

Community Gardens of Tucson

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Community Gardens of Tucson

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

January/February 2008



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Presidio Makeover

By Gene Zonge

The first frost of the season came on the night of December 14th and this was repeated on the night of the 15th. The once beautiful tomato, bell pepper and okra plants are not very good looking now and all of the volunteer green beans are dead too. It wasn't a very hard freeze so even unprotected pipes probably would have been ok, but several weeks ago we insulated all of the above ground irrigation plumbing. It might be safer if we moved all of it under ground some day, but that will have to wait. Here are a few recently completed projects.



From Top Left: Carpets appear to be magically keeping weeds at bay. The new garden coordinator Gene Zonge and George inspect a plant. A discussion of all things gardening.

- * The garden is completely carpeted now. We are hoping that the carpeting will help keep down the weeds next monsoon.
- * A 10 foot area outside the south fence has been cleared and carpeted to try to keep the weeds from encroaching.
- * Gravel has been spread in some of the driving areas to try to keep down the dust.
- * The cactus and Bermuda grass has been cleared away from the inside of the west fence. We now have 2 plots in good shape for new gardeners and 2 more plots that need a little work to get ready for new gardeners.
- * The chopping block has been rebuilt to give a larger work surface.
- * The mesquite tree has been trimmed to eliminate the very low branches and to let the wind blow through it more easily.
- * The water timer and valves have been changed so that the north row and the south row are watered separately.
- * The rain gauge has been wired in to the timer so that rain will shut off the irrigation. We will watch it carefully to make sure that it works properly.

In addition to all of this activity, the rhubarb, radishes, cabbage, broccoli rabe, kohlrabi, cardoon, and arugula seem to be thriving.

Garden Photo



Jeff and John are keeping busy in order to stay warm at a recent Wilson garden meeting.

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-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



CONTACTS

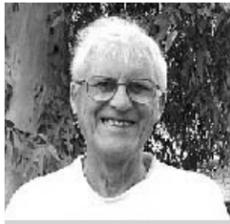
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****Position Open****

Steering Committee
Gary Cooper - 520-751-6769
Bob Ishmael - 520-572-6315
Shirley McReynolds - 520-408-0659
Angela Powers - 520-293-2817
John Swanson - 520-548-8193
Signa Roswall - 520-750-8439
Gwen Curiel - 520-327-0578



George Says . . .

by George Brookbank

Anyone who listens to the news on either radio or T-V knows that a frost is about to happen. With the weather cooling down in December it's an inevitability but what has been surprising during the last several weeks is that our summer plants have not stopped growing. So, gardeners have lots of tomatoes, many eggplant and peppers.

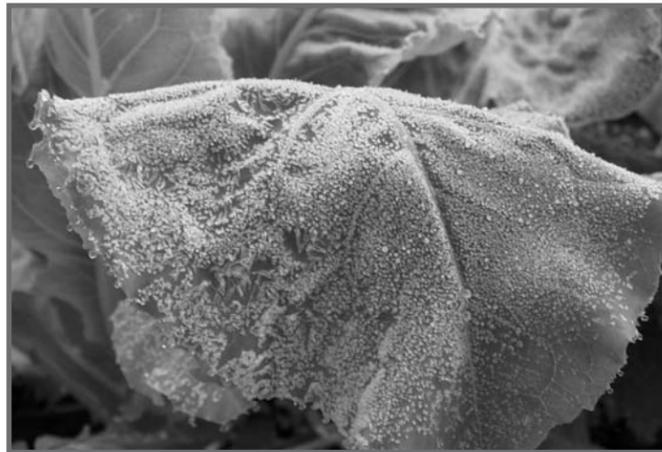
All at once they will have an abundance of fruit and will wonder what to do with it. During garden walks recently I'd suggested that gardeners don't uproot their plants that have fruit on them, but "wait and see" whether a frost will come and do damage. Well, that moment has arrived. The problem will be what to do with all that fruit.

Cook books with recipes are now needed because there are many more ways to use those tomatoes than making "green tomato pie". I've read that you can make chutneys and "green tomato marmalade" and I'm sure that yellow pear tomatoes can be pickled. Teddy, our Patrona at Sabino Vista produced an excellent fried sliced green tomato with bread-crumbs and olive oil

Don't waste the harvest. You can wrap large tomatoes in newspaper and loosely put them in a box with pieces of apple core. They will ripen on their own and though the color turns to a sort of red they may not taste as good as colorful ripe tomatoes- off-the- vine.

