



High on the Desert Conference—Coming soon!!!

The 23rd Annual High Desert Gardening & Landscaping Conference will be held on Thursday and Friday, March 10 and 11, 2016 on the Cochise College campus in Sierra Vista. The conference is presented by the Cochise County Master Gardener Association in conjunction with the University of Arizona Sierra Vista Cooperative Extension.

Several fun and interesting topics are lined up for this year—here are just a few . . . attracting birds into your garden, how to build the right house for the right bird, common plant problems, making planters from hypertufa, growing roses in the high desert, cactus and succulent propagation, growing and care of fruit trees, straw bale gardening, and much more. The conference is always an educational and motivational experience for anyone with an interest in gardening.

Watch for registration and the complete program on the Cochise County Master Gardeners website in January. For information one can also call the Cooperative Extension Office on the U of A Campus 520-458-8278, ext. 2141,

or visit <http://cals.arizona.edu/cochise/mg/high-desert-gardening-and-landscaping-conference>

Scholarships Available

If you'd like to attend the 23rd Annual High Desert Gardening & Landscape Conference on a full scholarship with all expenses paid, then here's a great opportunity!

The Cochise County Master Gardeners Association is awarding up to three full scholarships to the conference to be held Thursday and Friday, March 10 & 11, 2016.

Applicants are invited to submit an essay on one of the following topics:

- 1) Gardening for food production,
- 2) Landscaping with native plants, or
- 3) Environmental stewardship. Essays must be 750 to 1,000 words in length and be suitable for publication.

All references and authorities cited must be properly attributed.

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COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE AND LIFE SCIENCES
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
Cochise County

Cochise County Cooperative Extension

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Essays should be submitted as an attachment (plain text format) in an email addressed to

ccmgasecretary@gmail.com

Subject: Conference Scholarship

Entries must be received by close of business on February 11, 2016. Entries will then be judged by a committee of Master Gardeners appointed by the President of CCMGA. The awardees will be notified by February 20, 2016. Your essay could even be published in the Master Gardener Newsletter.

Give it a try! Not only could you win a full registration to the conference, but it's amazing all the things you learn when you have to do a little research to write a paper! It's actually quite enjoyable!

Jan Groth, Master Gardener
Program Coordinator



A Workshop for Roses!

Roses in the high desert have finally found some dormancy for their rest period. It's time to perform their annual pruning in order for them to develop strong new canes and produce beautiful blooms. Some folks are intimidated by rose pruning but no need to be!

The Cochise County Master Gardeners will present a rose workshop, sponsored by the U of A South Foundation, entitled *Roses in the High Desert*. The instructor will be Lauren Kettenbach, Certified Rosarian, who has directed the rose gardens in the Pima County Demonstration Gardens for more than 15 years. The workshop is set for Saturday, February 6 from 10:00 AM to noon. Confirmation of the workshop date will be on our Cochise County Master Gardener website under Events.

The first 45 minutes will be spent with Lauren in Room 503 on campus for a talk on rose care and preliminary pruning demonstration followed

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Cuttings 'N' Clippings

✿ Follow the Cochise County Master Gardeners at:

<http://cals.arizona.edu/cochise/mg/>

For more information contact Valerie at:

valeriedavidson@email.arizona.edu

You can also follow them on Facebook at:

www.Facebook.com/CochiseCountyMasterGardeners

✿ The Master Gardeners are at the Sierra Vista Farmers Market on the **first Thursday of each month** to answer questions and offer resources for common garden and landscape problems.

✿ Check out the Water Wise web site to see what's happening in 2016 at:

<http://waterwise.arizona.edu/>

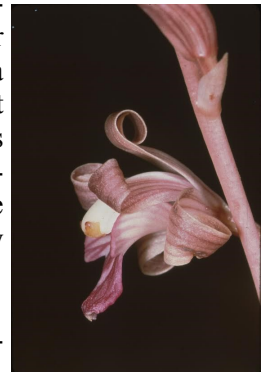
✿ The Cochise Chapter of the Arizona Native Plant Society holds monthly programs in the Cochise County Community Development Office Conference Room,

4001 Foothills Dr. (corner of Highway 92 and Foothills), Sierra Vista at 5:00 PM January 15 with Ron Coleman, Botanical Author and Photographer—*The Orchid Crescent*.

