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the Cochise County Master Gardener

NEWSLETTER

VOL. 4, NO. 4

APRIL 1993

R. banksiae—The Tombstone Rose

Barbara Kishbaugh
Staff Writer

The Tombstone rose is a climber with tiny white or yellow colored blossoms. It grows very vast and can form a dense canopy. New growth is delicate and dainty in appearance, but in actuality it is very hardy and adapts to new environments readily. A substantial support system should be planned or yearly pruning will be necessary to hold the plant in check. The Tombstone rose grows extremely well here and should be in bloom between the middle of March to the middle of April.

If you have yet to visit the museum in Tombstone where this rose is established, you will be in for a pleasant experience. This rose plant is listed in the *Guinness Book of Records* as the largest in the world. It is over 100 years old and the base is as large as a river tree. When you visit the museum to view the rose you enter a backyard and you will be under an umbrella of roses. The extent of growth and the support required to hold up the developed plant will surprise you. The fragrance and cocoon-like atmosphere will charm you. The spent blossoms fall to the earth to create a snowpack of soft petals. There are two other fairly large specimens of the rose in Tombstone; one at the Catholic church and the other at a private residence near the courthouse.

It takes no special conditions to grow this beauty. It does like the sun so plan a site where it receives plenty. Placement in a shady location may create conditions for powdery mildew or the encouragement of thrips.

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Robert E. Call
Extension Agent,
Horticulture

450 Haskell • Willcox, AZ • 384-3594
2500 Fry Blvd • Sierra Vista, AZ • 458-1104

The Tombstone rose is propagated by cuttings and transplants easily. This plant is recommended as a living roof of roses on a patio. It also lends itself well to arched trellises or if planted against the house produces a wall with shadows of delicate beauty.



R. banksiae

The Tombstone rose will please you with its easy adaptability to various environments. It is very fast growing and offers a multitude of blossoms in the spring. The lacy new growth is pliable and eager to create the effect you desire when landscaping.

Staff:

Carolyn Gruenhagen
Barbara Kishbaugh
Elizabeth Riordon
Virginia Westphal

Articles to be published in next month's newsletter must be received at the Sierra Vista Cooperative Extension Office by April 28.

MASTER GARDENER OFFICE SIERRA VISTA NEEDS STAFFING!

The Master Gardener Office in Sierra Vista located at the University of Arizona Extended Campus, 2500 E. Fry Boulevard, will be opening April 5th with hours of 9:00 am to 12 noon weekdays. Those who have taken the Master Gardener Basic Training and need to complete volunteer service hours to become Master Gardeners can sign the office calendar. Researching questions and answering phone calls is a great way to learn more about gardening and be of service to the community. If you need office orientation please contact the office so an orientation time can be arranged. An office coordinator is also needed to over see office staffing and orientation. During May the Master Gardener Office will move into the U of A Campus that is nearing completion next to Cochise College. Space will be available to develop and plant a demonstration garden. Those interested in planning the garden should contact Rob Call either in Sierra Vista on Wednesdays or at the Willcox Extension Office during the other days of the week.



THE AGENT'S CORNER

Robert E. Call
Extension Agent, Horticulture

QUESTION: How long can I wait to prune my fruit trees, ornamental shrubs and rose bushes?

ANSWER: Fruit trees should have major pruning during the dormant season after rest is completed. In Cochise County that is usually after Christmas. If pruning is done too early plant damage from cold and freezes can occur. Fruit trees can be pruned until flower petals fall. So for stone fruits; i.e. apricots, almonds, cherries, peaches, plums and nectarines the time has now past. For pome fruits; i.e. apples, pears and quince pruning can continue until bloom is completed. Small fruits; i.e. blackberries, grapes, raspberries, currants and gooseberries are best pruned during the dormant season. Grapes can be pruned through bloom but have a tendency to "bleed". This is not as detrimental as one might think and it is better to prune grapes a little late than let grow in to a knurled mass. Blackberries and raspberries bare fruit on one year old canes. The two year old canes need to be removed because they have born fruit and are dead. Thinning out weak canes can also be done through bloom. Currents and gooseberries should be dormant pruned by removing wood that is 3 years old by cutting it back to the base or to a main branch. Ornamental shrubs generally are pruned after flowering, however some species have other requirements. Consult a good pruning book like *Sunset's Pruning Handbook* or call the Extension Office. Roses are dormant pruned except in the case of climbing roses which are pruned after flowering. A pamphlet entitled *Roses for Arizona* is available at the Extension Office which discusses pruning different classes of roses.

QUESTION: When is the proper time to plant a turf lawn?

ANSWER: Because of our climate in Cochise County we can grow two general classes of turf. They are warm season and cool season grasses. Warm season grasses are those that flourish during spring and summer and then go dormant (brown) in the fall and winter. Warm season grasses include bermuda, buffalo grass, grama grass, sideoats, St. Augustine and zoysiagrass. These grasses should be sown, plugged, stolonizing or sprigging, (planting shoots with leaves) or sodded in the spring when temperatures are warming up. Cool season grasses grow best during cool weather but are green during the heat of summer if they are watered. They will remain green if winters are mild. Cool season grasses include Kentucky bluegrass, the fescues and ryegrasses. Cool season grasses are best sown or sodded in the late summer (late August or September) or early fall. The second best time to plant or sod these grasses is in early spring.