The space you get from pulling the frosted vines allows you to do a little digging, after adding steer manure and ammonium phosphate, which can be used to plant any of the cool season vegetables, such as broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and lettuce. They'll grow slowly but there's a trick to make them grow faster. And that is make a tunnel of clear plastic. A gardener at Sabino Vista has created a good example for us to follow by bending a double strip of metal reinforcing (such a block layers use)to make an arch that is three feet high and three feet across (the width of the plot). Then clear plastic was draped over the framework and held down by bricks--in case the wind blows. There's an extra amount of plastic to cover the ends, and these were also held down by bricks. The structure is really a miniature greenhouse

and it captures the sun's heat during the day, holds it until the morning when the sun again warms up the volume of air inside. If the days are sunny and too warm one of the ends can be opened to let out



Above: Broccoli glistens with a fresh layer of frost at the Wilson garden after a cool night.

the heat. Or even both ends on a series of very hot days.

Seeds of radish, turnip, lettuce, beets, and carrots can all be sown inside a plastic tunnel and their growth will be speeded up considerably. All these seeds lend themselves to mass light scatterings (instead of the long narrow rows that are described in many gardening books). Long narrow rows tend to make crowded seedlings that are weak and spindly. In a scattered sowing you can thin some and leave some to grow bigger, or you can snip off the tops and eat mini-leaves for filling sandwiches. It's a quick way to get food.

When walking through all of our gardens and when you see something of great interest, it's nice to know what it is and when it was put in the ground. Most of us don't remember and the lesson is lost. Wouldn't it be nice if every gardener put a weather-proof label for each crop. All of us could get an immediate answer and write it into our own garden notebook. Just joking---of course!!

Field Trip to Arbico - January 19, 2008

There is a place called Arbico in Oracle, just a few miles north of us, where they raise predator insects. They have been selling them to home gardeners, farmers, horse keepers, chicken minders, and people who are generally bothered by flies and mosquitoes. They raise preying mantids, lacewings, ladybugs, parasitic wasps and so on and have a bunch of "safe" organic materials for all sorts of garden ailments... even products for dogs and cats. They will give us a tour of their facilities, speak of their non-chemical philosophy, and sell us small packets to bring home. The cost will be \$5.00 per person for the hour's presentation and you'll pay at their office. If you want to car pool please meet at my house (4067 N First Avenue) at or before 9.30am. Melissa, the Site Coordinator at the Wilson Garden, has kindly offered to take six people if they contribute towards gas for her thirsty giant.



~ George

Directions to ARBICO:

From the I-10 take the Tangerine exit heading east. Turn North on Oracle Rd. Turn right on Golder Ranch Rd. Travel approximately 2 miles, then turn left on Lago del Oro Parkway. Travel approximately 2 miles; at the top of the hill, turn right on Edwin directly after a conspicuous row of mailboxes. Travel ¼ mile on dirt road then turn left on de Vargas. Travel about ¼ mile on de Vargas, you will see a slate rock ARBICO sign. Drive through the white gates. Park in front of the 2nd building. The third building on your left is the sales office.

Local Farmer's Markets for Produce

Saturdays

PLAZA PALOMINO: When: 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Where: 2970 N. Swan Road Info: 320-6344, www.plazapalomino.com

ORO VALLEY FARMER'S MARKET: When: 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Where: Oro Valley Town Hall, 11000 N. La Cañada Drive Oro Valley Info: 918-9811

RINCON VALLEY FARMERS MARKET: When: 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Where: 12500 E. Old Spanish Trail Info: 591-2276, www.rinconinstitute.org/rvfm/index.html

THE STATION: When: 9 a.m.-noon Where: 1395 W. American Ave. Info: (520) 896-9005, www.thestationoracle.com (Web site under construction)

Sundays

ST. PHILIP'S PLAZA FARMER'S MARKET: When: 8 a.m.-12 p.m. Where: St. Philip's Plaza Farmer's Market, 4380 N. Campbell Ave. Info: 918-9811, <http://stphilipsplaza.com/plaza/events.php>

CIVANO NURSERY ARTISANS & FARMERS' MARKET: When: 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Sunday Where: 5301 S. Houghton Road Info: 248-9218, DragoonMarketplace.MySite.com

Sell That Extra Produce!