✿ "What is that Plant?" ID service is available to the public by Herbarium volunteers. If you are wondering what that naturally growing or naturalized plant is, getting an identification is easy. All you need to do is visit the Cochise County Herbarium website:

www.cochisecountyherbarium.org

and click on the Plant IDs tab to learn how!



It's Fruit Tree Pruning Season . . .

. . . and just in time, the Cochise County Master Gardeners are presenting a fruit tree pruning lesson and demonstration on Saturday, January 16 from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM.

Bill Cook, Extension Specialist from Greenlee County and one of Arizona's foremost authorities on fruit trees, will be giving the workshop. Bill is always full of such valuable information and helps take the mystery out of the art of fruit tree pruning methods.

The workshop will be held in the home orchard of Dan and Carol Wood, where Bill will be working on apple, pomegranate, fig, peach, and plum trees. Directions to their home: 1565 Plaza Dominguin, East on Foothills from Hwy 92, 4th right is Plaza Dominguin.

See you in the orchard with Bill Cook on the 16th!

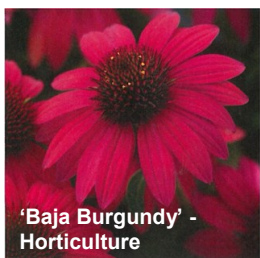


Ready, Set... Grow!

Most of us gardeners more than likely have that list of plants or new varieties we plan to purchase because they will make an excellent addition to our current landscape and garden because of a particular characteristic, or because it's a perfect fit for the microclimate and water requirements. This will be a two series article that will present to you the new varieties coming to market in 2016. So get your list and get ready to add some plants! Since there is an extensive amount, the focus for the first article will be on perennials that are conducive for our growing region; the second article will focus on some incredible annuals.

There are about 20 to showcase for our area, but I will need to focus on those that stand out the most, otherwise this would make for one lengthy article. A list of the new varieties not showcased here but is still conducive for our areas will be at the end, along with the sources.

First is our *Echinacea*! From Darwin Perennials, <http://www.darwinperennials.com/>. There are two, that I believe if planted together as a mix, would make a striking display all alone. The



'Baja Burgundy' - Horticulture

Echinacea Sombrero Baja Burgundy is a rich, deep burgundy on sturdy 26 inch high by 20 inch wide branched, highly floriferous, and drought resistant once established. Also, the

Echinacea Double Scoop Lemon Cream that is well branched with



'Lemon Cream' - Horticulture

double blooms that open yellow and mature to a rich cream.

From Plants Nouveau, <http://plantsnouveau.com/>, *Echinacea* 'Rainbow Marcella' which is sturdy-stemmed that will not flop hence its



'Rainbow Marcella' - Plantsnouveau.com

bushy 18 to 24 inch height and width, very floriferous, with tangerine orange color that changes to a deep mauve from the center outward to tips, and drought tolerant once established.

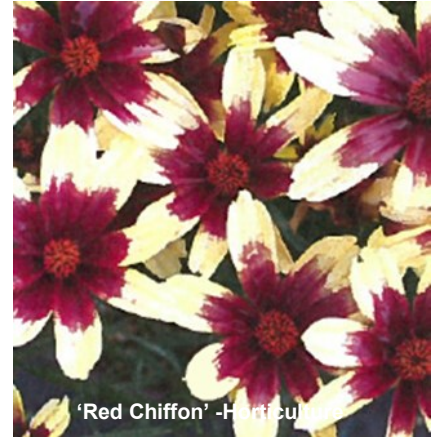
Last of the *Echinacea* is from Skagit Gardens, <http://www.skagitgardens.com/>, *Echinacea* 'Golden Skipper'. It attracts butterflies with its striking yellow color



'Golden Skipper' - Horticulture

and is named after a butterfly of the same color, with sturdy and compact 18 inch tall and wide structure, and drought tolerant once established.

