



Red colored head lettuce at Rincon Heights Community Garden

Organic Gardening Community

January -- March
2019

INTRODUCTION:

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Winter is here!

Welcome to winter when gardeners vigilantly check the weather forecasts and make ready the frost cloth. This quarter finds us harvesting brassicas, preparing the soil for spring plantings, and dreaming of warmer weather.



Tucson Organic Gardeners

Our mission is to promote sustainable gardening and composting in the Tucson community through meetings, lectures, and publications.
TucsonOrganicGardeners.org



Rita Gardens

Focused on developing a healthier, connected community through gardening and gardening related activities. WeLoveToGrow.org



Community Gardens of Tucson

Our mission is to create and support accessible community gardens with Tucsonans of diverse experience levels, abilities and cultures in order to educate, foster wellness and enhance the environment for people, plants and pollinators.
CommunityGardensofTucson.org

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PLANTING CALENDAR

Community Gardens of Tucson Planting Guide	Vegetables	Germ. Soil Temp. °F	January		February		March		April		May
			1-15	15-31	1-15	15-28	1-15	15-31	1-15	15-30	1-15
Artichoke/Cardoon	70-80	T	T		T	T	T	T			
Arugula	40-95	ST	ST	ST	ST						
Asian Greens	45-85	ST	ST	ST	ST						
Beans (Bush)	65-85						S		S	S	
Beans (Fava)	65-85				S	S					
Beets	50-85	S	S	S	S	S	S				
Black-eyed Peas	65-95									S	S
Broccoli	45-95	ST	ST	ST	ST						
Broccoli Raab	45-95	ST	ST	ST	ST						
Brussels Sprouts	45-95	T	T								
Cabbage	45-95	ST	ST	ST	ST						
Cauliflower	45-95	ST	ST	ST	ST						
Carrots	45-85	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S		
Chinese Fok Beans	65-100									S	S
Collards	45-95	ST	ST	ST	ST						
Corn	60-95				S	S	S				
Cucumber (Armenian)	70-95									T	ST
Cucumber	65-95								S	ST	ST
Eggplant	75-90									T	T
Endive	65-80	ST	ST	ST	ST						
Garlic/Shallots	45-85	T	T								
Irish Potato ²	45-75	T	T	T	T						
Jerusalem Artichoke ²	70-80		T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
Kale	45-95	ST	ST	ST	ST						
Kohlrabi	65-80	ST	ST	ST	ST						
Leaf Lettuce	40-80	ST	ST	ST	ST						
Melons	75-95									T	ST
Mustard Greens	45-95	ST	ST	ST	ST						
Okra	70-95										ST
Onion/Leeks	50-95/70-75	T	T								
Parsnip	50-70										
Peas	45-75	S	S								
Peppers	65-95									T	ST
Pumpkin ³	70-95						ST	ST	ST	ST	ST
Radish	45-90	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	
Rutabaga	60-75	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S		
Spinach (Winter)	45-75	T	T	ST	ST						
Spinach (NZ & Malabar)	70-80									ST	ST
Squash (Summer)	70-95						ST	ST	ST	ST	ST
Squash (Winter)	70-95						ST	ST	ST	ST	ST
Sweet Potato	75-85									T	T
Swiss Chard	50-85	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST	ST				
Tomato	60-85				T	T	T	T	T		
Turnip	60-105	S	S	S	S	S	S	S	S		
Basil	55-75									ST	ST
Chives	55-75	T	T								
Cilantro	55-75	ST	ST	ST	ST						
Dill	60-80	ST	ST	ST	ST						
Mint ⁴	65-75	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
Oregano	45-80	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
Parsley	40-90	T	T	T	T						
Rosemary	50-80	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
Sage	60-80	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T
Tarragon (French)	60-80					T	T	T	T	T	T
Thyme	60-80	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	T

Legend	
	Unwise to plant
S	Sow Seeds
ST	Sow Seeds & Transplant
T	Transplant

Rev. D

- Notes: 1. If planting seeds indoors, plant 8 weeks before planting in
 2. Potatoes and Jerusalem Artichokes are planted from seed
 3. There may be restrictions when planting pumpkins and melons
 4. Quality herb production is best achieved with filtered sunlight
 5. Speak to the site coordinator about Amaranth, Asparagus, Lemon Balm, Lemon Verbena, Lemon Grass, Lima Bean:

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Above chart excerpted from the Community Gardens of Tucson Planting Guide:

<http://www.communitygardensoftucson.org/planting-guide/>

Tucson Organic Gardeners Planting Guide: http://www.tucsonorganicgardeners.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/TOG_Planting_Guide.pdf

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Elizabeth Smith is the Executive Director of the Community Gardens of Tucson and a 2nd generation Tucsonan only a few generations removed from Irish potato farmers. She has been digging in our desert soils since childhood and one of her first gardens was a plot of cotton in her backyard at age 8. The late George Brookbank became her mentor in college, where she learned from his extensive knowledge of growing in dry, hot climates. Since then she has added new (and old) methods of growing to her repertoire such as organic cultivation, permaculture, rainwater conservation, vermiculture and harvesting native foods. Elizabeth is a former Chef and the founder of WeLoveToGrow.org a non-profit focusing on teaching people techniques for growing in our challenging climate, preparing, cooking and preserving foods from the garden and the desert, soap making, vermiculture and more.