If you've ever wondered what to do with the extra produce that your plots provide, the Community Food bank has the answer to your problem of abundance. They will take the produce that you drop off and sell it at the CFB Farmers Market or at the Santa Cruz Farmers Market. They get a small percentage of the sale, and you get to choose whether you would like to get back any unsold produce, or just donate it to the food bank. Either way, everyone wins. If you're interested, contact Amanda Morse at 622-0525 x237 or at amorse@communityfoodbank.com



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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

A Fresh Start

by Andy Stevens

These pictures are from 2007's last garden meeting at the Wilson Garden. I think that two of our younger members (Unai and Cady Paine) were teaching us something. Their joy serves as a reminder to not take some things too seriously and to always make time for play. Taking this lesson to heart, the gang of older members at the meeting were all smiles and laughter. To top this off, Shirley even returned to the garden from Pinetop wearing an elf hat.

2008 presents a whole truckload of challenges in the gardens. What to do and when? A quick look at the planting calendar will show you what kind of decisions that you'll have to start making soon. Get your garden journal or planner prepared for use so that you can get your plans set. Try to remember that one of the main reasons that we're in the garden in the first place is because it's fun.



Garden Positions Open

Newsletter Editor & Asst Editor: This person will compile and write articles for the newsletter as well as solicit photographs from each garden coordinator. A working knowledge of at least MS Word and basic email functions are about all that are needed. If you can run Quark Express, then that's just icing on the cake. We'd like to keep this position inside the group, but if you know someone who is looking to volunteer, let us know.

Water Meister: Filled by Gene Zonge at Presidio!

Treasurer: This person will need a basic working knowledge of accounting, be able to attend steering committee meetings, and be able to work with Quicken or Quickbooks. Darlene has been doing this job for a while and needs a break.

Asst. Administrative Director: This person will be the main contact point for the Community Gardens of Tucson. You'll be responsible for maintaining the solvency of the organization and running the steering committee meetings. The garden coordinators will report to you as needed and you will be responsible for interacting with the garden site owners. Andy has been doing this for a couple of years and would like to train someone as an assistant who will eventually take his place.

Plot Fees Now Due

It's that time of year again. Semi-annual plot fees of \$72 are due and should be sent to our acting treasurer at the address on the cover of this newsletter. Feel free to send \$144 for the entire year if you wish, this makes the accounting easier for our treasurer, and is appreciated. Please write your garden and plot number on the check. We'd hate to have to send our onion-scented bill collector (see photo below) out after you!



	Jan 1-15	Jan 15-31	Feb 1-15	Feb 15-28	Mar 1-15	Mar 15-31	Apr 1-15	Apr 15-30
Amaranth								
Armenian Cucumber								
Artichoke								
Arugula								
Asian Cabbage								
Asian Leafy Greens								
Asparagus								
Beets								
Blackeyed Peas								
Broccoli								
Broccoli Raab								
Beans (Bush)								
Beans (Fava)								
Beans (Pole)								
Brussels Sprouts								
Cabbage								
Cabbage (Chinese)								
Cauliflower								
Carrots								
Cantelope								
Chard								
Collards								
Corn								
Cucumber								
Dandelion Greens								
Eggplant								
Endive								
Garlic								
Irish Potato								
Kale								
Kolorabi								
Leek								
Lettuce (Leaf)								
Miner's Lettuce								
Lettuce (Romaine)								
Lima Beans								
Mache (Corn Salad)								
Melons								
Musk Melon								
Mustard								
Okra								
Onion (Green)								
Onion (Sets)								
Parsnip								
Peas								
Pepper								
Potato (Irish)								
Pumpkin								
Purslane Greens								
Radish								
Rhubarb								
Rutabega								
Spinach								
Spinach (New Zealand)								
Spinach (Malabar)								
Squash (Summer)								
Squash (Winter)								
Sweet Potato								
Swiss Chard								
Tomato								
Turnip								
Watermelon								

