



High on the Desert Cochise County Master Gardener Newsletter

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PRESS RELEASE

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The Glassy Winged Sharpshooter is the primary carrier of Pierce's Disease, an infection of the grapevine that has no viable remedy and has the potential to wipe-out the \$18 million wine growing industry here in Arizona and impact vineyard crops.

In addition, the pest stands to threaten one of Arizona's key landscaping ornamentals – the oleander.

New Information on Pest Threatening Arizona's Vineyards

(Phoenix) – The Arizona Department of Agriculture has begun eradication of Glassy Winged Sharpshooters in Sierra Vista this week and also continues to ascertain the magnitude of the problem in that region. The insect, initially found in the stock of a nursery in Sierra Vista, Arizona, stands to cause harm to key portions of Arizona's agriculture industry.

What is new?

- Treatments continue in approximately a 1/2 mile radius from the nursery in Sierra Vista, Arizona.
- 719 traps have strategically been placed up to 1 1/2 miles from the initial find.

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- 26 adults (13 males and 13 females) and 4 egg masses have been detected to date.

What was the timeline of events?

- A male and female were first detected in Sierra Vista on August 31, 2005 in a trap that was set out as part of more than 800 traps throughout the state to monitor for this pest.
- On September 8, 2005 an additional 140 traps were placed in key areas around the Sierra Vista nursery to determine the magnitude of this problem.



What is the history of this pest and how does it operate?

The glassy-winged sharpshooter is native to the southeastern United States. It was first found in California in 1990 and has threatened many of the vineyards in that region. This leafhopper is a large insect, almost a half-inch in length. It is a dark brown to black. Its head and back are stippled with either ivory or yellowish spots. It receives its name from its transparent wings. The glassy-

winged sharpshooter can fly up to one-quarter of a mile, and it frequently appears in high numbers. The insect is able to survive winter temperatures dipping as low as 20 degrees Fahrenheit.

The insect overwinters as an adult. It begins laying egg masses from late February through May. The year's first generation matures as adults from May through August. The year's second generation begins as egg masses laid from June through September. It is this generation that produces the next year's offspring.

High on the Desert

It's official—the 13th annual High Desert Gardening & Landscaping Conference sponsored by Cochise County Master Gardeners Association in conjunction with the University of Arizona will be held Friday afternoon, May 5 and all day Saturday, May 6, 2006 at Buena High School in Sierra Vista. Plans are under way right now to make this another outstanding event in the community. So, be sure to mark your calendars and plan to attend!

The spring Water Wise/Master Gardener Xeriscape Garden Tour will be held on Sunday, May 7 from 1 to 4:00 p.m.

**Cuttings
'N'
Clippings**

* The next CCMGA meeting is 5:00 p.m. Thursday, November 3, 2005 at the University of Arizona South campus, Room B160 in the new building. Master Gardener, Gary Gruenhagen, will present a Power Point talk on *Drought—Past, Present, and Future*.

* The November *Water Wise* workshop will be held November 5 from 9:00—10:30 a.m. at the University of Arizona South Public Meeting Room. The topic is *Plumbing Know-How for the Homeowner*. This will be the last workshop for 2005.

* The Sierra Vista Farmer's Market was a huge success. It is closed now but will reopen in April. Watch for a details.

Garden Tip 423

The first thing I read in the Sunday morning edition of the Arizona Daily Star is John Begeman's gardening article. John's articles are not only full of practical advice on gardening in the Southwest, but are always timely. For example, his article in the October 30 edition of the Star was on cold-hardy flowers to brighten our winter days. Did you know you can read John's articles online? To see a list of past articles indexed by subject, point your browser at <http://ag.arizona.edu/gardening/news/articles/>.

Robert E. Call

Robert E. Call
Extension Agent, Horticulture

Carolyn Gruenhagen
Editor

In a Desert Garden

Chrysanthemum–The Mums

I have always loved mums for fall color and am surprised how well they do in our climate. I have a whole collection that grows every year. Mums come in many shapes and colors. Of course they do not like our alkaline soils and are best grown in raised beds or containers. These plants like rich well draining and moist soil, but they are forgiving and do not mind if they dry out from time to time. They cannot be in standing water or kept too wet. That will make their stems woody and leggy, and the lower leaves will yellow or blacken and fall off.

