

Community Gardens of Tucson

2940 North Santa Rosa Place
Tucson, Arizona 85712
520-795-8823
www.CommunityGardensofTucson.org

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-Andy Stevens
520-990-1459; andy@solvomassage.com

Presidio Garden (Midtown)
Off Fort Lowell and Country Club
Site Coordinator - Gene Zonge
520-326-0458; Zonge@aol.com

Sabino Vista Garden (Sabino Canyon)
3185 North Rowe Lane
Site Coordinator- Susan Hussey
520-751-2074; tudieh@comcast.net
Site Coordinator-Teddy Carney
520-722-0334; teddycarney@msn.com

Wilson Garden (Midtown close to UA)
3331 North Wilson
Site Coordinator-Melissa Urreiztieta
520-320-9814; melissa.u@earthlink.net



Garden Photo



Cady Stevens shows off one of her Oma's impressive tomatoes.

Community Gardens of Tucson



Volume 9 - Issue 4

a bimonthly guide to community gardening activities in the Greater Tucson area

July/August 2008

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Special Sightings: Gardening for Food and Wildlife

by Lirian and Melissa Urreiztieta

As we tend our gardens, we make an effort to create microhabitats in which our plants can thrive. At the same time, we passively create suitable habitat for desert wildlife. If we keep our eyes and ears tuned in, we may discover a great diversity of creatures unlikely seen elsewhere in the city.

Community garden sites sprinkled throughout Tucson are oases--where animals can find the creature comforts they need: food, water, and shelter. Moist soil, dense vegetation, and little disturbance provide a comfortable place for our furry, feathered, and scaled friends to rest, hunt, and nest.



Jeff Harrison, of the Wilson Garden, recently shared with me a special sighting at the garden. While working in his plot, an adult kingsnake slithered out from the shady, moist depths of a hearty patch of squash plants in a nearby plot. While this sighting may cause some people to jump with fear, this harmless, nonvenomous predator is not only beautiful, but also beneficial to the garden.

(continued on page 9)



George Says . . .

by George Brookbank

These days all our thoughts are on water. Are our plants getting enough? What are the signs that they are happy? What are the signs that they are short of water? And so on. And, not forgetting ourselves--are we drinking enough?

Plants, in the first stages of water shortage, wilt. They recover if conditions improve quickly, but damage to their growth rate happened. A longer period of stress causes leaves to turn brown and die and recovery is less likely to happen. Leaf browning usually happens to lower leaves anyway, but if the new growth is strong and vigorous your plants will be alright.

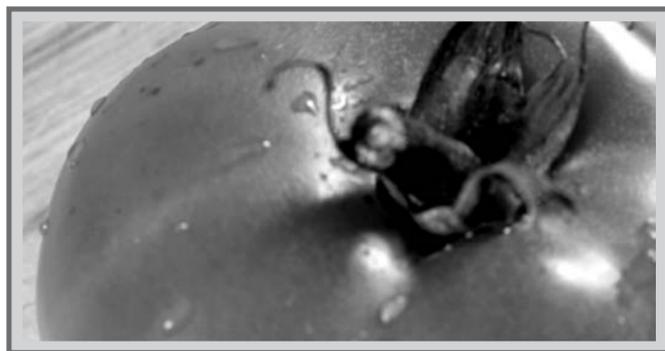
Strangely, plants wilt when they are stressed by wet soil--their roots are drowning. Use your soil probe to check soil moisture down at root depth. A constantly wet surface soil tells us that the roots may be struggling in too wet a soil lower down. It's good, even in these hot days, to let the surface inch of soil dry out---as long as the lower soil is moist. The soil probe will tell you.

Be a good irrigation manager. Check for leaks in the drip tubing caused by thirsty birds and beasts and careless spades and trowels. Leaks in a plot upset the balance of water pressure in the entire garden and they need to be repaired as quickly as possible. Our leader, Andy, diagnosed a loss of garden water pressure recently. One particular plot appeared to be not getting enough water whereas the other plots were. New tubing had been installed and though it's better tubing, the drip holes were further apart whereas all the other plots had older tubing with closer holes (at four inches). This is a tough situation and the only way to get round the problem (I think) is to make sure the dry plot gets the water it needs by a longer period of watering and turn down the green valves on the other plots to make sure they don't get too wet. When all the plots have the same kind of tubing this situation will disappear. If you think you have similar problem please call in your Site Coordinator and/or Gene Zonge If the situation is desperate you'll have to do some hand watering.