Melody Peters has been gardening in Tucson for 38 years. Most of that time she has been planting native wildflowers, shrubs and trees, but once she joined Tucson Organic Gardeners, she started seriously growing vegetables and fruit. She is coordinator of Rincon Heights Community Garden, an independent garden located just south of the University of Arizona main campus.

Madeleine Viceconte is a University of Arizona Journalism Student who recently visited various Community Gardens in the Tucson area to do interviews and agreed to share her report here in our newsletter.

Chef J. Todd Eanes C.E.C is a classically trained Chef with 30+ years of professional kitchen experience. Todd has lived and worked in kitchens in Russia, Austria, Alaska, Antarctica, U.S. Virgin Islands, Atlanta, Washington D.C., Tucson AZ., and Roanoke VA., Todd has many years of executive experience as a Certified Executive Chef, Program Culinary Manager, and Director of Food and Nutrition. Todd has 10+ years of culinary arts teaching experience as well as experience managing his own restaurant. Todd has extensive logistical experience in remote food service operations and has cooked dinner at the South Pole. Currently he owns and manages ComKitchen here in Tucson which is a full service, licensed commissary kitchen/incubator that is available to rent by the hour. He is interested in the success of others and is happy and always willing to mentor people new to food service business. Our website is www.comkitchen1.com.

Rodney Boudreaux is known to many in town as the 'Expert Chicken Guy' and he can be found at Ace Hardware on 22nd and Kolb if you are looking for advice and specific types of chicks for your chicken yard. He also grows organic produce at Chaverim Community Garden, one of the many gardens overseen by the Community Gardens of Tucson: www.communitygardensoftucson.org.

WHY COMMUNITY GARDENS?

By Madeleine Viceconte



Contrary to popular belief, the desert is able to sustain life.

Alexandre DuBroy, manager of the University of Arizona Community Garden, is no stranger to this concept. Just like a stalk of broccoli, his passion for plants grows every day and he wakes up ready to seize the day and take advantage of the wonderful winter weather. As the volunteers sort through weeds, harvest vegetables, and rearrange rocks, DuBroy checks in on everything that is going on and finds something for people to do. In between organizing, he stops and chats with his peers and keeps a high level of enthusiasm.

As a manager, DuBroy works 15-20 hours a week in the garden, but the position is a bit more administrative than he would prefer. Much of his role includes doing paperwork, meeting with advisors, making purchases, dealing with finances, and ensuring that the garden has enough funds. However, his favorite part is being immersed outside in the garden with everyone during their weekly work days and leading community events, such as Stories in the Garden.

"I sincerely hope we're building a community here," DuBroy said. "We're building a group of folks who are close, who have a good camaraderie and we're getting closer to the Earth; we're getting closer to our food and understanding how our food is grown."

There are a variety of community gardens scattered across Tucson where people are able to purchase small plots of land and plant fruits and vegetables of their choice. The gardens provide a way for people to grow their own food that they can easily cook and are a viable alternative to store-bought produce. Additionally, the products that are harvested can be sold in a farmer's market or donated to a local food bank.

Not only does community gardening make growing fresh food easy and accessible, but it allows people to get outdoors and interact with those who have similar interests. Anyone of all ages and backgrounds can come together and learn from one another. Whether someone has been gardening their whole life or is just getting started doesn't matter and gardening is an inclusive activity that everyone can participate in.

Gardening in a community garden can be less time consuming and laborious than gardening at home. Once someone begins renting a garden bed, it is ready for planting, so the gardener will not have to go through the process of going to the store and placing the soil themselves. Also, since an irrigation system is part of the garden, there is no need for the gardener to water the plants. The only priority is to help maintain the garden space and harvest the produce when it is ready.

The Community Gardens of Tucson is an organization that runs 21 community gardens around Tucson including Blue Moon Garden, located at 1501 N. Oracle Road and Doolen Garden, located at 2400 N. Country Club Rd. There is an \$18 rental fee per plot to join to cover the cost of the irrigation system. All the food grown is organic and does not use any type of chemicals, including pesticides.

