

# Yavapai Gardens

Master Gardener Newsletter

October/November 2015



## Events & Activities

MG Association Meeting, See back page, 3rd Wednesday of the month.

Alta Vista Gardening Club, Prescott, fourth Tuesday of the month, 12:30pm. Call 928-458-9508 for information.

Prescott Area Gourd Society, third Wednesday of the month, 10:30am, at Miller Valley Indoor Art Market, 531 Madison Ave, Prescott

Prescott Orchid Society, 4rd Sunday of the month, 1pm at the Prescott Library, (928) 717-0623

Prescott Area Iris Society call 928-445-8132 for date and place information.

Mountain View Garden Club, Prescott Valley, Dewey area, 2nd Friday of month, 1:30pm, call 775-4993 for location as it changes.

Native Plant Society Meetings - Prescott. 2nd Thursday of the month, 6:30pm. Attending the talk qualifies as Continuing Education. Non-members are welcome. Highlands Center for Natural History, 1375 S. Walker Rd. (928-776-9550).

The Verde Thumbs Garden Club, Cottonwood 2nd Tuesday, 6:30 pm at The Seventh Day Adventist Church. (928) 634-7172

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## Rabbitbrush

by Judy Kennedy



UA & CSU Master Gardener and CSU Native Plant Master Judy spends her summers in Colorado and winters in Arizona and has been a Master Gardener in Yavapai County since 2014. She works on the Plant Database team.

My Granny used to tell me "If you can't say something nice, don't ----". Well you know how that saying goes. It is difficult for me to write this article since I

spend late summer and early fall every year on a tractor pulling a brush-hog. The object of that activity is to try to keep rabbitbrush from becoming the dominant feature of our pasture. It tries to take over the pasture and would eventually drive out the grasses and alfalfa. The horses and mules will not eat it.

The definition of a weed is "any plant that is growing where it is not wanted," so I guess that is my problem with rabbitbrush as I enjoy its bright yellow foliage along the road sides and how it decorates the Colorado National Monument. It makes me think of school starting, the coming fall, and waiting for the cottonwoods and aspens to turn golden.

Rabbit brush was formerly called *Chrysothamnus nauseosus*, but the people who are very knowledgeable about plants have now changed the name to *Ericameria nauseosus*. The first time I saw the scientific name, I was sure that the nauseosus was referring to the queasy feeling you get when you eat too much, but actually nauseosus means heavily-scented. It inhabits desert to semi-desert areas of the western United States and is generally associated with sagebrush. Rabbitbrush, also known as Chamisa, is fast-growing and common in dry soils. It is also an indicator of poor soils, but is good for stabilizing areas by preventing soil erosion. It does grow in Arizona and is sometimes sold as a landscape plant.

A member of the aster family, rabbitbrush is pungent-smelling and is a globe-shaped perennial shrub consisting of slender, flexible branches. Those 2' to 4' branches are covered with microscopic woolly hairs which reduce water loss. Its attractive yellow flowers are arranged in umbrella-shaped heads which occur from August into October. The alternate, slender, feathery leaves are blue-green. You can sometimes observe small cottony bulges on the plant which

are called galls. These are caused by several species of small fruit flies which over-winter as larvae within the galls.

Rabbitbrush is attractive to butterflies and it is not uncommon to see many butterflies on one plant at the same time. The plant's food value is low but sheep, deer, elk and other wildlife will eat it if other browse becomes scarce. It may be called rabbitbrush but rabbits use it as cover and only eat it when other foods become insufficient during the winter. However, it does provide nesting habitat for sage grouse and small birds.

Used by Native Americans as chewing gum or tea, they also used rabbitbrush for toothaches, coughs, and chest pains. The whole plant was used by the Hopis for fuel, wind breaks, wicker baskets, and in arrow making. Yellow dye was obtained from the flowers, green dye from the inner bark, and the stems were used to thatch roofs.

So, I did it! I found several nice things to say about rabbitbrush, yet-----.



year's bees. And keep in mind, miner bees don't want to be walked on or flooded, they hate roots in their galleries and mulch on their roofs—picky aren't they? They just want bare, soft, undis-

turbed ground.