2 Other things to consider are to cover the tubing with a mulch to protect it from birds and the sun. And to cover the plants' foliage

with an old sheet to overcome sunburn of leaves and fruit. Many gardeners have already done this but there are lots of young tomatoes, peppers and eggplants that have already been damaged

Summer is going to be hard on fruit production (as well as ourselves) and on plants too. Many of them will go into heat dormancy. However, in the cooler weather or September and October (and even November if we have a mild winter) tomatoes, eggplant and bell peppers will make a remarkable recovery and give good harvests. This plant behavior suggests that it could be good practice to set out plants during the next two months, protect them with good shade and provide the water they need to get through the hot months.



Squash and melons like the heat and sunshine as long as they get sufficient water. Turn the plants back on themselves if they wander too far. Nipping off three inches of end growth often causes flowering side shoots which increases the plant's yield and spreads the harvest beyond the fruit that's already forming..

Squash seed can be sown two more times before cold weather starts. Young plants produce more than old ones and the old one are susceptible to squash vine border. A sudden and devastating wilt invites you to look for a mass of wet sawdust somewhere on the horizontal stalk. If that happens, pull the whole thing out and put in new seed. If you're not planting yellow-colored fruit already, you'll find it easier to see them amidst a jungle of green foliage.

Cover up, drink a lot.

From The Garden

Special Sightings, continued:

Like other reptiles, the kingsnake is cold-blooded and therefore needs to regulate its own body temperature. As the heat rises, a kingsnake will look for a cool place to spend the day between sunrise and sunset hunting forays. Where better to rest than beneath the large, sprawling leaves of the summer cucurbitaceae?

Kingsnakes benefit the garden by eating rodents that may dig undesirable holes or eat the fruits of our labor. They are quite considerate in their method of hunting by gliding smoothly through the garden, leaving the plants and soil completely undisturbed. Although rattlesnakes are quite unlikely in any of our gardens, should any appear they would also become kingsnake prey. Kingsnakes also benefit the garden by leaving behind one of the best fertilizers around.

Various species of the common kingsnake, Lampropeltis getula, can be found throughout the desert Southwest. Of the subspecies found in Tucson, an average adult is 3 to 4 feet in length. They are black with yellow markings that vary greatly between individuals. They mate in the spring and females lay eggs in the summer. After about 60 days, the clutch will hatch and the young are immediately independent. If we are lucky, we may see baby kingsnakes at the Wilson Garden in late August, around the time when the cornstalks turn brown and we've tried nearly every zucchini recipe in the books.

Kingsnakes have been sighted at the Wilson Garden for about five years now, from robust adults to slender hatch-year youngsters. They seem to be a perennial visitor there, and we are likely seeing many generations of the same family. To see such a species within our urban confines lends to the idea that our gardens provide for others . . . and not just in terms of edibility. This most regal of desert creatures is but one of the many links in the chain of organisms that find habitat in our gardens.

The periphery of the Tucson pueblo is rich with endemic, migrant, and rare species, but the heart of the city has lost the horny toads and bull snakes once common across the valley. Our small gardens encourage new life, and when opportunity arises, they may harbor some special and uncommon species.

I would like to reserve a bit of space in each newsletter to highlight a special sighting, so if you are out at the garden and see a lizard scurry or hear a bird's song, send me a note (melissa.u@earthlink.net), and a snapshot, too, if you happen to have your camera. Let's see what new (and wild) friendships we may cultivate as we care for our garden habitats!

New Garden Spots?

Do you know someone who knows someone with land that's sitting idle? Well, we'd like to be able to add a garden in the downtown area and another garden near where our old First Avenue garden was. The ideal site would be clear of trees (and their roots), at least 75'x75', and have access to water and electricity. We've started a good thing by partnering with church organizations or others with commercial water rates and would like to continue this as the household tiered water rates soar with no end in sight. We hope to hear from you soon!



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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.

Director's Cut

A Planter's Guide

Siriusly

by Andy Stevens

Mmmm....the heat's laying on thick now with all of the added humidity from the welcome rains. It's beginning to feel like Mississippi outside...well, with about 40% less humidity anyway. The arrival of said rain and stormy weather unfortunately means it's weed time, so try not to let your garden go to the dogs.

