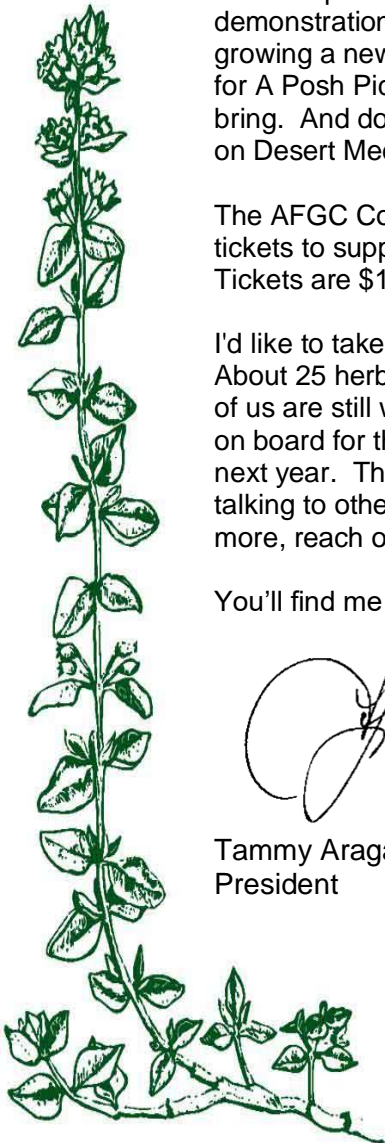
Need inspiration? Come to the Weed & Feed on Saturday, April 5. See what we grow in our demonstration garden. Mike and Pam always have a lot of information to share. If instead of growing a new herb, you'd rather eat one, join us at the Culinary Event at Janet Coleman's home for A Posh Picnic. Sign up on our website and make sure to let everyone know what you plan to bring. And don't forget our monthly meeting. This month Herbalist JoAnn Sanchez will present on Desert Medicine, and Herbie Bernie Arnecke will tell us about wonderful Nasturtiums.

The AFGC Convention is this month. See page 13 for more details. Herbies can purchase raffle tickets to support the AFGC at our **April 3rd general meeting** and at **Weed & Feed on April 5**. Tickets are \$1 each or 6 for \$5. Be sure to bring cash and invite a friend to join the fun!

I'd like to take a moment to thank all of our dedicated volunteers who keep our club running. About 25 herbies are diligently working to make this the best garden club in the valley, but many of us are still wearing multiple hats. We would love to have you join us. It's not too late to hop on board for this year and it's not too early to start thinking about how you'd like to contribute next year. There are jobs big and small, no prior experience required. Some will get you out talking to other gardeners, others you can do from home. If you're interested, or want to learn more, reach out to me - tjaragaki@gmail.com, or stop by at our next meeting.

You'll find me singing in my garden,

Tammy Aragaki
President



Calendar

April 2025

Thursday, April 3: General Meeting
Location: MCC Extension; Time: 7:00 p.m.
Topic: Desert Medicine
Speaker: Herbalist JoAnn Sanchez
Herb of the Month: Nasturtiums
Presenter: Bernie Arnecke

Saturday, April 5: Weed & Feed
Time: 8:00 a.m.



Sunday, April 6: Flavors of Arizona
Location: Boyce Thompson Arboretum
More information:

<https://www.flavorofarizona.com/>

Saturday, April 12: Culinary Event
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Hostess: Janet Coleman
Theme: A Posh Picnic

Saturday, April 26: Butterfly Walk
Location: Boyce Thompson Arboretum
Time: 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.
<https://btarboretum.org/tours/>

March 15 to May 11: Orchid Fever Exhibit
Location: Desert Botanical Garden
Info: <https://dbg.org/events/orchid-fever/2025-03-15/>

May 2025

Thursday, May 1: Annual Salad Supper
Location: MCC Extension, Time: 7:00 p.m.
Come early to tour the Demo Garden
Guests welcome!
Topic: Herb of the Year – Chamomile
Speaker: Shay Emmers

Saturday, May 3: Weed & Feed
Time: 7:00 a.m.



Saturday, May 10: Culinary Event
Time: 6:00 p.m.
Hosts: Donna and Keith Lorch
Theme: Parsley, Sage, Rosemary and Wine!

Friday – Sunday, May 16 to 18; Time: 10 am to 5 pm
Maricopa County Home and Flower Show
Location: Westworld in Scottsdale
<https://maricopacountyhomeshows.com/attend/>

April General Meeting

Our April 3, 2025, general meeting promotes renowned speaker JoAnn Sanchez, an herbalist in the Sonoran Desert since 1981. She is the creator and owner of Botanica, a 700-hour accredited Western Herbalism program offered at Southwestern Institute of Healing Arts (SWIHA).



JoAnn's topic is "Desert Medicine" and her hands-on demonstration will thrill your senses and well-being. JoAnn is an author, educator, forager, clinician, and public speaker. Our meeting starts at 7:00 p.m. Come early to get a seat and join us for this anticipatory event! Katherine Tarr reports that there will be Marjoram, Marigold and Bachelor Buttons plants for sale at the meeting also.



