

Community Garden Locations

Chaverim Garden (Eastside)

5901 East 2nd Street
Site Coordinator—Signa Roswall
520-750-8439; alamo@dakotacom.net

Corbett Garden (Eastside)

5948 East 30th Street
Site Coordinator—Nanihoa Smith
520-760-8579; nanihoa@velocityhsi.com

Presidio Garden (Midtown)

Off Fort Lowell and Country Club
Site Coordinator—Sally Coulthard
stan@coulthard.net

Wilson Garden (Midtown close to UA)

3331 North Wilson
Site Coordinator—Melissa Urreiztieta
520-320-9814; melissa.u@earthlink.net



Featured Photo



The Wilson gardeners were met by a brilliant splash of color in recent months thanks to Vladimir's wonderful Zinnias. They were tall plants and produced large blossoms which attracted pollinators by the dozen.

Community Gardens of Tucson

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Community Gardens of Tucson

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a bimonthly guide to community gardening activities in the Greater Tucson area November /December 2005

INSIDE

2 George Says . . .

3 Planter's Guide

4 Time for Tom

5 Calendar

8 Garden Reports

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Winter Garden Visitor Spotted

On a recent trip to my garden, I noticed that the leaves of my fall plants looked a bit like swiss cheese. They weren't pale and smelly, but they did have numerous holes in the leaves and some leaves had disappeared completely. I was quite dismayed by this, but I followed the advice given in the book *The Hitchhikers Guide To The Galaxy* by Douglas Adams which was DON'T PANIC! I began looking at some of the plants closely to see if I could find what was causing this damage. I looked all over the tops of the leaves and found nothing. It wasn't until I started bumping the leaves around that I saw one of my small winter visitors fall to the ground.



Once inside the house, I did a quick internet search for common pests that inhabit this area. In no time at all, I found the above mug shot of *Trichoplusia ni*, aka the Cabbage Looper. I had a strong urge to call George Brookbank; surely he'd know what it was and exactly what to do about it. I then thought better of this - George is the education director, not my personal garden nursemaid. Shortly after Dianne and I arrived in Tucson, we acquired a copy of his book *Desert Gardening*. Now was the time to take the knowledge on these printed pages and put it to use. I ran through the contents to the section appropriately titled, "When Things Go Wrong". After going through it, I proceeded to "Alternatives To Poisonous Chemicals" and struck pay dirt. I read about various methods of Integrated Pest Management and found that I had already figured out how to employ the "finger-and-thumb" method. For an infestation of the magnitude present in my garden, drastic action was needed, but a wide spectrum poison was not what I wanted. My needs were very specific and I found the answer to my problems on page 106. It's a naturally occurring soil bacterium called *Bacillus thuringiensis*. This bacterium produces an endotoxin that kills caterpillars including the cabbage looper, but according to the Oregon State University Extension Service, has very low to nonexistent toxicity to plants, animals, and humans.

There are plenty of ways to go about instituting Integrated Pest Management in your own garden, so educate yourself and get going. You can bet that your garden pests will be busy in the interim. I'll soon be delivering the eviction notice to my garden visitors and I encourage you to do the same.

Andy M. Stevens



George Says . . .

by George Brookbank

At last, summer is over and we now go into a different gardening program. It's an easier one for us and it's a more productive one too. Lower temperatures and shorter days slow down the growth of almost everything, both weeds and crop plants. Pull out weed seedlings as soon as you see them coming up. Those of us who allowed Bermudagrass to get a hold have had a bad experience and we can all learn from it. Weeds are easier to control while they are small.

Slower growth is a fact of gardening life and we need to sow seeds and put out transplants as soon as we can while there is still some warmth in the soil. Mulches have a place during summer, keeping the soil cool and moisture in, but now our gardens don't need a mulch- we want the sun to shine on the soil and keep it warm.

What to plant? Check out the list that John Swanson has made for us. Try not to delay sowing seeds or setting out transplants. I think it's too late to sow bush beans- you probably are eating them if you sowed them a month ago. Faba Beans (which stand on their own) are a good bet as are peas (that need a strong support). December will be a "no-growth" month. And empty spaces perhaps can't be usefully planted up until late February when the soil warms up again. However, most gardens are well planted already. Gardeners have done well.