Elizabeth Smith, the Executive Director of the Community Gardens of Tucson, started as the site coordinator for the Rita Ranch Community Garden, located at 7471 S. Houghton Rd. She noticed that there was a lack of public community gardens in the Southeast Tucson area and wanted to change that. She was able to do enough fundraising to start developing two acres of land. So far, almost half of that space has been developed and Elizabeth is working on getting more funding to finish the rest of the project. Her involvement and devotion to her job eventually led to her earning the title of Executive Director.

According to Smith, there are site coordinators who are in charge of a specific garden and oversee the logistics. Anybody in the community can help and volunteer at a garden even if they are not renting a garden bed. Saturdays are the most popular days for people to come and work, but the gardens are available every day to meet with site coordinators.

Gardeners can plant almost any fruit, vegetable, or herb they choose as long as it is in season. The only exceptions are that marijuana, because it is not legal, and mint because of its invasive properties cannot be grown. Currently, brassicas such as broccoli, cabbage, kale, spinach, and lettuce are being harvested. The Rita Ranch Community Garden is also getting ready to plant pecan, Asian pear, carob, Chinese apple, fig, pomegranate, and mulberry trees in the spring.

The weather and climate in Tucson does not prevent bountiful harvests and the heat can actually be beneficial for produce such as eggplants, chilies, and tomatoes. The winter frost makes vegetables such as cabbage and Brussel sprouts taste sweeter. The most important aspect of gardening is having good quality soil and mulch to keep the roots moist and healthy.

Smith believes that community gardening has a different energy than gardening at home and is helpful to those involved. Gardening is able to bring a diverse group of people together who share a common interest. People can have meaningful interactions with others and the Earth while creating a healthier lifestyle for themselves physically and mentally.

“The Earth is very important to us as human beings and we kind of get lost when we never touch the Earth and instead go from our homes to our cars and asphalt, then to glass and concrete office buildings, and then back to our cars, asphalt and homes,” Smith said.

Rincon Heights Community Garden, located at 1053 E. 8th Street was built by and is maintained by Rincon Heights Neighborhood Association on land owned by the University of Arizona. A Garden Committee made up of garden members administers the garden, and committee chairperson, Melody Peters, coordinates their efforts. Now in its seventh year, the garden has 36 garden plots where individual members grow both standard and more unusual vegetables, and an Herb and Pollinator Garden designed to attract a diversity of beneficial insects. *

Peters acknowledges that there are benefits to community gardening. She appreciates that it allows people to share with each other and gain new knowledge.

“It’s just having the company, Peters said.” “Gardeners are usually good, positive people so they’re fun to be around.”

**Minor edits supplied by Melody Peters*

STUDENT GARDENERS ROCK!

By Elizabeth Smith

Many gardens in the community garden world are tended to by Student Gardeners. Ventana Vista Elementary, Sunrise Elementary, Rita Ranch Community Garden, Blue Moon Community Garden and Chaverim Community Garden are just some of the many locations students are rocking the gardening world. Recently, many classrooms benefitted from the fruits of their labors by harvesting the last of the summer season's veggies and moved on to planting winter crops.



Andrea Alvarez, Ventana Vista's Site Coordinator has been having a lot of fun with the student gardeners from Ventana Vista Elementary School. She says the 3rd grade Spanish Immersion class students harvested a native squash called "Magdalena Big Cheese" that looks a lot like a pumpkin and has the size and weight to match. Then both 3rd graders and 1st graders planted kale, broccoli, broccolini, purple cabbage, endive, collard greens, lettuces, radishes, carrots, beets and flowers like California poppies, bachelor buttons, lupine and borage. The students learned about challenges in the garden and how to deal with these kinds of disappointments when their strawberries all died off. On a high note, they still have native Apache gourds drying on a trellis that the students will learn how to paint from a local artist.

Harry Crane, Sunrise Elementary Garden's Site Coordinator says the teachers at that school are very involved and they even come and garden on their own time besides during school hours with the kids. "At Sunrise Garden there is a very special relationship between the school and the Community Gardens of Tucson." Harry continues, "There are fourteen (14) CGT gardener's plots and sixteen (16) plots used by classes at the school. Each class has a plot where the kids chose what to plant, tend their garden and harvest their crops. Part of the school curriculum includes gardening – it isn't an extra-curricular activity but an integral part of the school program. It all works because the Sunrise Drive School community fully supports the program and has developed a support structure of students, teachers, teacher garden liaison, parents, a Family Faculty Organization (FFO) and a teacher FFO Chairperson".