Bernadette (Bernie) Arnecke is an Arizona Herb Association board member, plant ordering coordinator for Ways/Means, and a Maricopa County Master Gardener. She has chosen the herbaceous plant Nasturtium as the Herb of the Month. Come ready to taste test and admire the beautiful colors of flowers!

Snacks are always appreciated for our meeting break; a recipe or ingredient list helps those with dietary concerns. Bringing your own table service helps reduce our carbon footprint.

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

Topic: April AHA General Meeting
Date: Thursday, April 3, 2025
Meeting begins promptly at 7:00 p.m.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81288082383?pwd=ciryfLYJUDuyspcmvTEELZcfH705tb.1>

Meeting ID: 812 8808 2383
Passcode: 088744

Welcome New AHA Members:

Briana Jacobs
Zip Code: 85225

Natalie Ortega-Davis
Zip Code: 85268

Greg Bernosky
Zip Code: 85260

Stacy Quiroz-Brown
Zip Code: 85013

Rebecca Phillips
Zip Code: 85207

Robin Abbott
Zip Code: 85016

Vicki Margaritis
Zip Code: 85020

Perri Benemelis
Zip Code: 85203

Pam Brooks
Zip Code: 85206

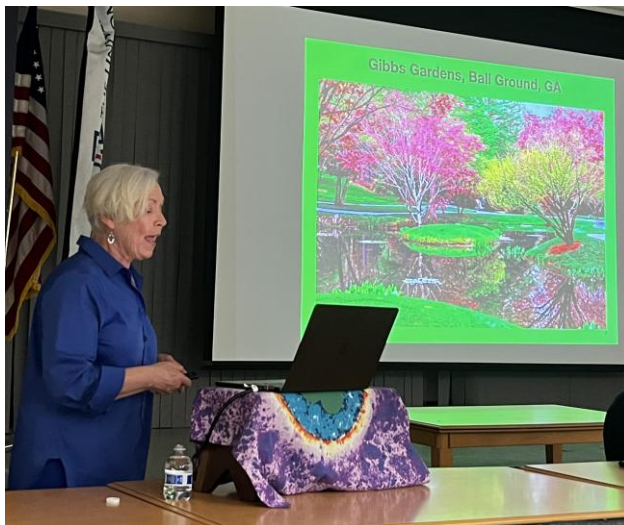
Tammy Aragaki, Membership Committee



March General Meeting

Our featured speaker, Linda Larson, a retired teacher and Master Gardener, shared her travels of the world in search of the most beautiful gardens. She brought us along on a breathtaking journey of her most treasured gardening memories. Quoting Mary Oliver, Linda advised us to: "Pay Attention, Be Astonished, Tell About It." Linda's presentation did just that!

Her presentation titled "In Search of Wonder - Traveling 1,000 Gardens," was an awe-inspiring glimpse of Linda's life-long enthusiasm for finding wondrous places. She suggested she was given this gift of observing nature because of admonishments from her mother to "slow down and look where she was going." Linda reminded us that we all need nature. Her deep love of flowers comes from buds, a symbol of hope for what is to come.



Linda has always been fascinated by gardens and shared that finding your way to and back from the gardens you visit is also part of the adventure! She is joined on her garden travels by her husband, Rich Larson, who does the fabulous photography.

She organized the gardens featured in her talk around these topics: Famous, Foundational, Fantastic, Fearsome and a Few (special) gardens.

The **Famous** category included Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, Pennsylvania, built by Pierre Dupont on 1,100 acres and known for fountains, such as its Italian Water Garden, its conservatories, and many trees known as "a walk in the woods;" Keukenhof garden in Lisse, Netherlands, known for 800 varieties of tulips; and Gardens by the Bay in Singapore which broke ground in 2007, with the

Welcome to all our new members!

Welcome to all our new members. Being an Herbie includes lots of activities! One of the educational outreach endeavors of the group is our Speaker's Bureau. We are sometimes asked to make 30-to-45-minute presentations to groups, some large, some small, to educate them about herbs. If you would like to be part of this aspect of AHA membership, I would love to hear from you.

We have a couple ready to go presentations, although it is possible to tailor talks to each group. We can always find a project or two in one part of the valley or another, and do not require members to chase all over the county, unless they wish to. I would love to chat with folks who would like to find a new way of being an Herbie! Call or email me, (602-279-6250, pamlperry@cox.net) to explore the idea. I hope to hear from you soon!

Thank you
Pam Perry, AHA Speaker's Bureau

vision of creating a city within a garden. This garden has three distinct waterfront gardens; the largest, Bay South, opened to the public in 2012.



Gardens by the Bay showcases twelve “Supertrees,” inspired by mature trees in the rainforest. These vertical gardens of flowering vines on concrete and steel structures, taller than 164 feet, serve as solar systems, converting sunlight into energy; their unique shape also harvests rainwater that is used for irrigation. At night, they become a light show, complete with music. There are two Bio Domes, constructed with no internal support, made of glass that allows light, but not heat, to enter (see them in our banner photo). The Cloud Forest Dome features a mountain with waterfall and an elevator that takes you up to the tree top walk; the Flower Dome holds the Guinness World Record for the largest glass greenhouse!