Your Steering Committee, at its monthly meeting, decided to again offer onion plants to you, for free, so remember to have some planting space in early December. Our Texas supplier won't have White Granex that we had last year but we are ordering a similar kind, called White Contessa and we hope that it will do as well.

Unless you need planting and sowing space there's still good life in peppers and eggplant and tomatoes, but don't expect much from them unless the weather stays warm and/or you can make a mini-greenhouse with clear plastic over them. Allow some ventilation to avoid "sweating" on the inside of the plastic. When frost gets them pull them out and chop the stems into pencil-length pieces and put them in the compost.

To help maintain moisture in the compost pile good gardeners are leaving the hose end in it and walk back to the faucet to turn off the water. Bacteria need moisture to function, and we're not very good at keeping the stuff moist enough. In the same way, before you hand water your plot turn the faucet on and walk over to the compost pile to get the hose, and the pile gets another gentle watering.

When you sow seeds, you can expect birds to come and take them. A trick, that calls for daily attention, is to cover the seeded area with clear plastic to make a sort of ground-level greenhouse. Condensation on the underside of the plastic means you don't need to hand water every day but when the seedlings emerge you don't want their leaves to touch the plastic for fear they'll get burned. Raise up the plastic with bricks

November and December are good months to use a tunnel of plastic, putting the large square-meshed wire that you used for tomatoes to work, if you are not using it for peas. To save space in this newsletter, I suggest to you look at the pictures of tunnel gardening in my book "Desert Gardening-Fruits and Vegetables". Tunnel gardening is the ultimate in small scale greenhouse cropping because it speeds up growth during our cool season.

If you don't use a plastic tunnel and we get sharp night frosts you'll need to cover your plants with a heavy sheet or a light blanket for the night. Next morning take the covering off to let the sun warm up the soil and your plants. This becomes a bit tiresome but it's often necessary. Listen to the weather forecasts and know whether your garden is in a cold or a warm area. A five degree discrepancy can make all the difference between happiness and grief. Buy a maximum-minimum thermometer from a nursery or hardware store and start recording the nightly temperatures at your garden. Then compare your "Lows" with the forecasts and the actual official temperatures. There's a chapter in the book on how to do this and there are pictures, too.

Both the thermometer and the book make good pre-holiday gifts, by the way.



Hot Water & Soggy Cubic Feet

by Andy M. Stevens

Just as the heat comes and goes, so do the Community Gardens of Tucson water issues. Recently the lush and productive Wilson garden was the site of a water audit by the Tucson Water Department. We requested this audit based on our high water usage numbers and water bills. From the 5th of August to the 12th of September, this garden used almost 55,000 gallons of water! Just so you know, this garden only has 8 1/2 full plots. During the audit, we ran the system in the garden for 20 minutes and it used 206 gallons of water. The city meter was found to be reading inaccurately as a result of this short test, and was replaced by Mike Marquez from Tucson Water.

I watched George give a talk recently about the importance of using the headless golf club/soil

probe as a quick way to tell whether or not your garden plot is getting enough water. I've also watched him demonstrate the use of this handy gadget at the garden meetings several times.

Seeing the water bills really makes the case for using these probes stronger. These easy to use tools are the key to keeping us out of "hot water" with our gracious landowners and with our treasurer.

Using these soil probes to determine whether or not your garden is really as dry below the surface as it looks from above will help keep our gardens not only green, but sustainable. With another water rate hike likely to come in the new year, every drop that you save helps keep the Community Gardens of Tucson afloat.

A Sharp Decline In The Nutritional Value Of Food

What is the nutritional value of vegetables? This question was answered in 1940 by R.A. McCance and E.M. Widdowson in a study commissioned by Britain's Medical Research Council. In 1991 they were asked the same question, this time by the British Agriculture Ministry and the Royal Society of Chemistry. Below is what they found in comparing the two studies.