The student gardeners at the Rita Ranch Community Garden are making lots of great things happen in their garden beds. This past semester Vail Blended Learning Principal Kristen Murray and Community Gardens of Tucson Executive Director Elizabeth Smith collaborated on an Agriculture Class aimed at students in the Middle and High School levels. Students learned all about good growing practices beginning with a foundation of organic soil cultivation. Seed germination, watering techniques, seasonal planting choices and most fun of all, harvesting, were all covered in this hands-on class. At the start of the semester, students picked out the plants they wanted to grow by pouring through seed catalogs. Spicy peppers were a favorite! Once the seeds arrived, they created their own signature germination mix using things like coconut coir, compost and earthworm castings, all organic of course. They labeled and dated everything and watered the little pots as needed. Within a short period of time, little green seedlings began emerging. Students planted their seedlings in their garden bed in the Rita Ranch Community Garden and came back each week to tend their plants. Teacher Monica Christensen drove the students to the garden located at 7471 S. Houghton and was often seen joining in the fun as well. Other popular activities were digging tree wells and creating fun art projects for their beds. If you come visit the garden you will quickly notice the brightly colored clay pots as well as artistically painted rocks depicting desert scenes and other creative motifs. The students hope you are inspired by all their hard work!

Traditional classroom students aren't the only kids enjoying gardening; homeschoolers like to get in on the action too! Blue Moon Community Garden located at 1501 N. Oracle and Chaverim Community Garden located at 5901 E. 2nd Street each have a garden bed reserved just for homeschoolers and they've been going strong for 4 years now. Each of the gardens hosts 10 kids ranging in ages from 3-12 who do everything from planting to harvesting. If you know of a homeschooler who would like to join one of these groups, contact Coordinator Jessica Paul: Admin@communitygardensoftucson.org.



Happy Harvesters from the Blue Moon Community Garden



We love digging at the Chaverim Community Garden

VEGETABLE BORSCHT

By Chef Todd Eanes

Having lived in rural Russia (Votkinsk) for 5 years I learned several ways to make Borscht. The recipe below I use often when I have vegetarian guests.

Vegetable Borscht

Serves 12-14

2 medium-size beets, peeled and grated (yellow beets also work well)
1 large carrot, peeled and grated
1 Tablespoon olive oil
1 tomato, diced
2 Tablespoons of water
Juice of ½ lemon
2 Liters of water/vegetable broth
1 Tablespoon of salt
5 medium-size potatoes, diced
½ cabbage, coarsely shredded
1 small onion, diced
1 teaspoon olive oil
5-7 whole black peppers
3-4 bay leaves
1 Tablespoon dried parsley
2-3 garlic cloves, halved

Directions:

1. Heat up 1 Tablespoon of olive oil in a large pot over medium/high heat. Add grated beets, carrots and diced tomatoes.
2. Add 2 Tablespoons of water and lemon juice to the vegetables and stir.
3. Reduce the heat to low, cover the pot and simmer for 20 min.
4. Boil 2 Liters of water in a kettle. Add the water to the shredded vegetables after they have been simmering for 20 min.
5. Bring to a boil and add 1 Tablespoon of salt.
6. Add diced potatoes and shredded cabbage to the soup and cook for 10 min.
7. Meanwhile, heat up 1 teaspoon of olive oil in a small skillet and sauté the onion over medium heat until it becomes golden.
8. Add the onions to the pot and give it a good stir.
9. Finally, add black pepper, bay leaves, garlic and dried parsley to the soup and continue cooking another 5-10 min.
10. Remove borscht from the heat. It is now ready to be served.
11. When serving borscht, add sour cream, fresh herbs like dill and freshly ground pepper to individual bowls.

Notes: Borscht will stay fresh in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