I grow mine in big clay pots and I like their foliage even when they are not in bloom. In our region, most varieties bloom in spring and in fall. The family of Chrysanthemum includes many different plants. Some are even native to Alaska like Shasta Daisies (*C. maximum*) with white flowers. There is also an Alaskan strain called *C. arcticum* – Arctic Chrysanthemum with white or pink flowers. Unfortunately these northern varieties do not like our hot dry summers.

If we had no winter, the spring would not be so pleasant: If we did not sometimes taste of adversity, prosperity would not be so welcome.

-Anne Bradstreet



Mums, as we know them, are native to China, Japan, and Europe. Then there are all the lovely hybrids, called Florist Mums, with fancy colors and flower forms. I always find another unusual one I just have to have. Colors are shades of white, yellow, pink to reddish and almost black. Flower forms are single daisy to double, pompom, quill, and spider. These plants do best in our climate.

The painted Daisies, Pyrethrum or *C. cocconeum* belong also to this family of mums, as does the Marguerite (*C. frutescens*). This plant is beautiful but not hardy in our winter. Costmary, the European herb, is a Chrysanthemum also.

I love container gardening and I have lots of pots I can interchange for long lasting color. Mums need big pots as they grow quite fast. I deadhead, that means I cut off spent flowers, prolonging the flowering season well into winter. On freezing nights I throw a blanket over the pots. I also like to add winter blooming annuals to these pots like Pansies, Alyssum, Carnations and Lobelias. This kind of color is very nice in the dead of winter. Mums can be manipulated, by pinching, giving more blossoms. They also can be trained into different shapes. Last

year I trained a bright pink variety into a cascade which was very attractive. This year I trained a yellow variety into a standard, a stem with a ball of leaves and flowers, and this looks very interesting too. The stem is not very strong and it has to be staked. If I find the time, I play around with my plants. Mums are fast growing and every two years they have the tendency to outgrow the pot. They need to be divided. This is best done in late winter or early spring. Dig up the clump and cut it in half or even in quarters and repot. Mums like fertilizer heavy on nitrogen. I use fish emulsion for mine. These plants are not bothered by pests, at least I have never had any problems. They like full sun, but in May and June when it is very hot and dry, I give them afternoon shade.

Angel Rutherford,
Master Gardener

November Reminders

- ◆ This is a good time to install a drip system
- ◆ Replace summer mulch with fresh mulch
- ◆ Start a winter herb garden
- ◆ Protect plants from frost (The bulletin Frost and Frost Protection is available from the Cooperative Extension offices.)

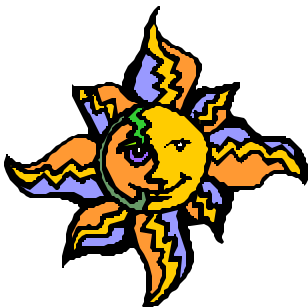
The Virtual Gardener—Winter Weather

For those of us living in Cochise County, our summer rainfall this year was pretty good. In fact, I was whining a little last month about the tremendous growth of weeds we had this summer because of the rain. This month I will take a look at what the boffins are predicting we can expect for temperatures and precipitation this winter.

As you probably already know, on average in Sierra Vista we get about 40 percent of our annual 15 inches of precipitation during the winter. That means we can expect about 6 inches of precipitation during an average winter. Whether we get that much or not depends on—you guessed it—the El Niño. Here's how it's supposed to work.

El Niño conditions (warm waters off the coast of South America) favor the development of a strong subtropical jet stream that brings moisture to Arizona. Conversely, La Niña conditions (cool waters of the coast of South America) tend to shunt winter moisture away from Arizona to the Northwest Coast. But the correlation between El Niño conditions and wet winters is not as strong as the correlation between La Niña conditions and dry winters.

Winter temperatures in the Southwest also correlate with the state of the El Niño Southern



Oscillation (ENSO). El Niño conditions that bring winter moisture also bring more cloudiness and cooler temperatures. Conversely, La Niña conditions bring clear skies and warmer winters.

So much for theory. What about this winter? According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Web site (http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso_advisory/) ENSO conditions are likely to remain neutral for the next three to six months. This means that forecasters don't have much to hang their hats on to make a long-term prediction about this winter. The best guess of NOAA forecasters (<http://www.noaanews.noaa.gov/stories2005/s2525.htm>) is that this winter (December-February) for us in Southeast Arizona is likely to be a little warmer than average but it's a toss-up as to whether it will be wetter or drier than normal (see maps).

If you would like to know more about our climate and the processes that influence it, go to the Climate Assessment for the Southwest (CLIMAS) Web site at <http://www.ispe.arizona.edu/climas/pubs/CL1-99.html> and download CLIMAS Report Series, CL1-99 (*The Climate of the Southwest*), a 41 page PDF document that will give you lots of information (maybe more than you care to know) about our climate and the processes that influence it.

