

# COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

University of Arizona and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.

the Cochise County Master Gardener

## NEWSLETTER

VOL. 5, NO. 1

JANUARY 1994

### POINSETTIA (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*)

Barbara Kishbaugh  
Staff Writer

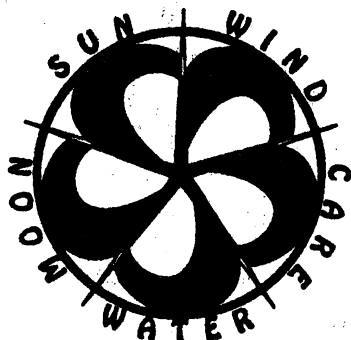
A native of southern Mexico, poinsettias have become traditional for winter color on this side of the border at Christmas time. The bright red foliage (variations of pink and white are also now available) decorates homes and businesses during the holidays.

To maintain the lovely colors of your poinsettia plants during the season, keep them under a light or near a window. Placing the pot on a bed of marbles in water will keep the plant moist and discourage leaf drop. Do not allow the plant to stand in water. Try to maintain a temperature of 60 to 70 degrees with no drafts.

The plant will drop its leaves and go dormant in late winter or early spring. At this time it may be placed out of doors in a warm protected area. Create a micro-climate against the southern wall of the house and protect it if a freeze is expected.

Poinsettias get "leggy" and will require pruning to promote a bushy appearance. These plants grow successfully in San Clemente and the warmer climes, but here in the high desert the needs of the plant demand special attention. If you are determined to try and reproduce the commercial quality of the poinsettia, prepare to expend much effort with small chance of great achievement. None of the requirements of even temperature, moisture, acidic soil, or the period of absolute darkness exist in the desert—they will have to be created.

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*Robert E. Call*

Robert E. Call  
Extension Agent,  
Horticulture

450 Haskell • Willcox, AZ • 384-3594  
1140 N. Colombo • Sierra Vista, AZ • 458-1104

When the leaves of your holiday plant have dropped and the plant is dormant, withhold watering it and allow it to be in a dry state through the spring. Begin watering again in June or when you notice mesquite trees beginning to leaf.

Take a cutting from the tips of the new growth which has 4 or 5 bracts or eyes. Plant these stems in acidic potting solution in a 4 inch container which will drain well. Encourage propagation by covering the entire plant with a plastic "envelope." This will assure an even moisture balance. In October move the plant to an area of complete darkness—no light at all!—for 14 hours each night. When leaves begin to turn red, start feeding the plant every two weeks with a nitrogen fertilizer. The plants should have green undergrowth, bright red color at the top of the plant, and tiny yellow blossoms when it is mature.



Buying a new poinsettia plant each season is recommended. They are available at many local stores. Poinsettias make wonderful gifts for the hostess you may visit during the holiday time of year. They contribute to peaceful feelings when viewed in arrangements of multiple plants.

## NEW MASTER GARDENER CLASS TO BEGIN SOON!

On February 23, 1994 and lasting for 13 weeks, a new Master Gardener class will begin. It will be held at the University of Arizona, Sierra Vista Campus (1140 N. Colombo) from 4:00 - 7:00 pm. The fee for the class is \$50. For more information please call the Cooperative Extension office in Willcox or Sierra Vista.

## AMAZING ARIZONA MINI-FESTIVAL

Look for the Master Gardeners at the Amazing Arizona Mini-Festival at the Oscar Yrun Community Center January 20!!!



## THE AGENT'S CORNER

**Robert E. Call**  
**Horticulture Agent**

**QUESTION:** My Christmas Cactus did not bloom this year. What happened?

**ANSWER:** There are several "holiday" cacti. They are Christmas Cactus (*Schlumbergera bridgesii*), with smooth

leaf margins or edges; Thanksgiving Cactus (*S. truncata*), which blooms earlier and has saw-tooth leaf margins and two oppositely pointed tips at the end of each leaf; and the Easter Cactus (*S. gaertneri*), which blooms naturally in the spring and has smooth leaf margins. These cacti species originated from the Brazilian jungle and grow naturally as epiphytes (in the air), in the branches and bark of trees.

These plants are short-day plants like poinsettias. Flowering is initiated by cool temperatures (45 to 55°), drier soil and the naturally shorter days of spring or fall. The Christmas Cactus in question did not bloom because one or more of these conditions were not met.

To induce flowering determine what type of cactus species you have. Ten weeks before blooms are desired place the plant in a cool closet or dark cupboard from sundown to sunup, never letting any light reach the plant during seclusion. Keep the soil drier than normal. Once flower buds are set you can cease this practice and increase watering.

**Source:** *Houseplants*. The American Horticultural Society, 1980. pp. 81-85

### Staff:

Carolyn Gruenhagen  
Barbara Kishbaugh  
T.J. Martin  
Elizabeth Riordon  
Virginia Westphal

Full Conference:

\$60.00

Includes both day sessions,  
2 breakfasts, 2 lunches,  
& closing reception

One Day:

\$40.00

Includes one day sessions,  
1 breakfast, 1 lunch,  
& closing reception, if Friday

Register by February 11, 1994  
to avoid late charge:  
\$70.00 full - \$45.00 one day



The Ramada Inn

2047 S. Hwy 92

Sierra Vista, AZ 85635

(602) 459-5900

is offering special room rates for  
conference participants.