CULTIVATING CONNECTIONS

By Elizabeth Smith

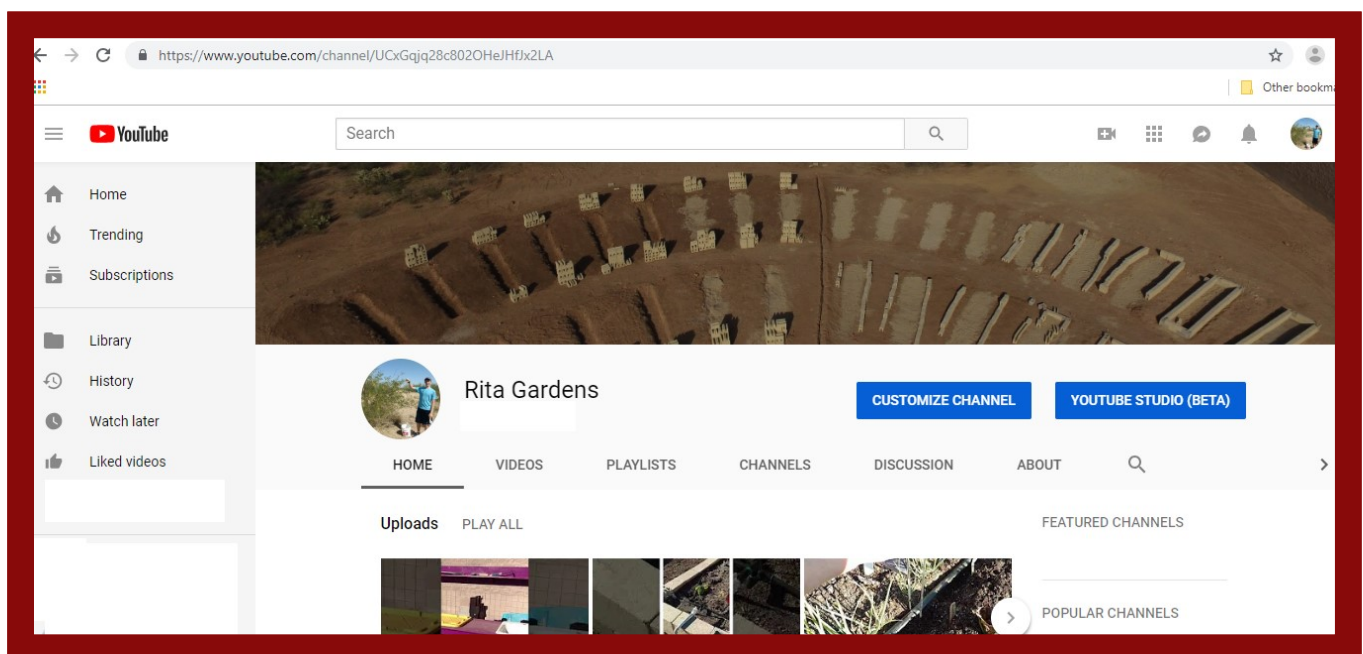
Gardeners are really good at cultivating crops of corn, carrots and kale but what about cultivating connections and spreading the news about what we do and how we do it? Many of us are learning modern ways to get the word out and I certainly count myself as one of those people. Our Rita Gardens' mission statement reads, "Focused on developing a healthier, connected community through gardening and gardening related activities". I really believe that "connected" is one of the key principles of what we do and who we are. If the internet age offers us new ways to inspire others to grow those corn, carrot and kale plants, then I'm all for it!

Since I already take a kazillion pictures and videos of anything plant/tree/soil/earthworm/etc related, it makes sense to share them in an easily accessible format for anyone to view. The problem I was finding is that I could never seem to email them out because the files were too large to send, even if it was only a 30 second video. So I would revert to just sharing pictures and videos face to face on my cell phone, one person at a time. But having tons of pictures and videos on my cell phone creates a problem too because it uses up space very quickly. Pretty soon, I would run out of storage space and my phone wouldn't let me take any more videos until I transfer them to my computer to store them there.

So to resolve this technical dilemma, I've recently created a YouTube channel to highlight all the great stuff going on in the local garden world. Check out all the videos here:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCxGqjq28c802OHeJHfJx2LA>

I find gardeners as a whole to be very visual people so videos are always well received. YouTube offers a simple way to make it faster and more convenient to access. Feel free to watch any of our videos and subscribe if you like what you see. On a side note, if you are interested in Monarch butterflies, look for a video interview of a local man who is raising Monarchs and growing lots of milkweed. If you would like to see a video of YOUR garden highlighted on our YouTube channel, reach out to me at welovetogrow@gmail.com. I'd be happy to help you share your hard work and inspiration too!



GROWING PEANUTS

By Rodney Boudreaux

So, maybe as a gardener you've found yourself in this situation. You are standing in front of a seed display, or sitting at home in winter with the seed catalog open on your lap, and something: flower, herb, vegetable jumps right out at you.

And you catch yourself, you think maybe that is a bridge too far.

It's probably my Cajun upbringing (we think we could grow rice on the moon if we could figure out how to get up there). In other words, there's NOTHING that's a bridge too far.

Last spring, I'm thumbing through the *Baker Creek Heirloom Seed* catalog, minding my own business, NOT shopping for seed, and there it is: peanuts! What the heck! Why not!



I do try to plant one thing each season that I've never grown before... parsnips, Brussels sprouts, fava beans, chard have all started out that way. Mostly those experiments aren't very successful, but I do hit a winner now and then.

The position of my experimental choice was open last spring, so peanuts it was.