In France, Linda explored Monet’s Giverny Garden and the Versailles Palace with 2,100 acres, 20 “garden rooms,” 30 miles of paths and the largest open-air sculpture museum in the world, with works of art made of marble, lead and bronze. Off the shores of Lake Constance in the far southwest of Germany, the 45-hectare Mainau Flower Island, with a Mediterranean character, offers a temperate climate growing 12,000 dahlias; Linda described this garden as being like a year-round Tournament of Roses Parade display.



Foundational gardens (gardens that teach and are the basis for study) included Padua, also known as Orto Botanico di Padova, in Italy. Created in 1545 AD, this is the oldest university garden with a focus on botany and medicine, featuring 3,500 plant species from around the world. Kew garden in London, England, built in 1759, opened to the public in 1840, when the public demanded to be let in “to know the science for the well-being of all people and the future of all life on Earth.” Leiden Botanical in The Netherlands was established in 1590 for medical students. Lankester Orchid Garden in Costa Rica showcases and protects some of the most threatened plant species. Closer to home, Missouri Botanical Garden has over seven million plants in its database.

Fantastic gardens (one of a kind) included Giant’s House in Akaroa, New Zealand with its landscape of whimsical mosaics.



This category also featured the garden at Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Renowned artist, painter and landscape architect Roberto Burle Marx designed this garden with

geometric arrangements and checkerboard lawns and a boardwalk with a wavy mosaic pattern.

Fearsome gardens (spiders, snakes, falling coconuts and crocodiles, oh my!) Described as seriously scary, Middleton Place and the Audubon Swamp Garden, both in South Carolina, sport alligators. Jurong Lake Gardens in Singapore has fearsome water dragons. Linda also warned of “widow maker” Coulter pine cones falling at Rancho Santa Ana Botanical Garden located in Claremont, California, and creepy 20-foot wide massive, circular webs of the Golden Orb spider, found in Else Kientzler Botanical Garden, Costa Rica.

And **Few very special gardens** (the best of the best; most unusual). A military garden museum, Cantigny is a 500-acre park in Wheaton, Illinois, 30 miles west of Chicago. It is the former estate of Joseph Medill and his grandson, Colonel Robert R. McCormick, publishers of the Chicago Tribune. Started as an experimental farm, the focus turned to horticulture after McCormick’s death in 1955. Nearly all the annual plants in the gardens originate on site.

In addition, the park is the site of the First Division Museum, highlighting the history of the U.S. Army’s 1st Infantry Division. The Robert R. McCormick Research Center, open to the public, houses the museum’s library, archival and photo collections. Tanks from every era are outside the museum, along with artillery pieces and a personnel carrier. Memorial markers and commemorative statuary pay further tribute to those who served.

Kenji’s Garden is described as Japan’s national treasure in Kyoto with stone lanterns and a rock garden. For seasonal splendor, Linda says it is hard to beat Gibbs Garden, Ball Ground, Georgia, a newer bulb garden built in 2012 with over 20 million daffodils and breadseed poppies. She also highly recommends an English themed garden located in Ireland called Powerscourt, which just happened to be the 1,000th garden she visited.



Linda says, “Find your way to the garden, and you will find your way home.” She reminds us that gardens “color the way we look at the world and embrace life.” And, she inspires us to discover our own stories in a garden.

Find more of Linda Larson’s work at her website: www.travelinggardener.com, on Facebook or Instagram. Find more photos from her presentation at our meeting on AHA’s Facebook page.

Celebrating our friend Rebecca’s retirement



Congratulations to Rebecca Senior on her retirement. We celebrated her long history of giving back to the gardening community with a cardamom cake prepared by Janet Coleman. From left to right, Past President Liz Lonetti, Rebecca Senior and current President Tammy Aragaki. Photo by Lee Ann Aronson

Herb of the Month: Cardamom *Elettaria cardamomum* by Diane Knudsen

Herbie and Master Gardener, Diane Knudsen described cardamom as the third most expensive spice after saffron and vanilla. It is an herbaceous, perennial plant in the ginger family, *Zingiberaceae*.

Cardamom contains phytochemicals that have anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties. The spice has been used as a breath freshener for centuries. Small studies suggest that cardamom and/or cardamom essential oil may boost heart and oral health, help with digestion problems, and help to reduce high cholesterol and triglycerides. More research is needed.

Cardamom grows 6 to 15 feet tall in partial shade in stable



Diane Knudsen
presents Cardamom

year-round climate conditions, but will only flower and fruit in the tropics where it receives at least 150 inches of rain per year. It is native to parts of India, Myanmar, and Sri Lanka. Guatemala is currently the world's largest producer of cardamom, followed by India.

Each cardamom pod contains 15 to 20 aromatic seeds. It is sought out for its tasty pods as a spice in cooking and beverages. You can use cardamom pods whole by infusing them in liquids like tea or stews, or by lightly crushing them and adding them to savory dishes like curries or stews. You can also remove the seeds from the pod and grind them for use in baking.

Cardamom has an extremely complex flavor profile, lending itself to both sweet and savory dishes. It can be found as whole pods (either green or black), shelled whole seeds or ground powder.