From Sunny Border Nurseries, <http://www.sunnyborder.com/>, *Coreopsis* 'Red Chiffon'. This one



'Red Chiffon' - Horticulture

comes out of their Satin & Lace series, which is a sterile hybrid from native tickseeds that results in continuous flowering from June into fall. Other characteristics include extreme disease resistance, 18-inch height, dark green foliage, and large yellow with vibrant red center blooms that spread outward as temperatures get colder.

Now for some popular trees and shrubs! The *Vitex agnus-castus* 'Blue Puffball' from Bailey Nurseries: First Editions,

<http://www.baileynurseries.com/>.



'Blue Puffball' -Horticulture

Forming a perfect ball shape with thick foliage, this new chaste tree is a perfect addition to those with small spaces as it is a genetic dwarf that only reaches 3 feet high and wide. The 'Blue Puffball' blooms from June through September with deep blue, fragrant flowers and requires moderate water. Also, from Bailey

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(Ready, Set ...Grow! continued from page 3)

Nurseries is the new *Lagerstroemia* 'Ruffled Red Magic'. The flowers on this tree offer carnation-like, glowing red blossoms, which contrast beautifully against the dark green foliage. These trees truly show off their anthocyanin content in the fall with their orange-red leaf colors! The 'Ruffled Red Magic' reaches a height of 12 feet and width of 8 feet.



Last but not least, from David Austin English Roses, <http://www.davidaustinroses.com/american/advanced.asp>, is 'The Lady of the Lake'. This new rose is a rambler that grows to approximately 10 – 15 feet which makes it perfect for a trellis, arch, wall, or small tree. It blooms large sprays of semi-double (2 inches across), citrus fragrant, pink blush flowers set off with bold golden stamens.

Now here is the list of the other new perennial varieties coming in 2016 to keep an eye out for:

- *Achillea* 'Little Moonshine' (Yarrow) – Blooms of Bressingham, <http://bloomsofbressinghamplants.com/>
- *Rosa* spp. Olivia Rose Austin – David Austin English Roses, <http://www.davidaustinroses.com/american/advanced.asp>
- *Lagerstroemia* 'Red Rooster' – Gardener's Confidence, <http://gardenersconfidence.com/>
- *Lagerstroemia* 'x Pink Pig' – Gardener's Confidence, <http://gardenersconfidence.com/>
- *Lavandula stoechas* 'Bandera Purple' – Kieft Seed, <http://www.panamseed.com/perennials.aspx>
- *Campanula carpatica* 'Rapido' – Kieft Seed, <http://www.panamseed.com/perennials.aspx>
- *Dianthus barbatus interspecific* Jolt series, 'Jolt Pink' – Panamerican Seed, <http://www.panamseed.com/>
- *Baptisia* Decadence series, 'Sparkling Sapphires' False Indigo – Proven Winners Perennials, <https://www.provenwinners.com/plant-program/proven-winners-perennial>
- *Hellaborus hybridus* 'Evening Mist' – Sunny Border Nurseries, <http://www.sunnyborder.com/>
- *Bergenia* 'Flirt' (Pigsqueak) – Terra Nova Nurseries, <http://www.terranovanurseries.com/>
- *Hibiscus* 'Mars Madness' (Hardy Hibiscus) – Walters Gardens, <http://www.waltersgardens.com/>

Be advised, although some of these new varieties say full sun and low water, they were not tested for their durability in our specific Southwest region, therefore specific location in the garden and additional water should be considered especially during summer months. Keep an eye out for the microclimates produced in your very own garden because of structures nearby creating shade during part of the day, or the orientation of your home to the sun in summer and winter months.

Joshua Sherman, M.S., Commercial Horticulture Area Agent

2016 Master Gardener Class Series Begins!

The Master Gardener class series for 2016 begins Wednesday, January 27, 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM and runs for 16 weeks through May 18. Classes take place on the U of A Sierra Vista campus, Room 503, with an occasional field trip.