I planted in March. Forget trying to figure out our latest frost date. I got two varieties from Baker Creek: Fastigiata and Tennessee Red. There's not much room in those small paper envelopes, so that saved me from planting a whole row of them. I did plant two sections of each on two different rows. Instructions said an inch deep, so I planted them that way in three-foot sections.

Reward came early; they all seemed to sprout well. Growth was slow, and none of the plants seemed all that vigorous. May hit with our predictable heat. This wiped out all of the sections except one. This one struggled through June, with about a foot in height growth. Monsoon came and these babies hit their stride. The plants exploded outward to cover an area five feet square with dense extensive new growth and blossoming.

They just seemed to keep expanding. I didn't know until this experiment that those little yellow flowers are pollinated and then they put out a root that grows into the ground. This is where the peanuts develop.

September and October passed with more vegetative growth. I'd expected some yellowing and dieback, but it wasn't happening. Push came to shove. I needed space for fall plantings, and to be honest, I was really anxious to see what was under all that plant growth.

Mid-November I pulled plants and dug. I managed to harvest about a pound of peanuts. These were perfect, and after curing them on my sunny porch for a week, they were excellent right out of the shell.

My conclusion is that our seasons aren't that conducive to peanuts. They needed that nice moisture, and then drier more temperate weather to produce nuts. The few I harvested were obviously from the early spring growth/blossoming, and they were scarce. All that growth from the monsoon rain took away from those first blossoms and blossoms that came

later didn't have enough time to produce. Oh well.

But I learned much from the process, and I have a better appreciation of these protein and fat rich treasures. I wouldn't discourage anyone from trying them on their own because they were fun and interesting. Baker Creek has reduced their offering to just the Tennessee Reds, but these were the variety that survived in my plot.

POWERFUL DAIKON

Plant Daikon to Break Up Impacted Soil

by Melody Peters

A couple of years ago, when shopping for native plant seed, I happened across advice about growing daikon radish to break up impacted soil. I had read about this years earlier in Masanobu Fukuoka's *One Straw Revolution* but didn't at the time consider using the technique, so I filed the tip in some dusty region of my brain. On reading this advice for the second time the information registered since we were trying to deal with a trouble spot at Rincon Heights Community Garden where impacted soil was keeping us from growing pollinator plants.

To be honest we knew when constructing our garden that the soil in that particular spot was impacted. We should have done the hard digging to address problem as soon as we realized we had a problem, but because we were in a rush to coordinate with other phases of the project we didn't. Once our underground irrigation was turned on, we found that the spot did not drain. After losing a slew of fine penstemon plants we were at a loss as to how to address the problem; we couldn't at this point go back in and dig aggressively with picks or garden forks for fear of puncturing our fragile underground irrigation lines. We tried some replacement plants but those (alas!) died too. When I read of daikon as a solution to impacted soil for a second time the idea had instant appeal; the seed was very reasonably priced and what had we to lose? Here is the story of our daikon experiment in pictures.

1. *The Herb and Pollinator Garden within Rincon Heights Community Garden Under Construction in 2015.* We planted penstemon in the small bed close to the rain jar on the right. The soil there was badly impacted and remained soggy, so consequently all native pollinator plants we planted there died.



2. *Daikon Radishes planted from seed in fall of 2016* putting on lots of growth during the winter.



3. A daikon radish just begging to be picked. As the radish grows, the root at some point appears to be jumping out of the ground. If you are growing the radish for consumption this would be a good time to pull it. If, however, you are using daikon as a cover crop to break up impacted or heavy clay soil, do not harvest it. Instead, allow it to grow until it naturally dies.

4. Death of a Radish. In cooler climates without severe frost, daikon can live for several years, eventually drilling their roots a couple of feet into the soil. In our Tucson experiment the radish plants died when the weather got hot. We left the plants to rot in the ground. At monsoon's end the garden bed was filled with hollow skeletonized roots, perfect delivery tubes for water and



oxygen into the soil! In October, about a year after planting the daikon seed, I introduced new pollinator plants and some native wildflower seed into the plot. Today the once troublesome garden spot is host to several species of penstemon and milkweed, chocolate-scented daisy, cosmos and germander.

5. Success! Pollinator Plants Now in Business!

Above: Caterpillar of Monarch Butterfly feeding on Tropical Milkweed (*Asclepis curassivica*) thriving in once impacted soil. Photographed November 3, 2018, by Deborah Oslik.