Green pods are considered sweeter with a eucalyptus type flavor; they are used in warm beverages in the Middle East. Ground cardamom comes from grinding green cardamom seeds; it is used in cookies and cakes in Scandinavian countries and in chewing gum in Guatemala and Mexico. Green cardamom is also used in cosmetics and perfumery.

Black pods are more robust with a smokier flavor profile. They are rich in camphor. Slightly crushed black pods are used in savory stews and curries. Similar to bay leaves, be sure to remove the pod before serving the dish. Black cardamom is the main ingredient in curry powder.

For best shelf life, purchase whole pods rather than ground seeds. Whole cardamom pods may retain their flavor for up to a year. If you purchase ground cardamom for baking, ideally use it up within one month of purchase as cardamom's flavor fades quickly after grinding.

Diane shared with us delicious cookies she had made using ground cardamom!

Editor's Note: *If a recipe calls for "white" cardamom, know that this is not a different variety, but simply green cardamom seeds that have been bleached.*

Liz Lonetti's Recommended Reading

In the thought-provoking feature "They Carry Us with Them: The Great Tree Migration" from Emergence Magazine, the authors delve into the subtle yet profound shifts occurring within our forests. As climate change accelerates, numerous tree species are gradually migrating—northward, westward, or to

higher elevations in search of favorable habitats. This movement, though traditionally spanning multiple human generations, indicates a significant transformation in our natural world.



The article highlights the plight of the black ash tree, a species deeply rooted in the cultural practices of Indigenous communities in Maine. The looming threat of the emerald ash borer, an invasive beetle, endangers not only the trees, but also the traditional basket-making crafts that rely on them. This narrative underscores the intricate connections between ecological changes and cultural heritage.

By examining these migrations, the piece invites readers to reflect on the broader implications of a warming planet. It challenges us to reconsider our relationship with forests, urging a deeper understanding of the dynamic and interconnected nature of life on Earth. As trees embark on their slow journeys, we are called to accompany them, listening to the stories they carry and adapting our perspectives to the evolving landscape.

For those interested in the intersection of ecology and culture, this article offers a compelling exploration of how environmental shifts impact both the natural world and human traditions. It's a poignant reminder of the resilience of nature and the enduring bond between humans and the forests that sustain us. I encourage you to follow the authors on the incredible journey they have created as an immersive experience with video and sound in this documentary article. Please follow this link: <https://emergencemagazine.org/feature/they-carry-us-with-them/>

For more information:

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/science/climate-change-is-shifting-plant-growth-zones-heres-what-to-know-for-your-garden-this-year>

About those orchids...

A friend brought me a pot with two somewhat scraggly small leaves poking from the soil. He informed me that I was now the proud owner of an *Eulophia petersii*. With the parting advice that the orchid is not very demanding, my friend disappeared to play with other more exotic plants.



Photo of *Eulophia petersii* (Desert Orchid) and its flower from <https://planetdesert.com>

Given an abysmal lack of knowledge about orchids, I began the search to learn more about *Eulophia petersii* and was pulled into the fascinating domain of the orchid family (*Orchidaceae*). Consisting of 15,000 to 20,000 species in about 1,000 genera, its family reunions are one of the largest of all flowering plants. Judging by their endless color, variety, and beauty, you might not see the similarity, but their structure shows an unmistakable family resemblance.



Being bilateral, a vertical imaginary line drawn through the flower creates an identical mirror image. The outer segments, modest looking sepals, protect the buds, alternating with three petals. The middle petal or lip takes a

different form from the other two and is typically slightly lower than the other two petals, although exceptions do exist. The lip can take a variety of forms, depending on the species, e.g., wavy, covered with hairs, and more depending on the species. The lip provides a landing pad for insects attracted to the plant shape, aroma or whatever meets their arthropodal fancy. Orchids are reported as using complex, and sometimes deceptive, strategies to entice their pollinators to cross-pollinate their flowers. Loyal to their pollinators, most orchids are exclusive in their relationships with their bees, wasps, and flies, and others have healthy affairs with moths, butterflies, fungus, gnats, and even some birds.

Another commonality shared by the *Orchidaceae* is a symbiotic relationship with helpful mycelium. A part of the fungus provides a network for transporting nutrients mined from minerals and water from the environment. Up to 70% of orchids are found in the tropics, finding structural support growing on trees, lianas (woody vines) and even rocks, causing no harm.

An astonishingly rich assortment of orchid habitats is found in the Sonoran Desert, home to 26 native orchids; fourteen are considered rare, numbering less than 100 occurrences in Arizona. Orchid communities flourish between eastern Arizona and Big Ben National Park in Texas. The Chiricahua Mountains in Cochise County, Arizona, hold the title for greatest concentration of Cochise adder's-mouth orchid (*Malaxis porphyrea*) and coconut orchid (*Maxillaria tenuifolia*) in the United States.