Potatoes 35% less calcium
45% less iron
46% less copper
30% less magnesium

Spring Onions 74% less calcium
Broccoli (boiled) 46% less iron
75% less calcium
Turnip cabbage 71% less iron
Spinach (boiled) 60% less iron
96% less copper
Watercress 93% less copper
Carrots 48% less calcium
75% less magnesium

Source: ODE Magazine, September 2005
Submitted by Lucille Boilard-Harkin (Chaverim)

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As always, we extend our warm thanks and appreciation to our friends at AlphaGraphics who not only make the publication of this newsletter possible, but make it beautiful as well.

Autumn Time *Llewelyn Ellsworth Dahlen*

There's a time to enjoy
The flowers of spring
And all those pleasures
That summer will bring

Treasure the autumn
All those painted leaves
The crisp fall air
On those moon lit eves

But as the winds will change
And the summer will set
Nature paints a picture
That's hard to forget

It's a blessing at best
Not costing a dime
For all to enjoy
Yes it's autumn time..

Garden Reports



Presidio Garden

George recently opened up one of his late season melons. The picture is correct, that's a yellow rind. *Citrullis lanatus* is the scientific name, but it is more commonly known as the Tohono O'odham Yellow Meated watermelon. You can pick up the seeds from Native Seeds Search for next year if you'd like to try them. The Presidio Garden is busy making the shift from warm season to cool season plants and we look forward to seeing George's fall spinach trial take off.

Andy M. Stevens

Wilson Garden

The Wilson Garden is overflowing with the fruits of summer's end. Cucumbers and melons hang heavy on their vines. Jacquie's eggplants, Vladimir's okra and zinnias, and Renate's morning glories are all exploding, adding lots of color in our lush garden jungle. The birds kept us all very busy this summer mending leaks in our irrigation lines. Hopefully these latest rains will quench their thirst and our persistent feathered friends may move on! After a long time idle, Wilson's compost bin is back in action. I am watering and turning the pile regularly now and hopefully we will all soon be able to add this rich organic matter to our plots, recycled from our gardens past.

Melissa Urreiztieta

Corbett Garden

Most of Corbett Gardeners are preparing for the fall garden. Thanks to a seed sack from George we can try kohlrabi, fennel, mustard choy, watercress as well as the standard broccoli and cabbage. Sam has elected to allow his loofah and beans continue to grow. Bill and Lucy are letting their beans continue, also. The pomegranate tree is the centerpiece at this time as its branches are loaded with the lovely fruit.

Onion sets will be available for us in December so leave room for 30 plants or so.

Naniola Smith

Chaverim Garden

This summer we received a wonderful storage shed, and newly oiled tables. What a nice surprise. Now that our summer rains have finished, the weeds around the garden are gone. Our garden looks neat and clean. Chaverim had wonderful spring and summer produce. We had lots of wonderful tomatoes, beans, cantaloupe, eggplant, zucchini, peppers and onions. We are looking forward to receiving our onions in December and we thank the steering committee for that. We are presently preparing our gardens for winter plants. The gardens have wonderful soil, in which we are finding plenty of great earthworms. We work well as a group and often help each other. Best yet, we feel that we have our water situation under control.

Gwen Curiel

A Planter's Guide

to November and December

Autumn is just another word for finding more things to plant. If you're not sure where to begin, use this guide as a handy key to plants that love cooler weather

Vegetables	*	Nov 1 to Nov 15	Nov 15 to Nov 30	Dec 1 to Dec 15	Dec 15 to Dec 31
Arugula	S,P				
Asian Leafy Greens	S,P				
Beets	S				
Broccoli	P				
Broccoli Raab	S,P				
Brussels Sprouts	P				
Cabbage	S,P				
Carrots	S				
Miner's Lettuce	S,P				
Cucumber	S,P				
Chinese Cabbage					
Collards					
Fava Beans	S,P				
Mustards	S,P				
Leeks	S,P				
Kale	S,P				
Kolorabi	S,P				
Onions	S,P				
Leaf Lettuce	S,P				
Romaine Lettuce	S,P				
Radish	S				
Mache(Corn Salad)	S,P				
Spinach	S,P				
Swiss Chard					
Turnips	S				
Herbs					
Chervil	S,P				
Cilantro	S,P				
Chives					
Dill	S,P				
Parsley	S,P				
Mint	P				
Oregano	P				
Marjoram	P				
Thyme	P				

* P = plant, S = seed

* Consult an experienced gardener for tips if planting this late in the season

Time for Tom

Rethinking

Reprinted with Permission from 2004-Issue 6

by Tom Watson

What I described last time, regarding being able to pull out living plants in order to prepare for a new season, has suddenly come home to roost in a strange way. Only this time it isn't the plants I'm scraping, it's my garden.