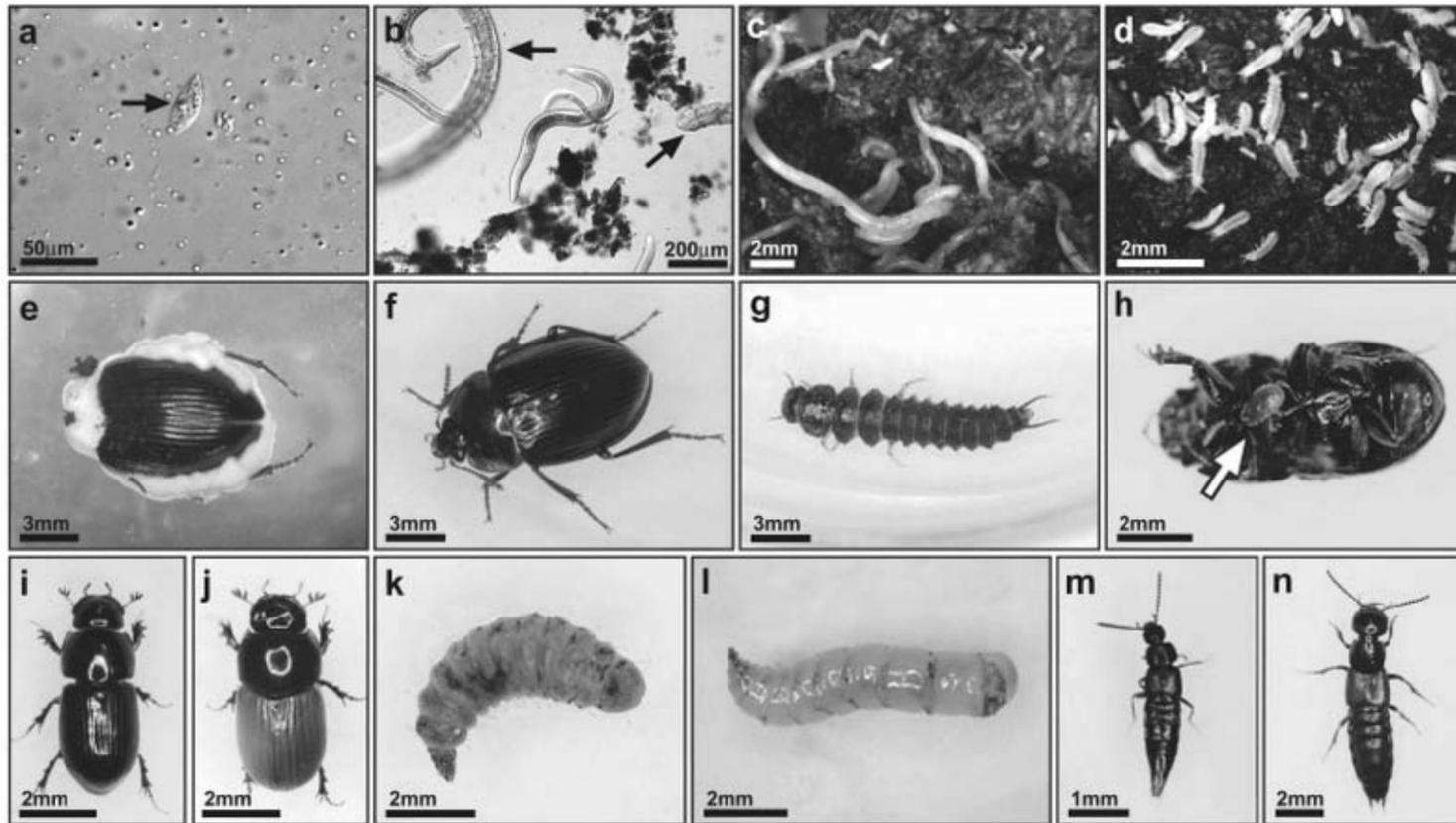
Legend For Planting Guide

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

Book Review

By Dianne Stevens

Life in the Soil, a Guide for Naturalists and Gardeners



James Nardi is an entomologist, so I like him already. He conducts research at the University of Illinois into insect development, the insect immune system, and the interactions between arthropods and microbes in soils. It's this last part which makes me really, really like him. The inter-soil interactions he studies are in part responsible for turning my kitchen and garden scraps into compost and then the friable, productive compost that goes into my garden. So, he benefits by positive association.

Dr. Nardi's book *Life in the Soil, a Guide for Naturalists and Gardeners*, from which the above image is taken, is a comprehensive, yet accessible guide to all the organisms living in the soil. Even if you are not already predisposed towards bug doctors, if you have at least a passing interest in soils, soil biota, and the ecosystem you will find much that is relevant in this guide. Additionally, as gardeners and compost-masters, CGT members will appreciate his techniques for and discussion of composting. The image above

demonstrates the inhabitants of one cup of compost taken from a backyard pile.