Adapted to the extreme climatic conditions of the desert, my drought resistant orchid *Eulophia petersii*, commonly known as "desert orchid," ranges from sub-Saharan Africa to the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula. The desert orchid has 2 to 4 thick, serrated, leathery leaves, which sprout from the base of a fat, water-storing pseudobulb; it is easily confused with agaves, even including a spine at the tip. When blooming, sometime between November and April, the hearty plants can send up 8-foot high, branching spikes loaded with hundreds of long lasting, almost casually placed, purple-green, musky smelling blooms. Provided with plenty of sun, the desert orchid forms large colonies and happily commingles with other succulents. Thanks to my friend's generosity, and with a little luck, my garden eventually will be populated with some very undemanding and beautiful desert orchids.

Author's note: Although the petals and roots of some orchids in the *Eulophia* family are edible and/or medicinal, my *Eulophia petersii* was not specifically mentioned.

Kathleen McCoy
Herbie, Master Gardener, Master Naturalist

Banner Photos: Last month our guest speaker, Linda Larson said, "Find your way to the garden, and you will find your way home." Far left, Rich Larson's photo of the Bio Domes at Gardens by the Bay in faraway Singapore, center three photos feature our home demo herb garden at March Weed & Feed, and far right, Rich Larson's photo of world-famous landscape at Stourhead Garden in the UK.
Demo Garden photos by Lee Ann Aronson

March Weed & Feed



Rain gauge shows .4 inches!
Photo by Herbie Maureen.

As our volunteers gathered on a bright and clear Saturday morning, the rain gauge measured .4 inches of rain from Friday's storm! What a wonderful greeting for volunteers – the weeds pulled easily, as we tried not to put our feet into that soft moist soil and compact it into adobe. Chamomile, lavenders and

sweet peas are in full fragrant bloom, making pollinators and beneficial insects...and garden

volunteers happy. Even a few poppies graced our garden beds. Sunflowers that have bloomed gangbusters all winter were giving up the last of their seeds to our resident finches and some migratory sparrows. Many seedling sunflowers have germinated in the last 4 weeks, with flowers to come soon. The hollyhocks are resplendent - in March, earlier than "usual."

Bunnies scampered, impervious to any possible threat that we humans did not seem to pose. Oy, the damage they can do to young plants and to irrigation lines. Fresh buds on the Moringa tree are breaking, the new growth on the queen's wreath is beginning to ascend the trellis, and both pomegranates are leafing out! There is even a burst of new growth on our little elderberry. Flea beetles are happily consuming our *Oenothera*, a clear sign that Spring has sprung. Watch your *Solanacea* and Cole crops in your own gardens, as well as your caper plants. More Information

<https://extension.arizona.edu/sites/extension.arizona.edu/files/attachment/FleaBeetles.pdf>

We moved the *Eupatorium*, blue mist flower, that was on the southeast corner near the *Vitex* tree. In years past, it swallowed the caper, sprawled into the driveway, was run over by traffic and generally just got too big for the space. Re-planted at the corner where the herb garden meets the stairs and path, perhaps it will have room to trail and bloom as profusely as it aspires. Several people took home starts to add to their collections, and perhaps even share with others at a meeting or other event. This is a great pollinator plant, attracting native bees, butterflies and honeybees for nectar.

Seeds were cleaned for future sales events, the bulb garden weeded of invasive grasses, and many little lion's tail (*Leonotis leonurus*) seedlings were potted

up for volunteers and future sales. They self-sow so well in a sunny spot near the bulb garden. We celebrated the Spring return of the French tarragon, admired new growth on the white sages, pulled and pulled at the Mexican evening primrose, *Oenothera speciosa*, that the flea beetles had missed. The scented Pelargoniums/Geraniums planted last month are doing nicely. Many folks went home with some great heirloom tomato plants from MG and future Herbie Carol Stuttard; some with mints and seedling bachelor buttons as well.



Volunteers check out tomato plants brought by Carol Stuttard.
Photo by Mike Hills

Keith Lorch repaired a significant leak or two in our irrigation, and as we ran the system at the very last, we found another. So many thanks to Keith and Donna for their loyalty and irrigation skills!

For folks who hung in for the "Feed" meal at the end to chat about our gardens, Kathy Eastman's delicious soup was filling and comforting, accompanied by fruit and fancy chocolate stuffed dates. We were well sated as we made the final walk around the garden, packed up and put stuff away! We look forward to a happy garden come April and hope you can join us for whatever that month brings! The garden is always open for self-tours, so drop in and check the blooms whenever you need a break from freeway driving.

Pam Perry and Mike Hills
Demo Garden Co-Captains



In the cool morning hours, left, herbie Susan Adamczyk, Garden Captain Mike Hills, and right, Teresa Richardson, spring MG Trainee, gather at the seeding table.
Photo by Lee Ann Aronson



From left to right, Katherine Tarr, Lauren Espinoza and Bernie Arnecke head up sales at the AHA booth during the MG Spring Plant Sale. Photo by Herbie Alison Matthees

Ways and Means Report

The Arizona Herb Association has participated in a number of fundraising events in the past two months. The most recent event was the Master Gardener's Spring Plant sale. It was very well attended and we sold a number of plants and other merchandise. Several members potted up Lion's Tail seedlings from the Demo Garden to add to the selection of plants. There will be plants for sale at the next general meeting - Marjoram, Marigolds and Bachelor Buttons.