Leafcutter, mason, and the ever-popular carpenter bee like dead wood. They tunnel in twigs and soft wood to build their nests. This is your chance to never, ever, feel guilty about an untidy garden. Bumble bees love old rodent dens, so you might leave those alone, too. All bees need water, especially in the heat. They don't swim very well, so please, if you set water out for the birds (or the bees) make it easy to climb out of. You can do this with a hill of pebbles in the water, wooden ramps or even floating packing peanuts.



Native bees co-evolved with our local native plants and that means they are the right size, the right weight and have the correct tongue length ( who knew THAT mattered?) to pollinate native flowers. European

bees may or may not fit the specs of the native bloomers, so it just hurt to plant more native plants to help support native bees and maintain the diversity of Central Highland plants. Go the extra mile if you can and use early, mid and late season flowers to provide pollen and nectar for as long as possible.

There you have it! Get out there and raise some bees!!



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## *Making Room for Native Bees in Our Gardens*

*by Lori Dekker*

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Probably every Master Gardener in the country understands how important pollinators are in our yards and in our world. Most of us use little or no chemical controls in our gardens, partly out of concern

for the bees and other wildlife that pass through our property. While pesticide free gardening is a great gift to the bee world, I encourage each of you to consider a few additional kindnesses. The bees will thank you.

About 60% of Arizona's native bee population are digger or miner bees, common, catch-all names for bees who build underground chambers to raise their young. Gardeners who can spare sunny, undisturbed patches of loamy soil will provide the all-important space for next

# MG Recognition Picnic

The Yavapai County Master Gardener Association hosted its yearly Recognition Picnic, Sept. 13, 2015 at Thumb Butte picnic grounds in Prescott, AZ.

The event recognized the contributions of its many Master Gardeners who volunteer countless hours to enrich the communities of Yavapai County. Recipients were awarded pins earned for their volunteer hours. Associate Master Gardeners were also present and those who recently completed the required 50 hours, earned the title of Master Gardener. Yavapai County Agent, Jeff Schalau, was present to award the honorees with their pins, "This has been a wonderful group of genuine, caring and compassionate gardeners and I am extremely proud to recognize their accomplishments." On behalf of the Master Gardeners, Jeff was awarded a denim shirt as "Honorary Master Gardener," for his mentoring.

## 150 Hours

Kathleen Corum  
Lois Gotfredson  
Deb Grafe  
Judy Kennedy  
Roni Kennedy  
Jan Lockhart  
Debbie Mayne  
Nirmala McAfee  
Jodi McBride  
Faith Roberts  
Elizabeth Sexton  
Dick Sitts  
Andy Switanek  
Susan Williams



## 1000 Hours Sherry Morton

## 1500 Hours

Pam Bowman  
Tom Konzem  
Steve McIntyre  
Cathy Michener  
Rich Peterson  
Susan Peterson  
Missy Sandeen  
Janet Schieber  
Faun Vogel



## 250 Hours

Karen Austermliller  
Susan Crutcher  
Terrilyn Green  
Al Herron  
Scholly Ketcher  
Barbara McCurry  
Tricia Michelson  
Virginia Mullins  
Linda Sanzo  
Susan Tolley  
Toni Wackerly



## 4000 Hours Kathy MacCauley



## 2000 Hours

Bill Cart  
Bob Gessner  
Sherry Howard

## 500 Hours

Lesley Alward  
Bob Busch  
Hope Fonet  
Kris Holt  
Bill Marmaduke  
Diane McKelvey  
Barbara Saul  
Jim Sheehan



## Emeritus

Lesley Alward  
Sherry Howard  
Herdis Maclellan  
Angie Mazella  
Diane McKelvey  
Cathy Michener  
Rose Williams



# Creepy Plants for a Halloween Garden

by Nora Graf



Not that you could actually grow these plants in your garden for the most part, but there are some strange plants out there more in tune with Halloween than Valentine's Day. So for the fun of it, a few creepy plants.....

## Devils Tooth (*Hydnelum peckii*)

Not a plant per se but a fungus, creepy enough that it really tops the list of weird. Just don't eat it. It is actually a beneficial fungus that attaches to tree roots. It is found throughout North America. In its above ground form it "bleeds". Droplets of a bright red liquid are exuded. Sometimes called "strawberries and cream".



## Black Bat Flower (*Tacca chantrieri*)

This odd-looking flower has wings, long whiskers and is black. It grows wild in China but can be grown in the United States. It is finicky, though.