Several topics will be covered throughout the curriculum such as our desert soils, water & irrigation, pruning, fertilizing, vegetable, herb, and fruit tree gardening, tree care, common insect and plant diseases, native and desert adapted plants, pollinator habitats, landscape concepts, theme gardens, and more.

For information and registration for the class call Valerie Davidson at the U of A Sierra Vista Cooperative Extension Office, 520-458-8278, ext. 2141, or call Jan Groth, Master Gardener Program Coordinator, at 520-559-7078. Application for class can be submitted through the week before class begins.

Any certified Master Gardeners from previous class years are always welcome to attend any classes of your choice, at no charge, throughout the series for refresher or motivation. . . . a benefit of being a certified Master Gardener! The first week of January, the curriculum schedule will be published on the website on the **Events** page. The order of the schedule throughout the series is always subject to change, but the website will reflect any change as it occurs.

Note: Mention of commercial products or trade names is made with the understanding that no endorsement is implied and no discrimination is intended by UA Cooperative Extension.

(A Workshop for Roses continued from page 2)

by a 15 minute break offering coffee and snacks! The next hour will take us out into the Rose Garden at the U of A Sierra Vista, where Lauren will provide further instruction and demonstration on the roses there. Please bring your pruners if you have some, as we'd like each attendee to be able to practice on one rose bush. We will have several extra pruners here as well.

Cost for the workshop is \$10.00 per person or \$15.00 per couple. All money and/or donations will be donated to the Rose Garden Invigoration Project on the Sierra Vista campus, where we hope to restore the Rose Garden to beautiful glory by springtime for everyone to enjoy.

It's a Bloomin' Cochise County Native Plant of the Month—Mistletoe

What native plant sports seasonally festive berries now? Mistletoe is the end-of-year choice and traditionally marks the beginning of the new. A kiss under mistletoe promises attachment, at which the mistletoe is a master, with its sticky seeds (dropped by berry-loving birds) that glue to host branches, that still in the berry are already starting to poke out their tiny haustoria (modified roots). This hemi-parasite (half parasite) pushes its root through bark and into the inner transporting tissues of its host for water and minerals. Having chlorophyll, it can photosynthesize and make some of its own food, but it's the liquid electrolyte it must steal.

How does this affect the tree? Is there ever a degree of partnership? More likely it is tolerance, though sometimes a fatal battle for water. Mistletoe does not normally kill a healthy tree, but if stressed by other factors the host can succumb. Lowland mesquites with poor drainage can overgrow in wet years, but become infested then die if drought years follow. I have, however, seen many healthy trees elsewhere with dead balls or swellings which once were sites of living mistletoe. Pruning the unwanted growth helps minimally as it can re-grow; cutting the branch can be more effective and watering helps the tree that's losing too much water to its guest.

As winter approaches I see dense masses of grayish, greenish, and reddish mistletoe hanging in bare desert trees. Many are loaded with white and pink translucent berries and are at the same time producing new flowers. There are male flowers and there are female flowers, often on separate plants (dioecious) and sometimes on

the same (monoecious) plant. Though small and not flowery, they can sometimes be intoxicatingly fragrant.

Berries attract birds. Phainopeplas, the silky flycatchers, will territorially stake and defend a good mistletoe tree where it can gorge on the berries, its primary winter food, defecating and regurgitating the viscid seeds or wiping seed-sticky bills on host branches for further propagation of its food-supplier. Mockingbirds, finches, and woodpeckers are attracted to the berries, also.

Livestock and rodents relish twigs and fruits. Are these berries edible to humans? There are varying opinions: many snack on them and native folks traditionally cooked them into mush or dried them into cakes. The Mayo, Pima, and O'odam have used mistletoe as medicine, as have Mexican culture. Perhaps they eat some, but not many. Mistletoes have a somewhat quirky chemistry, sometimes bordering on toxicity and can affect folks differently.