Lauren Espinoza and Bernie Arnecke have been a welcome addition to the Ways and Means team. We are in the process of re-vamping the labels on the seeds we package and sell so they are more uniform and informative. And, the three of us, along with Teri Thorpe, are getting really good at setting up and breaking down the Herb Association booth.

There is one more event in April on Sunday and Monday, April 27 and 28, for the Arizona Federation of Garden Clubs State Convention being held in Tempe. I will need one or two volunteers to help with that event. We will sell all of our regular merchandise, but not plants. Many of the attendees will be from out of town and plants don't travel well.

I will have a sign-up sheet at the April meeting.

Katherine Tarr, Ways and Means

Want to learn more about or support local farms? Check out this article:
<https://www.yourvalley.net/tempe-independent/stories/volunteers-lend-a-hand-on-some-valley-urban-farms.566475>

Cowboy Cookin' at the March Culinary

On Saturday, March 22, seven Herbies ventured to the town of Wickenburg where Annie Alvarado hosted a Culinary Brunch featuring Cowboy Cooking! It was a beautiful, breezy day, perfect for dining al fresco, as it only got up to 86 degrees!



Hostess Annie Alvarado

Janet Coleman and Zac Thayer created Cowboy Caviar with homemade tortilla chips and sweet pickled jalapeños. Heidi and Russ Maxson made her award-winning White Chili. Drew Templeton fixed vegan Cheese Grits with Garlic and Lemon Thyme, while Todd Templeton fixed Cowboy Beans. Janet also made Jalapeño Cornbread with Lime Honey Glaze. Our hostess Annie roasted Stuffed Zucchini.



The Cowboy Brunch Crowd at Annie Alvarado's

Our sweets were Kathy Eastman's Spotted Dick and Annie's Lemon Rosemary Olive Oil Cake. Spotted Dick is a bit like Irish Soda Bread, but it can be made in a Dutch oven in a campfire. Kathy learned to make it in the Australian outback.

The Lemon Rosemary Olive Oil Cake, Cornbread, and White Chili were top faves.

Join us on Saturday, April 12, at Janet Coleman's home in Mesa, when our dinner will be A Posh Picnic.

Drew Templeton, Culinary Chair

Lemon Rosemary Olive Oil Cake

Serves 8 to 10

1 cup extra virgin olive oil
2 (4-inch) fresh rosemary sprigs
nonstick cooking spray with flour for the pan
1-1/2 cups granulated sugar
2 large eggs
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
2/3 cup sour cream
grated zest of 2 lemons
1/3 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice (2 lemons)
2 cups all purpose flour, plus more for greasing the pan
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon kosher salt
Lightly sweetened whipped cream or confectioners' sugar, for serving
3 small oranges, for serving



Annie's Lemon Rosemary Olive Oil Cake

In a small skillet or saucepan, combine the oil and rosemary sprigs. Bring to a simmer over medium heat until the rosemary begins to sizzle, then turn the heat to its lowest setting and cook for 5 minutes. Set aside to cool for 20 minutes, then discard the rosemary sprigs and pour the oil into a large bowl.

Meanwhile, position a rack in the center of the oven and preheat the oven to 350° F. Spray a 9-inch round cake pan that is at least 2 inches deep (this is important; a springform pans works well for this cake) with cooking spray, line the bottom with parchment paper, then flour the sides.

Add the sugar to the bowl with the rosemary oil and whisk until combined. Add the eggs and whisk vigorously until thick and glossy. Add the vanilla, sour cream, lemon zest, and lemon juice and whisk until smooth.

In a medium bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Pour the dry ingredients into the wet ingredients and whisk gently until only small lumps remain. Pour the batter into the prepared 2-inch deep pan.

Bake until the edges of the cake are golden brown and a toothpick come out clean, 55 minutes to 1 hour. Let cool for 30 minutes in the pan before inverting onto a wire rack to cool completely.

Serve the cake at room temperature, with lightly sweetened whipped cream or a sprinkle of confectioners' sugar and the orange segments, if using. Store covered at room temperature for up to 3 days.

Heidi Maxson's Award-Winning White Chili

This makes enough for 8 to 10 people

Heidi's note: This recipe is a wonderful reminder of my friend's mother. It was her favorite recipe.

2 teaspoons olive oil
2 pounds skinless, boneless chicken breast, cut in bite-sized pieces
1 medium onion, chopped
1 15 oz. can chicken broth
2 cans (4 oz.) diced green chili (I use Macayo's)
1 teaspoon crushed garlic
2 teaspoons ground cumin
1 teaspoon dry oregano
1 teaspoon dry cilantro or 2 teaspoons fresh
1/2 teaspoon flaked red pepper
2 19 oz. cans great white northern beans
1 can garbanzo beans
1 bag frozen white corn
Monterey jack cheese, shredded, for topping
Green onions, sliced, for topping

Heat olive oil and chicken and onion.
Sauté until chicken loses its pinkness.

Add broth, chilis, garlic, cumin, oregano, cilantro, and red pepper.
Simmer 30 minutes.

Add beans and corn and simmer additional 10 minutes.