And no, I'm not giving up gardening. I'm abandoning the way I garden. All gardens evolve, and how they do so very much depends on how they start out, and on what goes on in their environments. In the case of this garden it started out with a load of good ideas that, as time passed, proved to be less and less useful. That evolution was going the wrong way. But by then the project had some momentum, so instead of falling back and beginning again, I forged ahead and adapted plans and designs as I went. At first, this seemed okay. But that environment—meaning how the garden fit into an at times awkward and irksome set of events in my life—changed, and then changed again. There seemed to be less time to get out and garden each year, while at the same time the numerous adaptations necessary to make the garden work proved steadily more time consuming. The infrastructure of the garden remained partially developed because if I worked on it the plants were neglected. And of course, caring for the plants meant that the infrastructure received little or no attention.

It is tremendously frustrating to be out in a garden pulling weeds and mulching, and seeing that the borders of the beds need to be replaced—a big job in this case. Or that the trellis wire needs replacing. And that the pavers on the path have settled in an irregular, toe-stubbing fashion. But before these things could be fixed, shouldn't I really get that irrigation system in

place? And then there's the shade support...I could go on, but you get my drift. The things I'm not getting to make it necessary to spend more time supporting plant growth than enjoying it—the workarounds are labor intensive and not very efficient. And at some point this past summer, I just couldn't deal with it. No matter what I attended to, something equally important went by the wayside. I thought I could put the structure of the garden in place while I gardened, and in this I was very much mistaken. The garden had become a source of frustration and annoyance, not of peace and satisfaction. It was time to step back, admit that the workarounds that were meant to put my dearly beloved plan into motion simply were not working, around or otherwise.

So this fall and winter, I have no garden. I may plant a cover crop to keep the soil alive, but there will be no vegetables, no herbs, no flowers until the beds are fixed, the paths repaired, the shade erected, and the irrigation system installed. The end result will not be what I wanted at the start, and that isn't easy. I'm a bit on the stubborn side, you see. If it's hard to pull out a late-season tomato plant, admitting it will never bear fruit, imagine what it's like to uproot an idea? The garden I had in mind six years ago will never come into being. It can't. It's the wrong plan for the place in which I live. It's time to make like a good little organism and adapt, and I can already see how to go about it. I know myself well enough to understand that, once I get the work underway, it will be an enjoyable process. And if this plan works (it should, being more firmly based on the realities of my back yard), by next spring there will be a garden again, ready and waiting for the tomatoes.

Administrative Notes

Indian Ridge Garden Club Donation

The administrative director and education director were invited to speak recently at a meeting of the Indian Ridge Garden Club. After Andy gave a brief explanation of what the Community Gardens of Tucson is about, George was introduced and began fielding all manner of plant and insect questions in earnest. A good time was

4 had by all in attendance. Our administrative director regretted having to dash off before getting to visit the lovely dessert table that was

offered. The Indian Ridge Garden Club continued their support with a donation of \$100. This has already helped to offset the cost of updating our supply of irrigation equipment. The Community Gardens of Tucson continue to thrive, due in no small part, to donations and support from our fellow gardeners in the Tucson area. We sincerely appreciate this support.