## Crown of Thorns (*Euphorbia millii*)

The flowers can suck you in but beware, it is covered with thorns. Long stems of thorns waiting to catch you. The sap is toxic too, so beware.



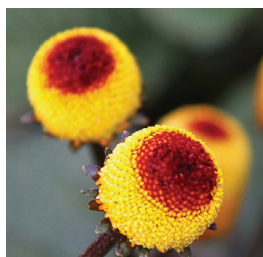
## Ghost Plant (*Montropa uniflora*)

Ghosts appear on the forest floor. Nearly translucent with no chlorophyll this parasite doesn't need or desire the sun. It grows in dark places.



## Dolls Eyes (*Actaea pachypoda*)

The name dolls eyes doesn't really transmit the creepiness of this plant. Think eyeballs. They are the fruit of the plant. The white skin with a black "iris" and red stems resemble strange aliens. Don't eat them either, the berries can kill you.



**Eyeball Plant (*Spilanthes oleracea*)** Need more eyeballs? This plant has bloody red and yellow ones and if you eat the leaf, your tongue will go numb.



**Dracula Orchid (*Dracula sergioi*)** Orchids often resemble insects, sometimes even monkeys and angels but these are more reminiscent of piranhas. It's just a flower but then again, I wouldn't be sticking my finger in it's "mouth."

## Venus Flytrap (*Dionaea muscipula*)

We are so familiar with the Venus flytrap I almost didn't include it in this list. It's really a plant that eats meat. Not only that, but it lays a trap for the meat source. Just glad it's not bigger.



## Voodoo Lily (*Saurauum venosum*)

This lily is more like snakes emerging from the ground. A lover of shade, these snakes can grow three to four feet tall. Not scary enough for you, just watch the corm grow without benefit of soil or water. The flowers, have a reptile-like skin and smell like rotting meat.



## Devils Claw (*Proboscidea sp.*)

If you have spent time in the desert you might have seen these things scattered about, if you have been unlucky one may have latched on to your leg. The fruit of this plant has long arms with sharp points that lay in wait for unsuspecting humans and animals.



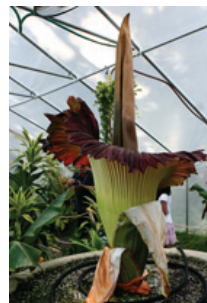
## Octopus Stinkhorn (*Clathrus archeri*)

Just when you thought it was safe, a creature comes out of the water and lurks in our woodlands. It's really a fungus and not particularly edible and who knows about those arms. Did the arms move...?



## Porcupine Tomato (*Solanum pyracanthum*)

Large bright oranges spines are just waiting for you to touch them. This tropical plant from Madagascar is also toxic.



**Corpse flower (*Amorphophallus titanium*)** Looking for the smell of death? The corpse flower will perfume the air with it.

# Heritage Park Zoological Sanctuary Community Education Garden Project

by Ellen Greenblum

If you haven't been to the Heritage Park Zoological Sanctuary, it may be a great time to go for a visit. There is a beautiful community garden, productively growing produce for the animal residents.

Last spring, Leigh Ann Wolfe had an idea and didn't realize how much support she would receive for her vision to create an educational, organic garden that would serve as a site for community education and provide supplementary nutrition for animals. First she shared her idea with her friend Ellen Greenblum who agreed, not because she knew anything about gardening, but loved the concept. Leigh Ann's fiancé, a supporter of the zoo, mentioned that there was space available at a site where an abandoned garden project existed years ago.

Next, letters were sent out to local businesses requesting donations and an article in the Daily Courier also solicited funds to help launch the project. Because of the excel-



lent response from local businesses, the garden began. Leigh Ann's partner donated the fencing so that pesky, produce-seeking critters wouldn't undermine their efforts.

The first season was remarkably productive in spite of the lack of formal training

that Leigh Ann and Ellen had. A successful crop of squash, pumpkins, zucchinis, watermelon and carrots were enjoyed by zoo animal residents and zoo visitors enjoyed seeing the beautiful vegetables and flowers. Children were encouraged to come into the garden to explore and discover what was growing.



This spring Leigh Ann and Ellen joined the Master Gardener class and with new knowledge returned to the garden to plant again. Because of the great connections made with Master Gardeners, the amount of volunteer support has exponentially blossomed. The garden is going strong, incorporating the wisdom of experienced growers, organic food advocates, and educators.