Ladle into serving bowls.
Top with cheese and onions. Serve with Fritos, if desired.



Heidi Maxson's award winning white chili

Janet Coleman's Cornbread recipe link:
[Jalapeño Cornbread with Lime Honey Glaze](#)



Cowboy Brunch views.

All brunch photos by Drew Templeton

Exploring Among Saguaros

Editor's Note: This article was written by Past AHA President Jane Haynes, in November, 1989, when she lived in Fountain Hills and wrote for the Fountain Hills Times; the botanical drawing was also done by Jane. In this article, she references the Fountain Hills Botanical Garden she and her daughter, Pat Haynes, developed.

Ten years ago in 1979, Desert Broom was the first native desert plant I illustrated in my newspaper column. There were not many of these plants then, but now there are so many growing throughout Fountain Hills; it seems time to revisit the plant.

I saw my first Desert Broom in 1974. It was in the deep, moist gully of what is now known as the Fountain Hills Botanical Garden. There were few anywhere else. Perhaps great numbers of them were bulldozed when Fountain Hills was laid out. It has taken this long for it to reclaim its native place in the desert.

The Desert Broom is a good example of how the desert repairs its damaged areas. It was one of the first plants to come back, along with the bursage, brittlebush and a few others, in disturbed soils, long before the trees and cacti. It has been said that the desert may take one hundred years to come back to its original vegetation. Yes, even longer to rid itself of off-the-road vehicle tracks. Let us be very careful with this fragile environment.



Every wash and vacant area is blooming with Desert Broom. The yellowish shrubs are male plants and the glaring white ones are female. Study this handsome shrub and its habits. It may lend itself to desert landscaping some of your property.

The Desert Broom, or Broom Baccharis (*Baccharis sarothroides*) or "escoba amarga" or "romerillo" in Spanish, belongs to the sunflower family and is the desert member of the *Baccharis* genus. (Another species, seepwill, is common to waterways and irrigation ditches). Desert Broom grows three to six feet high, at 1,000 to 5,500 feet elevation, mostly in sandy washes and slopes, and along roadsides where there is added moisture. It is an evergreen shrub with vivid green branch-lets and black stems growing in an upright broom-like fashion. In midsummer, however, it has a dull appearance, which greens up after the summer rains. The

branch stems are four or five-sided, finely grooved and somewhat sticky. (The shrub has been called the "Rosin-bush.") The leaves are alternate, narrow, entire and somewhat spatulate—almost absent at flowering time.

Desert Broom are dioecious shrubs, having unisexual flowers, that is male and female flower heads growing on separate plants. The male and female plants are easily distinguished in their flowering and fruiting stages. The male flower heads are inconspicuous, yellow-white and rather pincushion-like. Their color is mostly due to the pollen. The female plant is much more spectacular and attractive looking when in bloom. Its flower heads, when in fruit, display glaring-white pappus hairs that make the shrub appear that a snow has just fallen on the tops of its bunchy green branches.



A female Desert Broom in bloom December 2024. Dried leaves, not the flowers, may be made into an herbal ice tea (Using 1 tablespoon dried leaf per cup of water, pour boiling water over, then steep 5 minutes.) that tastes like green tea and will greatly refresh you in the heat.

Photos Lee Ann Aronson.

Right, male Desert Broom leaves and male flower bracts March 2025.

Trim 2 inches off tips of leaves from either male or female Desert Broom to dry for herbal tea.



The pappus hairs—so characteristic of the *Compositae* or sunflower family, are a sort of fluffy crown at the top of each achene or seed. Each sails away on the winds to be carried wide and far. (Editor's note: the sunflower family is now considered to be of the daisy family, *Asteraceae*.)

It is said that *Baccharis sarothroides* is poisonous to livestock. But, among some Indian tribes, the twigs are chewed to relieve toothache. (The taste is very astringent.) As another use, it has served as a make-shift broom for many an Indian, prospector and pioneer.

Ants and Butterflies...Oh, My!



Species Shown: Western Pygmy-Blue

LYCAENIDAE (BLUES, HAIRSTREAKS)

- ✓ Black/white banded antennae
- ✓ Intricate colorful/iridescent markings, small in size
- ✓ Feathery-tipped wing filaments



Species Shown: Great Purple Hairstreak

<https://azstateparks.com/arizona-butterflies>

When you think of butterflies, you don't think of ants. However, there is one family of butterflies that has an interesting relationship with ants. The *Lycaenidae* family, also called the Gossamer Wing family, is the second largest family of butterflies and makes up 30% of known butterfly species. There are about 4,700 species worldwide, and of those, 2,500 species depend upon ants to care for their caterpillars and protect them from predators.

Gossamer Wing butterflies are found from southeastern Oregon and southern Idaho to South America, and east through the southwestern quarter of the United States to Nebraska, Arkansas and Missouri. These tiny creatures live for a year or less, with some species living only a few months.

The family includes blues, coppers, hairstreaks and harvester butterflies. These tiny butterflies have delicate wings that remind people of sheer, gossamer fabric, hence the name "Gossamer Wing."