Andy M. Stevens
Administrative Director

Growing and Eating

Butternut Squash Soup with Poblanos

- 1 tablespoon corn oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 teaspoon chopped garlic
- 2 poblano chiles, deveined, deseeded and chopped
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 2 cups cooked butternut squash (from about 1 medium), see cooking instructions below
- 3 cups chicken stock
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon white pepper
- Toasted pumpkin seeds and/or chopped cilantro leaves for garnish (optional)

To prepare the squash, cut it in half lengthwise and scoop out the seeds. Place the squash in a shallow baking dish and add about 1/2-inch of water to the dish. Bake uncovered in a 400 degree F. oven until squash is easily pierced with a fork, about 45 minutes to 1 hour. Let cool and then scoop out the flesh.

Heat oil in a pot over medium heat. Add onion and garlic and saute until translucent. Stir in chopped poblano chiles and cumin; cook about 3 minutes. Add 2 cups of the squash, chicken stock, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil, reduce to a simmer and cook 15 minutes.

Cool soup and puree in small batches in a blender or processor. Strain if desired. Reheat before serving, garnished with toasted pumpkin seeds and/or chopped cilantro.

(Signa Roswall and Cindy Coan of Chaverim Garden devoured this with the cilantro garnish, but minus the pumpkin seeds. Yum!)

Komatsuna with Tahini and Soy Sauce

- 1 medium bunch Komatsuna (Japanese mustard spinach)
- 1/4 cup Tahini sauce (sesame sauce)
- 1-3 tablespoons of water or lemon juice
- 1-2 teaspoons of soy sauce

Directions:

Coarsely chop Komatsuna
Steam for 2-3 minutes until tender crisp
Mix Tahini, water, or lemon juice and soy sauce together in a bowl
Pour sauce over Komatsuna and toss



November-December Lunar Phases



Community Garden

Activities



6 In rows from Left to Right: What a difference a year makes. Andy and Gail's young Becca has moved from swaddle to supersonic in short order. Melissa U. and the Wilson gang enjoying some zucchini bread and wildflower honey. The usual suspects at Corbett are busy speculating under the pomegranate tree. A rare sight recently, the ever-busy variety of the Gardening Kaczurkin was spotted harvesting the last of his summer beans. Darlene shows us what happens when good corn goes bad...well, at least unpollinated. Debra Williams bids goodbye to some of her summer tomato plants. It's a wonder that the dust from Patty's heels doesn't show in this picture. She and Marianne had this plot in shape in no time. Bruce however, is conspicuously absent from this photograph.

Community Garden

Calendar

November 2005

5 Corbett Garden Meeting, 8:00am

10 CGT Steering Committee Meeting at Darlene Schacht's, 2940 N. Santa Rosa, 9:00am. All CGT members invited.

12 Presidio Garden Meeting 8:00am



20 Chaverim Garden Meeting 8:00am

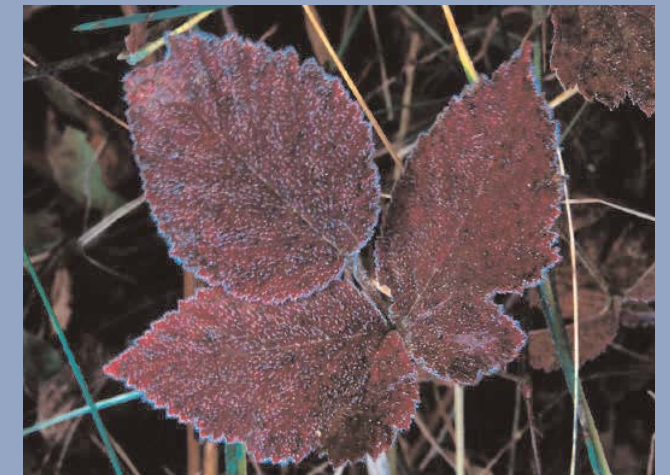
There will not be a meeting at the Wilson Garden Meeting this month. Enjoy your Thanksgiving holiday and weekend! See you on December 17th!

December 2005

3 Corbett Garden Meeting, 8:00am

8 CGT Steering Committee Meeting at Darlene Schacht's, 2940 N. Santa Rosa, 9:00am. All CGT members invited.

10 Presidio Garden Meeting, 8:00am



17 **DATE CHANGE!** Wilson Garden Meeting, 8:00am

Deadline for Newsletter Submissions

18 Chaverim Garden Meeting 8:00am