Until next time, happy surfing!

Gary A. Gruenhagen, Master Gardener
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Save Water Save \$ Make Your Home or Business Water Wise

Available Free of Charge through the University of Arizona Cooperative Extension:

- ◆ *Water Wise* bulletins containing practical, low-cost tips for reducing water use and conserving natural resources.
- ◆ *Water Wise* audit and guide to resource conservation, a systematic check-list with cost saving alternatives for reducing water use around your home or business and conserving your property's natural resources. For residents of the upper San Pedro River watershed, a water conservation specialist is available on request to help conduct the audit and suggest water saving alternatives.
- ◆ *Water Wise* consultation for new and current property owners, home builders, and developers. Learn how to incorporate water saving features into home construction or remodeling, landscaping, and storm water management.
- ◆ *Water Wise* info line: 458-8278, Ext. 2139 call with your questions or to make an appointment.

Cado Daily
Water Wise Educator

The Agent's Observations

Q I have about three dozen gladiolus and only one had a bloom this year. It was not in the group with the others. Any suggestions why no blooms?

A There are several reasons why your gladiolus did not produce flowers this year. There are about 200 cultivars of "glads," each having various cultural requirements. Gladiolus flowers are produced from an underground storage part of the plant called a corm (a swollen stem). It is like a lily bulb or an iris rhizome in some ways but also different. It is similar because it is an underground food storage plant organ that produces flower and leaf buds and stores food for next year. It is important to let glads die down before cutting leaves back. The leaves are needed as long as possible to "refill" the corm with food for the following growing season. If the leaves are cut back too soon, over time the corm will become smaller and weaker. At some point if the corm gets too small it will no longer produce any flowers. The leaf buds are easily produced by the plant and will be produced regardless. However, the flower buds will only be initiated from leaf buds if the corm "senses" that it has gone through a cold winter. It



does this by biologically recording the temperature around it. If the temperatures are not low enough, the corm will act as if there was no winter and produce only leaf buds. If the temperatures are low enough for long enough the corm will then sense that winter has been experienced and produce flower buds. Assuming you left the corms in the ground to over winter, a plant process called vernalization may occur. In the case of gladiolus, several weeks of temperatures in the 30's and 40's are required to initiate flower buds. This length of time varies with different varieties or cultivars. Gladiolus corms are also sensitive to freezing temperatures. If left in the ground in freezing climates they may be killed if not properly mulched. If left in climates with warm winters they may not

flower. The last reason for not flowering is if they are stored with other plants such as fruit like apples or pears. Gladiolus corms can be stored in a refrigerator (verisalized) through the winter to encourage flower bud formation for the next year before replanting in the early spring. If they are stored with fruit the flower buds may abort or never form due to the release of a gas from fruit that causes ripening called ethylene. So, dig the corms in the fall when the tops have died back. Store them in a refrigerator or other location at temperatures around 40°F for about eight weeks. Replant in mid-February to early March. Relocating corms to a cool part of the yard, like the north side of a building, may allow enough winter chilling to flower. If a cold winter occurs they should be mulched. In their present location try mulching them with about four inches of loose mulch as night temperatures drop into the low 50's and 40's. For more in depth information on gladiolus visit the North American Gladiolus Council.

<http://www.gladworld.org/>
Source: *Xtreme Horticulture*, October 10, 2005. www.unce.unr.edu/southern

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Announcing Version 2.0
Desert Landscaping: Plants For a Water—Scarce Environment
A Multimedia CD-ROM

Version 1 of *Desert Landscaping: Plants For a Water-Scarce Environment* has been a tried-and-true tool for arid-land gardeners, both the weekend practitioner and the landscape professional. Version 2 promises to be an even more useful resource with new and updated plant information.

Users of the new version will benefit from an expanded plant list, revised and more detailed plant information, improved navigation and search capabilities, many new photos, new information on invasive, native and endangered plants, and expanded bibliography with web sites.

Desert Landscaping 2.0 can be ordered directly from the Water Resources Research Center for \$30, including shipping and tax. To order, send a check or money order for \$30 made out to The University of Arizona and mail to 350 N. Campbell Ave., Tucson, AZ 85719. The web site <http://cals.arizona.edu/AZWATER/> has a walkthrough of Version 2.0 that demonstrates various features of the new version.

Features:

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