Guide to images above: a) bacteria and protozoa feeding on bacteria, b & c) potworms [arrows in b point to small potworms, c shows larger potworms], d) springtails and earthworms, e) fungi such as the insect-eating *Beauveria* on the remains of an agyrtid beetle, f) beetles such as the primitive carrion beetles (agyrtid beetles), g) larvae of agyrtid beetles, h) mites that live as stowaways on beetle bellies and under beetle wing covers, i & j) dung, or scarab, beetles, k) soldier fly larvae, l) fruit fly-related larvae, and the largest predators in this collection, m & n) rove beetles. (Courtesy of GardenRant.com)

Of course, different organisms will thrive in each region, soil, garden, and compost. Get your hands in your dirt and then get them on a copy of Dr. Nardi's book to find out what you're really growing. *Life in the Soil, a Guide for Naturalists and Gardeners*, 336 pages. University Of Chicago Press.

Garden Reports

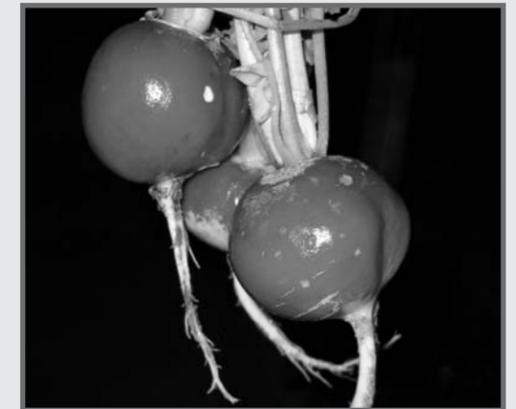
Sabino Vista Garden

A visit with Teddy is always a joy at the Sabino Vista Garden. It was a cool day and the turnout was rather sparse, but it allowed plenty of one on one time with George. There's plenty growing in the garden and by the time this hits mailboxes around town, most of the summer plants will have been dealt a final blow by the frost. The scarecrows are keeping watch, the winter crops are in full production, and the compost piles are coming along nicely. Many thanks to Cathy hunt for donating the wonderful shed and to Gabby for keeping things in the garden humming along smoothly.



Chaverim Garden

Listen and Learn - My sister has been planting a few years now and she knows her radishes. Check out the size of them.(picture attached) But I also need to accept her telling me "I told you so" even if it hurts. Because I waited in pulling the summer plants and preparing the soil for the winter I now have a pretty baron winter plot. All I have is a little bunch of radishes, one cabbage, one carrot and one or two spinach plants. My plot is empty! So I just want to encourage all fellow gardeners, plant when it is time. Follow the planters guide, listen to your experienced gardeners like George and as the seasons change so do our plots.



Wilson Garden

John is eating lettuce
Jeff is preparing the soil
Melissa is taming loofahs
To make space for Shirley to toil

Emmanuela is growing pigeon peas
Marbie protects tomatoes from frost
Jacques plots flourish with winter crops
Sadly, one gardener has been lost

The Wilson Gardens are growing well
With all the recent rain
And during this busy time of year
Time in the garden keeps us sane

~ Melissa U.



Community Garden

Activities



From top left: Powdered donuts don't last long around this little gardener. "Oma" Darlene's little joy hangs out near the fence at Wilson to see if someone will hand her another donut. Kohlrabi thrives at Presidio. That's not salt on that water line and those onions; it's a nice frost after a cool night in the desert. It's hard to tell from this photo whether Darlene is helping or playing compost police as Claire cuts her leftovers into small pieces.

Community Garden

Calendar

January 2008

- 5 Corbett Garden Meeting 9:00am
- 10 CGT Steering Committee Meeting at Darlene Schacht's, 2940 N. Santa Rosa, 9:00am. All CGT members invited.
- 12 Presidio Garden Meeting 9:00am



- 13 Sabino Vista Garden Meeting Time TBA
- 20 Chaverim Garden Meeting 9:00am
- 26 Wilson Garden Meeting 9:00am

February 2008

- 2 Corbett Garden Meeting 9:00am
- 9 Presidio Garden Meeting 9:00am
- 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 9:00am
- 18 **Deadline for Newsletter Submissions**
- 23 Wilson Garden Meeting 9:00am