There are many types of mistletoes, and the same ones growing on different tree species will have varying chemistries, as well as morphological variations which in some appear to mimic the host.

Desert Mistletoe (*Phoradendron californicum*) lives on many desert legumes: Mesquite, *Acacia constricta*, *A. greggii*, Palo Verde, Ironwood.



Desert Mistletoe ball on whitethorn

It can also be found on Creosote (*Larrea tridentata*), and according to various sources, 'rarely' on *Condalia*. In our area, it is actually quite abundant on the mysterious beautiful Snakewood (*Condalia warnockii* var. *kearneyana*), a dense, somewhat spiny evergreen bush/tree with minuscule leaves and tiny berries, which make dark spots on desert scrub limestone landscapes. Desert Mistletoe has mildly sweet pinkish berries and leaves reduced to scales. Its round masses are particularly dense this year of much rain.

Yellow Mistletoe (*P. serotinum* sub sp. *macrophyllum*, *tomentosum* var *macrophyllum*, a.k.a. *Phoradendron leucarpum*) has large oval yellow-



Yellow Mistletoe on ash—female



Yellow Mistletoe—male

green leaves and pure white berries. It parasitizes riparian trees: Ash, Sycamore, Cottonwood, Willow, Walnut. According to Amadeo Rea in *At the Desert's Green Edge*, these berries taste horrible!

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(Spurges continued from page 5)



English or Cory's Mistletoe (*Phoradendron coryae* and many other taxonomically confusing names), the traditional holiday mistletoe, grows on Oaks, has white berries and oval or obovate greenish leaves, more like its host **Juniper Mistletoe** (*P. juniperum*) is yellowish with a scaly shape that appears to mimic juniper leaves. Used into modern times as medicine by New Mexicans: for birthing, bleeding, migraines, as vasoconstrictor, may not be safe with high blood pressure.

Dwarf Mistletoe (genus *Arceuthobium*) seen on several species of conifers at higher elevations, golden yellow one on pines, sticking out on Ponderosa trunks, and a bluish white one on fir which made my arm turn cold when I held it! Mysterious Mistletoes!

Happy New Year and Tree-Gazing All!!

*MiMi Kamp, Guest Author
Herbalist, Plant Illustrator, Cochise
County Herbarium Curator, taxonomist and consultant*

A Goodbye and . . . A Hello!

It is with mixed emotions that I say “goodbye” to all of you from my position with Water Wise. After 20 years at the helm, it is time for me to “pass the glass” (so to speak) to a terrific new Water Wise team, and for me to dream up a new life which begins with spending time with my family. Starting January 1, 2016, our new Water Wise team will be: Mark Apel, our County Community Development Agent, who will oversee Water Wise, our own Water Wise Sandra Hurlbut who will continue with the residential/commercial programs, and our new hire, Kathryn Ramirez coming down from Pima County Extension, who will head up the Water Wise Youth program and help in the residential and commercial sectors. It has been a terrific 20 years working with Water Wise and with a great community, and after a bit of a breather, I look forward to being involved in other ways (Carolyn won’t let me off the hook for writing some Bloomin’ articles!). As we usher in this New Year, please stop by the Cooperative Extension office and say “hello” to our new Water Wise team!

*Cado Daily, Water Resources
Coordinator, Water Wise*



Wettie sez...
BE *Water Wise!*

January Reminders

- ◆ Winter prune
- ◆ Remove old mulch & replace
- ◆ Dig tree holes
- ◆ Prepare soil for spring
- ◆ Water periodically
- ◆ Stratify seeds
- ◆ Fertilize asparagus
- ◆ General garden clean-up

Sierra Vista Offers Christmas Tree Recycling

Recycle your Christmas tree free of charge by dropping it off at the City’s compost facility on Hwy 90. If you opted for a live, potted tree, you can donate it to the City for use in future landscaping projects. City refuse customers can arrange for a special curbside pickup by calling 520-458-7530.



Cochise County Master
Gardener Newsletter Editor
Carolyn Gruenhagen

“The wise gardener anticipates June in January.”

-Unknown