International Master Gardener Conference and Trade Show

August 13-15, San Antonio, TX

Tours, classes, clinics, trade show exhibit. Contact: Debbie Reid, Bexar Co. Ext. Office, Texas Agricultural Extension Service, 1143 Coliseum Rd., San Antonio, TX 78109; (210) 228-0417.

WALLS AND FENCES

Elizabeth Riordon
Staff Writer

Some of us consider fences or walls to be a necessary part of our homes and gardens. Others feel enclosed and unfriendly behind a fence. Sometimes, no matter how we feel, fences are necessary.

In our county, dogs are not allowed to run free. During times of rabies danger it is very important to keep our dogs confined, and usually fences seem better than collars and chains.

Many neighborhoods have ordinances regulating fences and walls. Underground utilities must be marked before fence holes are dug. Always call Blue Stake—1-800-362-4860—before you dig. (I learned the hard way! My underground telephone line was just inches under the grass and only after my phone stopped ringing for several days did I realize how easy it was to cut the line with my garden spade!) Sometimes, building permits are required for fences and you may be forced to remove a fence if it was put up without one. "Temporary" fences, those which are not set in concrete, may often be built without a permit and placed in or across easements where permanent structures are not allowed.

When walls and fences are built on the lot line, costs and maintenance are usually shared by neighbors. Fences entirely owned by one residence are put about two feet inside the lot line. Both sides can then be maintained without trespassing.

If wind control is important, a wall or fence that filters the wind is best. A solid wall simply lifts the wind up and over. There are lots of block walls with lovely wind-filtering patterns in our area. Wood fences are not so common here, but are available if you want them. Open wood fences fortified with wire are pretty and

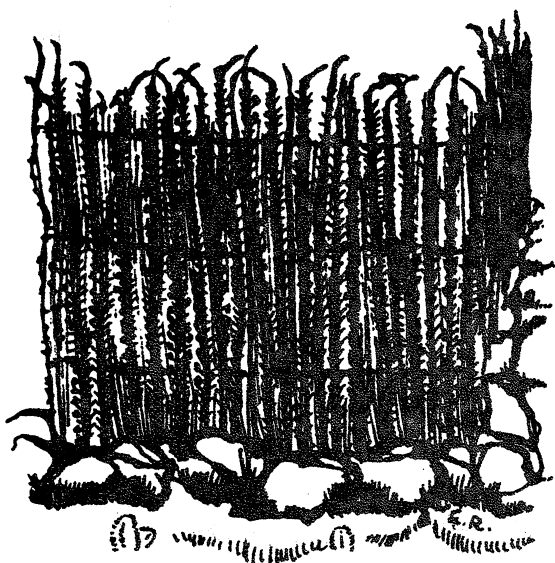
don't block out the distant view. The upright posts are sunk in concrete so that they don't come in contact with the soil. The concrete is sloped away from the posts to enable water to drain away from the wood.

Chain link used to be a sign of affluence and that is why it was put in front yards in older neighborhoods. It is sturdy and practical, so a lot is still used. It isn't considered beautiful any more, but it can be a perfect support for evergreen and flowering vines while safely confining dogs and children.

If gardens need to be protected from wildlife, there are several different fences to try. Unfortunately most are expensive. Live ocotillo fencing is a wonderful garden fence. It comes in five foot sections, thorn-free, and ready to root. (For information see our newsletter of June 1992.) An lovely old ocotillo fence can be seen by the Boot Hill parking lot in Tombstone and also around some of the graves in the cemetery.

Electric fencing keeps out deer. Very high fencing, two parallel fences, or tilted fencing may also protect gardens from deer. Heavy wire deters javelina. Wire fencing buried 18 inches deep discourages gophers and rabbits. High tensile wire fencing is another practical fence, lasting longer than woven wire. It does not sag, withstands livestock pressure, looks nice, can be electrified, and doesn't damage livestock hides or human hands. It is very adaptable and has been used in one to ten strand designs.

Once you have decided what kind of fence or wall you need, be prepared for a wait, unless you are going to build it yourself. Our area is growing so rapidly that any building or construction requires becoming part of a waiting list this year. I'll be waiting with you, hoping that the deer will leave at least a little of my garden to put the fence around.



living ocotillo fence



APRIL REMINDERS

- Watch out for late frosts
- Stake new trees
- Plant cool season vegetables
(*Vegetable Varieties for Arizona*)
- Fertilize
(*Fertilizing Home Gardens in Arizona*)
- Prepare for pests—put out codling moth traps

The two pamphlets listed in parenthesis are available in the Sierra Vista Cooperative Extension Office as well as many others that may be helpful to you.

WILDFLOWER ALERT!

Find out what is blooming where!
**Call the Desert Botanical Garden's Wildflower Hotline —
(602) 481-8134**

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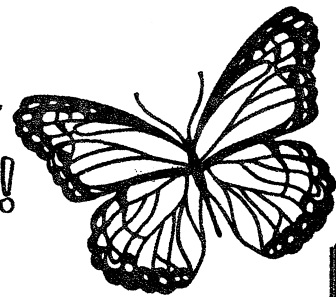
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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
TUCSON, ARIZONA 85721

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Address correction requested

Garden Tour Planned!



Dorothy Britton has graciously invited us to tour her iris garden — 3405 Ojibwa Court, Sierra Vista.

10:00 am — April 22 (rain date 23rd)

and

10:00 am — May 6 (rain date 7th)

Directions: Drive South on Highway 92, turn right on Yaqui, right on Hopi, and left on Ojibwa.

For more information contact Elizabeth Riordon — 378-6760 or Dorothy Britton — 378-3240.