Pigweed and Horse Nettle are already sprouting and in a week or three they'll be big enough to laugh at a hoe and the sweaty gardener wielding it. If you feel like you've got some excess energy, head over to another garden. There'll be plenty of weeds for everyone and it's a nice way to meet other gardeners.

Enjoy Today.



Thank You!

Gary Cooper Memorial Donors

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Stan and Sally Coulthard
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 Tucson Garden Club
 Our Generous Landowners
 and Garden Coordinators

There are so many wonderful people that keep this organization running along every day. The next time you're at the garden, thank your garden coordinator and water meister for the great work that they do for all of us.



	Jul 1-15	Jul 15-31	Aug 1-15	Aug 15-31	Sep 1-15	Sep 15-30	Oct 1-15	Oct 15-31
Amaranth	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant			
Armenian Cucumber	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant
Artichoke						Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings
Arugula								
Asian Cabbage	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant
Asian Leafy Greens			Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings				
Asparagus								
Beets						Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings
Blackeyed Peas	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings
Broccoli							Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings
Broccoli Raab								
Beans (Bush)			Plant Seedlings					
Beans (Fava)								
Beans (Pole)		Plant Seedlings						
Brussels Sprouts								
Cabbage								
Cabbage (Chinese)								
Cauliflower								
Carrots								
Cantelope								
Chard								
Collards								
Corn		Plant Seeds and/or Plants						
Cucumber		Unwise To Plant						
Dandelion Greens							Plant Seeds and/or Plants	Plant Seeds and/or Plants
Eggplant			Plant Seedlings					
Endive							Plant Seeds and/or Plants	Plant Seeds and/or Plants
Garlic								
Irish Potato								
Kale								
Kolorabi							Plant Seeds and/or Plants	Plant Seeds and/or Plants
Leek							Plant Seeds and/or Plants	Plant Seeds and/or Plants
Lettuce (Leaf)								
Miner's Lettuce								
Lettuce (Romaine)								Plant Seeds and/or Plants
Lima Beans								
Mache (Corn Salad)								
Melons	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant
Musk Melon	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant
Mustard								
Okra	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings
Onion (Green)								
Onion (Sets)								
Parsnip								
Peas								
Pepper			Plant Seedlings					
Potato (Irish)								
Pumpkin	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings
Purslane Greens								
Radish							Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings
Rhubarb								
Rutabega								
Spinach								
Spinach (New Zealand)								
Spinach (Malabar)								
Squash (Summer)	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant	Unwise To Plant
Squash (Winter)	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings	Plant Seedlings
Sweet Potato								
Swiss Chard							Plant Seeds and/or Plants	Plant Seeds and/or Plants
Tomato							Plant Seeds and/or Plants	Plant Seeds and/or Plants
Turnip							Plant Seeds and/or Plants	Plant Seeds and/or Plants
Watermelon								

Legend For Planting Guide

- Unwise To Plant
- Sow Seeds
- Plant Seedlings
- Plant Seeds and/or Plants

Just Add Chips

Big tomatoes and peppers are coming out of some of the gardens right now and the onions are only a month out of the ground, so it's time for salsa. Mother Earth News had these recipes listed on their website.

Pico de Gallo (from Salsas! by Glenn Andrews)

3 ripe tomatoes, chopped
2 to 3 jalapeno or anaheim peppers seeded and minced
1/4 cup fresh cilantro, minced
1/4 cup onion, minced

Combine all ingredients. Refrigerate for at least an hour before serving. Keeps for 3 or 4 days if refrigerated. Makes about 1 cup.

Fresh Salsa (from Serving up the Harvest by Andrea Chesman)

2 cups tomatoes, seeded and finely chopped
1/4 cup scallions, white and tender green parts, finely chopped
1/4 cup fresh chile, such as jalapeno, finely chopped (seeded if desired)
1/4 cup green or red bell pepper, finely chopped
2 tbsp fresh cilantro, finely chopped
1 to 2 tbsp fresh lime juice
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
Sugar to taste

Mix together the tomatoes, scallions, chile, bell pepper, cilantro, lime juice, and the salt and pepper.