Please make reservations with  
Ramada Inn and ask for special  
Master Gardener Conference rate.  
1-800-825-4656

*High on the Desert*



**First Annual  
High Desert Gardening  
&  
Landscaping Conference**

**February 17 & 18, 1994  
Ramada Inn  
Sierra Vista, AZ**

Sponsored by:  
Cochise County Cooperative  
Extension Master Gardeners  
in association with  
The Arizona Native Plant Society  
Cochise Global ReLeaf  
Sierra Vista Garden Club

# PROGRAM

## Thursday, February 17, 1994

7:30 - 8:30 Registration and Breakfast  
 8:30 - 9:30 Welcome and Keynote Address  
 Judith Phillips\*, *Diversity, Fitness,  
 and Balance of High Desert  
 Landscapes*

### Session I 9:45 - 11:00

A. Dr. Jimmy Tipton, *Desert Willows*  
 B. Ron Bemis, *Native Grasses*  
 C. Tim Udall, *Fruit Trees for the High Desert*  
 D. Cathy Wertz, *Establishing a Flower Meadow*  
 11:15 - 12:30 Visit Exhibits  
 12:30 - 1:45 Lunch  
 Dr. Tom Doerge, *Desert Soils*

### Session II 2:00 - 3:15

A. Beth Anderson, *High Desert Landscaping*  
 B. Lynn Tilton, *Feeding Your Family From Your  
 Garden*  
 C. Greg Freeman, *High Desert Evergreens*  
**Session III - Workshops 3:30 - 5:00**  
 A. Jim Koweek, *Side Boxing Techniques*  
 B. Paige Bakarich, *What the Indians Ate*  
 C. Rob Call, *Pruning & Training Fruit Trees*  
 D. Emily Vardaman and Cathé Fish, *Passive Solar  
 Greenhouses*

## Friday, February 18, 1994

7:30 - 8:30 Registration and Breakfast  
 8:30 - 9:15 Nancy Stallcup, *Wild Flower  
 Slide Show*  
 Cathy Wertz, *AZ Native Plant Law*

### Session IV 9:30 - 10:45

A. David Epele, *Cactus and Succulents*  
 B. Richard Pecoraro, *Bio-diversity*  
 C. Tom DeGomez, *Small Fruits for the High  
 Desert*  
 D. Joanne Camron-Hild, *Selecting the Right Tree,  
 Place, and Time*

### Session V 11:00 - 12:15

A. Ted Hodoba, *Chihuahuan Desert Plants*  
 B. Dr. Deborah Young, *Plant Diseases*  
 C. Susan Comal, *Everlasting Flower Wreaths*  
 12:30 - 1:45 Lunch  
 Dr. Dave Langston, *African Bees*  
 Door Prizes and Raffles

### Session VI 2:00 - 3:15

A. Dr. Mike Kilby, *Nut Trees*  
 B. Matt Johnson, *Adapted Desert Legumes*  
 C. Mimi Camp, *Medicinal Plants*

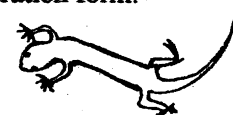
### Session VII - Workshops 3:30 - 5:00

A. Dr. Mike Kilby, *Tree Grafting*  
 B. Bill Free, *Drip Irrigation Design*  
 C. Dr. Dave Langston, *IPM For the Backyard*  
 D. Sandy Anderson, *Snakes in Your Garden*  
 5:15 - 7:00 Conference Summary and  
 Reception

## Saturday, February 19 - Optional Field Trips

A. Growing Vegetables in Worm Castings  
 Mary Diamond - Tierra Y Sol  
 B. Arizona Cactus & Succulent, Inc.  
 David Epele - Bisbee, AZ  
 C. Landscapes of Sierra Vista  
 Henry Haros  
 D. San Pedro River Tour  
 Carline Burrus

All tours are included in the registration fee. Transportation is on your own with carpooling suggested. Maps will be provided. The number of participants is limited to the first 20 to register for the Landscapes of Sierra Vista tour. Please indicate on the registration form.



\* Judith Phillips, author of *Southwestern Landscaping With Native Plants*, has worked in ornamental horticulture since 1970 as a professional plant grower and landscape designer. For the past few years she has worked almost exclusively with arid-land native plants, which she considers the most interesting area of horticulture. She is the owner/grower of a native plant farm in Veguita, New Mexico.

Robert E. Call, Extension Agent, Horticulture

University of Arizona and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.

## High on the Desert Conference Registration

Make check payable to: **High Desert MG Conference**  
 Mail to: U of A Cooperative Extension Office  
 ATTN: Rob Call

1140 N. Colombo, Sierra Vista, AZ 85635  
 (602) 458-1104, Ext. 141

Please indicate your preference for each session:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Full Conference \$60.00 After Feb. 11 \$70.00  
 One Day \$40.00 After Feb. 11 \$45.00

A	A	A	A	A	A	A	A
B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C
D	D	D	D	D	D	D	D

Amount Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

[This form may be reproduced]

Landscapes of Sierra Vista Tour

Check here for vegetarian meals



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

OFFICIAL BUSINESS  
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE \$300

BULK RATE  
POSTAGE & FEES PAID  
USDA  
PERMIT No. G268

Address correction requested

September 21 and March 22. Remove fewer branches from this area.

When finished, we will have selectively pruned the branches back to the trunk between C and B (the light and dark shading in the illustration), allowing winter sun into the south facing window from September 21 through the middle of winter until March 22.

Leave all branches above line C to provide summer shade for the window from March 22 until September 21. (A roof overhang can provide the same function.)

Branches below line B will not provide shade for the window but will shade outdoor sitting areas, and should not be removed.

Dead branches and suckers can be pruned at any time. Evergreens are normally pruned in the spring and summer. When pruning, remove a few branches at a time. Don't scalp the tree. Remember, branches don't re-grow. If you need help pruning large branches, contact a professional.