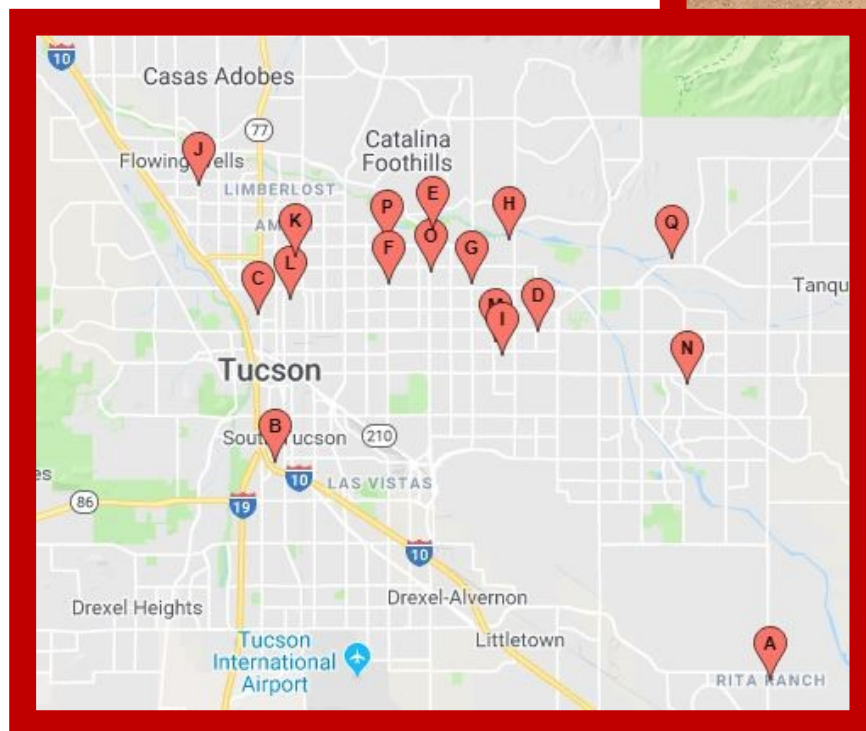


COMMUNITY GARDENS OF TUCSON

The Community Gardens of Tucson oversees 20 organic gardens throughout the greater Tucson area. Each one of the gardens is unique and everyone and anyone is welcome to garden with us.

Links to all the gardens are here:

<https://www.communitygardensoftucson.org/garden-list/>



If you'd like to find a garden near you, go to: <https://www.communitygardensoftucson.org/>

CGT Event: The 5th annual Spring Garden Tour will feature all kinds of amazing gardens including private gardens, community gardens and school gardens. It is an open house style tour taken at your own pace with a map and directions to each garden provided. The tour will start at the Rita Ranch Community Garden located at 7471 S. Houghton Rd, just south of Valencia and across the parking lot from the Ace Hardware. 9-1. See flyer on page 14 of this newsletter for more details.

TUCSON ORGANIC GARDENERS

Tucson Organic Gardeners offers fantastic lectures on all kinds of organic gardening and composting subjects. December's lecture was on How to Extend the Growing Season. Check it out here:

<http://www.tucsonorganicgardeners.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Season-Extension-Techniques.pdf>

Tucson Organic Gardeners Calendar for 2019



Tucson
Organic
Gardeners

presents

Spring 2019 Garden Fair

Find all you need to garden in one place! Seeds, plants, veggie starts, trees, compost, soil, tools, info, fun, children's activities and much more!

Where: 2 blocks west of Alvernon on 2nd Street.
North Parking Lot at St Mark's
Presbyterian Church

When: Saturday, March 2, 2019

Time: 9am-1pm

<http://www.tucsonorganicgardeners.org/>

TucsonOrganicGardeners@gmail.com @TucsonOrganicGardeners



For more than 40 years Tucson Organic Gardeners has been helping gardeners to grow healthy vegetables and fruits in the Sonora Desert without the use of chemicals.

Meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month from September through April. Our meetings generally are preceded by social time with snacks brought in by volunteers, open with announcements and time for questions about organic gardening, and then followed by a lecture about a topic of general interest. Doors will open at 6:30 PM and meetings will start about 6:45 PM.

Here is a preliminary list of the lectures and events for the first quarter of 2019 year.

Tuesday, January 15, 2019

Fruit trees, bare root planting and grafting. Speaker to be determined.

Tuesday, February 19, 2019

Lecture: Low Water, Low Labor, Hot Composting plus more Creative and Resourceful Ideas around the Garden, presented by Joy Holdread.

TOG SPRING GARDEN FAIR!

Saturday, March 2, 2019

Come Join the fun: Buy plants and other items for your spring garden and gain useful information from the area's experts: Spring plant starts, native vegetables, herbs, flowers and seeds, organic compost, fertilizers and garden supplies, children's activity corner, free gardening class at 11:00 AM, raffle, music, games and more.