Let sit for 15 to 30 minutes. Taste and adjust the seasonings, adding sugar to taste.

Salsa Photo: rawallison @ flickr



Garden Reports

Chaverim Garden

Chaverim Garden once again resembles a tent city. Walking into the garden we're struck first by a remarkable assortment of fellow gardeners' bed linens of yesteryear. Ah, but when we lift our covers and peek underneath we find tasty summer favorites going gang busters: tomatoes of many varieties; purple, green and maybe even variegated eggplants; peppers hot or sweet, red, green, or yellow.

Uncovered crops provide an immediate feast to the eyes. Matured to an astonishing electric blue, the bristly centers of artichoke flowers rise high and make their dramatic statement from afar. In another aisle an okra bud has modestly opened to an exquisite pale yellow blossom with black-purple markings in its heart. Here and there russet-orange marigolds or bright red cosmos clamor for attention. There are ample eats and plenty of eye candy in our summertime garden.

(Pssst: rumor has it that there's a wee new gardener about.)



Presidio Garden

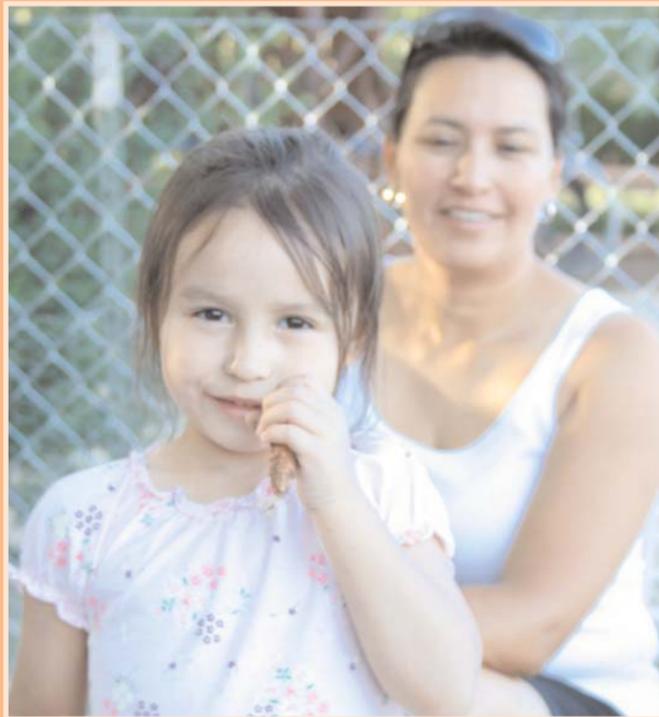
Gene's plants have been growing like mad while he was away, but the one that has garnered the most attention has to be the cardoon. It's a huge plant and looks very similar to an artichoke (pictured here).

The cardoon (*Cynara cardunculus*), also called the artichoke thistle, cardone, cardoni, carduni, or cardi, is a thistle-like plant which is member of the Aster family, Asteraceae; (or archaic: Daisy family, Compositae). It is a naturally occurring variant of the same species as the Globe artichoke, and has many cultivated varieties. It is native to the Mediterranean, where it was domesticated in ancient times. (this is an excerpt of a Wikipedia article - it can be found at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cardoon>)



Community Garden

Activities



From top left: Water on a Corbett curcubit, the onion harvest at Chaverim, and a sturdy sunflower at Presidio. Sabina Vista sweet carrots are best served straight out of the ground.

Community Garden

Calendar

July 2008

- 5 Corbett Garden Meeting 8:00am
- 10 CGT Steering Committee Meeting Darlene Schacht's, 9:00am. All CGT members invited.
- 12 Presidio Garden Meeting 8:00am



- 13 Sabino Vista Garden Meeting Time TBA
- 20 Chaverim Garden Meeting 8:00am
- 26 Wilson Garden Meeting 8:00am

August 2008

- 2 Corbett Garden Meeting 8:00am
- 9 Presidio Garden Meeting 8:00am
- 10 Sabino Vista Garden Meeting Time TBA
- 14 CGT Steering Committee Meeting at Darlene Schacht's, 9:00am. All CGT members invited.



- 17 Chaverim Garden Meeting 8:00am
- 18 **Deadline for Newsletter Submissions**
- 23 Wilson Garden Meeting 8:00am