The mutualistic relationship some Gossamer butterflies have with ants is called myrmecophily, which means "ant love." Three species of ants (*Formicinae*, *Myrmicinae* and *Dolichoderinae*) are known to protect Gossamer caterpillars. "Ant love" is shown in many ways, depending upon the variety of caterpillar.

Some Gossamer caterpillars have pores on their skin that secrete a sugary substance that attracts ants. While feeding on this sweet food, the ants keep predators away from the caterpillars. Others caterpillars have tentacle-like organs on their backs that pop out and secrete pheromones that alert ants to possible enemies. The ants gather to protect

themselves, while also protecting the caterpillars from predators.

Some caterpillars secrete a pheromone that lulls the ants and encourages them to stay close by, which helps protect the caterpillars from predators. Others emit pheromones that make ants think they are ant larvae. The caterpillars are carried into the ant's nest and fed regurgitated leaves or flowers until they turn into pupae. Once these tiny butterflies emerge from their chrysalises, they crawl out of the ant's nest, spread their wings to dry, and fly away.

It is amazing how many ways Gossamer Wing caterpillars rely upon ants for protection.



Ant tending a Lycaenid caterpillar
<https://kids.kiddle.co/Myrmecophily>

Editor's note: This article was written by Karen Bowen, Pacific Region Butterfly Chair. It is reprinted from the February, 2025, issue of Waconiah, the newsletter of the Pacific Region Garden Clubs, Inc. (Washington, Arizona, California, Oregon, Nevada, Idaho, Arizona, Hawaii). It was shared with us by President Tammy Aragaki.

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!



DON'T MISS OUT!

**"Wild and Water Wise"
AFGC State Convention
April 27, 2025**

And

**Pacific Region Garden Clubs
2025 Convention (PR25)
April 28 – April 30, 2025
Early Registration Closes March 1;
Online Registration Closes April 20**

As Herbies, we're also members of the Arizona Federation of Garden Clubs (AFGC), Pacific Region Garden Clubs (PRGC), and National Garden Clubs (NGC). One of the really cool things about this multi-tiered membership is that each of these entities host events where we can meet other garden-minded people, attend educational sessions and hands-on workshops, view beautiful floral displays, and even learn about (or get involved!) with garden club leadership.

During the last week of April, AFGC is hosting the 81st Pacific Region Convention (PR25) along with its own state convention and 91st Annual Meeting at Wyndham Phoenix Airport/Tempe. And we are all invited to attend!

The conventions share one theme - **Wild and Water Wise** - and will feature keynote speakers from Arizona's Water Conservation District, the National Forest Service, and Boyce Thompson Arboretum. There will be hands-on workshops, tours of local gardens (including our own Demo Garden!), and delicious meals where we can meet other garden club and plant society members from Pacific Region's eight states.

Educational sessions on a variety of topics, such as "Wild West" Native Tea Plants (by AHA's own Lee



Ann Aronson), Low-water Gardening (by Past Herbie President Liz Lonetti), birding, date palm pollination, and plant grafting sessions will also be held.



There will also be a floral design demonstration by renowned designer, Brent Leech of Arizona Flower Market, and a membership workshop presented by NGC Membership chair Robin Pokorski.

For those interested in learning about floral design, outstanding floral arrangements created by members will be exhibited in the "Arts in Bloom" flower show, and a hands-on floral design class will provide an opportunity to try your hand at making an arrangement. If you're lucky, you might win one of the terrific gift baskets made by our state garden clubs that will be raffled off. You can also purchase raffle tickets for special one-of-a-kind items and bid on high-end items in the silent auction.

The schedule of events for both conventions is found at <https://azgardenclubs.com/conventions/>. Several pre- and post-convention activities have also been planned.

	E Empower Leadership training and ideas to bring back to your club!
	D Design Hands-on floral design opportunities
	G Garden Garden tours, workshops and speakers on various topics
	E Enlighten and Educate Keynotes and educational sessions from experts in their fields

You can register online until April 20 at azgardenclubs.com/conventions/. Mail-in registration is available, but must be postmarked no later than April 10. Register today!

Any questions, please email azgardenconvention@gmail.com.

The AFGC / PRGC 2025 conventions offer something for all garden club and plant society members. Bring a friend, spouse or family member for even more fun, and be sure to sign up today!

You can also support AFGC by purchasing tickets for their 50/25/25 raffle. Cash proceeds from the raffle will be split, with 50% going to AFGC and 25% going to each of 2 winners. Winning tickets will be drawn at the AFGC Gala on April 27. You need not be present to win.

Herbies can purchase raffle tickets at our April meeting (April 3) or April Weed & Feed (April 5).

Arizona Herb Association
PO Box 63101
Phoenix, AZ 85082
www.AZHerb.org
Facebook.com: Arizona Herb Association



Inside this Month's Issue:

- 1,000 Gardens with Linda Larson
- March Herb of the Month: Cardamom with Diane Knudsen
- About Those Orchids by Kathleen McCoy
- Cowboy Cookin' Culinary
- March Weed & Feed
- Native Desert Broom by Jane Haynes
- AFGC Convention

We can complain because rose bushes have thorns, or rejoice because thorn bushes have roses.
Abraham Lincoln