Tuesday, March 19, 2019

Lecture about desert harvesting and sprouting, including safety concerns, by Wanda Poindexter.

Tuesday, April 16, 2019

End of year propagation party. Participants bring in cuttings, pots and seeds. Potting soil and gardeners capable of instructing various techniques to be provided by TOG.

VENDOR OPPORTUNITY

A call to all you plant growers and plant crafters. The Tucson Organic Gardeners Spring Fair will be on Saturday, March 2, 2019, 9:00 AM-1:00 PM at St. Mark's Presbyterian Church. This is usually a well-attended event and vendors do quite well. Last fall, one nursery vendor sold out and another with veggie starts and herbs took in nearly \$1500.00! If you have a product that relates to organic gardening, consider being a part of this one day, fun event. Vendors are asked to contribute 10% of their sales and one item for the raffle that benefits TOG. Non-profits may set up a booth gratis. Contact our president, Mohye Abdulaziz at TucsonOrganicGardeners@gmail.com

MORE EVENTS AROUND TOWN

Spring Garden Tour



Spring Garden Tour!



Saturday April 13th
9 am – 1 pm

Tour starts at the Rita Ranch/Ace Acre Community Garden:
 7471 S. Houghton (Houghton/Valencia across from Ace Hardware)

Tickets: Day of the Tour at Ace Hardware
 Online: [GoFundMe.com/RitaGardens](https://www.gofundme.com/RitaGardens)
 \$7 Adults \$3 Kids 12 & under

FARMERS MARKET in the Garden

Produce, Plants, Local Honey, Handcrafted Soaps & More!

Raffle Prizes

Communitygardensoftucson.org [Facebook.com/RitaGardens](https://www.facebook.com/RitaGardens)

Spring Plant Sales

Saturday, February 16 from 9 am to 1 pm. Tomato plant sale at Rincon Heights Community Garden, 1053 E. 8th Street. Many, many varieties (mostly heirlooms) of organically raised tomato starts. Some landscape plants also available. Prices start at \$2 each. Half of sales receipts will be donated to the garden.

Saturday, March 2, from 9 am to 1 pm. TOG Spring Fair. One-stop shopping for almost all your organic garden needs, raffle, kid's events, free gardening class. Please see flyer on page 14.

Desert Survivors Spring 2019 Plant Sale. March 9th through 16. This sale usually starts with members'-only days followed by a sale open to the general public. Spectacular selection of native plants.

Saturday, April 6, 2019. 8:00 am to 11:00 am. Pima County Master Gardeners 2019 Plant Sale, 4210 N. Campbell Avenue. You can find great deals on plants raised by the Master Gardeners. This sale is very popular and plants regularly sell out, so arrive early to get the best selection. They accept cash and personal checks but do not take credit cards.

<https://extension.arizona.edu/sites/extension.arizona.edu/files/data/LibraryTalkSchedule2019.pdf>

Classes

Pima County Master Gardeners

Saturday, January 12, 9 am – 11 am. *Tomatoes.* Learn all about raising this delectable fruit. Class will be held at new location the UofA Food Product & Safety Lab, 4181 N. Campbell Avenue (entrance is on Roger Road at NW corner of Roger and Campbell). Walk-ins welcome but if you would like to receive handouts you will have to register in advance.

<https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/eventReg?oeidk=a07efzx3nt0cd9827eb&oseq=&c=8dbd0390-da24-11e4-b420-d4ae52754007&ch=8f81e510-da24-11e4-b436-d4ae52754007>

Entire Spring, 2019 schedule of Library Talks offered by Pima County Master Gardeners:

<https://extension.arizona.edu/sites/extension.arizona.edu/files/data/LibraryTalkSchedule2019.pdf>

Tohono Chul Park, Spring Workshops and Classes Schedule:

<https://tohonochulpark.org/upcomingevents/classes-lectures-workshops/>

Tucson Botanical Gardens, Gardening classes:

Growing Spring Transplants, 01/12/2019, 9:30 am – noon;

Trees of Southern Arizona, 01/18/2019, 10 a.m. to noon

Sustainable Landscape Design, Jan. 2019 01/30/2019, 9 am - 4 pm

DIY Desert Design- Spring 2019- 9 a.m. to noon Saturdays, Feb 9, 16, 23 Mar 2, 9, 16

Wildflowers of Southern Arizona 02/08/2019 10 a.m. to noon

Preparing for Spring Gardening 02/12/2019 10 a.m. to noon

In addition to gardening classes Tucson Botanical Gardens holds classes in subjects ranging from yoga and Tai Chi to outdoor sketching, watercolor and journaling. For complete up-to-date schedule and registration click: <https://tucsonbotanical.org/class-schedule/>