Future plans include creating a pollinator garden, adding more programming focusing on organic gardening, and of course, increasing the amount of food produced for the animals. To become involved, contact Leigh Ann Wolfe [lawolfern@gmail.com](mailto:lawolfern@gmail.com) or Ellen Greenblum [ellengb@q.com](mailto:ellengb@q.com).



Hope to see you out at the garden!

# *Meet a Master Gardener – Lois Janowski*

*by Marti Griggs*

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Once a teacher, always a teacher! Although Lois Janowski retired from San Jose (California) Community College in December 2009, she still enjoys preparing lesson plans and teaching, now at local elementary school habitat programs and preschools.

The Schoolyard Habitat provides a unique way to enhance scientific learning in the Native Plant Habitat Garden. Her Kinder Gardeners explore, observe, and learn the names and characteristics of the plants and animals that live in the habitat.

Her home in Williamson Valley is also landscaped with native plants. It was recently listed as a Monarch Waystation, mostly due to rabbitbrush (*Chrysothamnus nauseosus*) in the yard, which is an important nectar source for migrating butterflies. It helps that Lois lives next to the forest, where the butterflies find shelter. She also has a small raised-bed vegetable garden with mostly herbs and enjoys putting outside. She helps with “plant sitting” in the months leading up to Monsoon Madness and chairs public relations for that event.

A graduate of the 2011 MG class, Lois jumped right in to volunteer activities. In addition to school habitats and Monsoon Madness she has volunteered at the farmers’ market, the Pecan and Wine Festival in Camp Verde, the Highland Center for Natural History, floriculture at the county fair, and the Speaker’s Bureau. One of the things she enjoys most about the Master Gardener program is the rich diversity in volunteer opportunities, her favorite being those that involve working as part of a team. She par-



ticularly loves getting kids tuned into the outdoors by looking at the small things and observing nature. As a Master Gardener, she is always able to find ways to continue her passions for both education and gardening.





### 2015 Newsletter Schedule

The newsletter comes out every two months. Deadlines have changed. The list below shows the issues, when they will be published, basically the day they will be available (or close to it) for you to read and the deadlines for each issue. Longer articles need to be sent in earlier than in the past, so please note that. If the article is time-sensitive, please let me know ahead of time but please get it to me by the deadline. There is a lot more latitude to the short announcements (a few lines) and if you let me know in advance something is coming I can be a bit flexible about things.

Issue	Publish date	Deadline
Feb-March	Feb 1	Articles Jan 5, short announcements Jan 25
April-May	April 1	Articles Mar 5, short announcements Mar 25
June-July	June 1	Articles May 5, short announcements May 25
Aug-Sept	Aug 1	Articles July 5, short announcements July 25
Oct-Nov	Oct 1	Articles Sept 5, short announcements Sept 25
Dec-Jan	Dec 1	Articles Nov 5, short announcements Nov 25

FROM THE EDITOR: Please send or email articles and announcements to the address below. All articles must be in my hands by the 10th of the month. Short announcements (no more than 2 or 3 lines) will be accepted until the 25th.

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**(928) 445-6590**  
**FAX: (928) 445-6593**

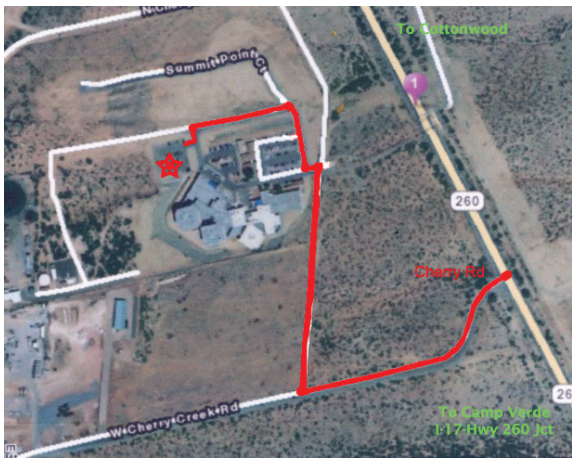
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Prescott, AZ 86305



## MG NEWSLETTER



## *Next Meetings*

October 21, 6:30pm, Camp Verde

The Camp Verde Meeting is held in the Yavapai County Superior court building, 2830 Commonwealth Dr.

November 18, 6:30pm, Prescott  
Election of Officers

*The Prescott meeting is held at the Extension office on Rodeo Dr.*

