

# The Chuparosa

Chapter Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 7 - August/September 2016



Desert  
Horticultural  
Society of the Coachella Valley

## Noted author Andrea Wulf to give two talks here in October



Award-winning author Andrea Wulf is scheduled to make two appearances in the Coachella Valley on Monday, Oct. 17.

She will talk about her book, "Founding Gardeners," at 2 p.m. at the Rancho Mirage Library. That evening she will discuss "The Invention of Nature" at 6 p.m., preceded by a reception at 5 p.m., both at UCR Palm Desert. Both talks are expected to include images, time for a Q&A and a book signing.

The session on "Founding Gardeners" will take a look at the lives of the founding fathers and how their attitude to plants, gardens, nature and agriculture shaped the American nation, Wulf said.

The life of visionary German naturalist Alexander von Humboldt and how he created the way we understand nature today will be the themes of her talk on "The Invention of Nature."

In addition to her acclaimed books, Wulf writes for newspapers including the Guardian, LA Times, WSJ and New York Times, as well as a column on the history of science for The Atlantic. She won the Royal Geographical Society Ness Award 2016, and appears regularly on radio

Wulf has lectured across the world – from the Royal Geographical Society and Royal Society in London to Monticello and the New York Public Library in the US. She's spoken to audiences in Sweden, Germany and the Netherlands as well as to 15,000 people at the Esri User Conference in San Diego and literary festivals in the UK. She's a member of PEN American Center, an International Fellow of the Explorer's Club, a member of The Society of Woman Geographers and a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society.

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## Our Next Meeting: October 26 at 6 p.m.

Joshua Tree National Park has used native plants to restore impacted areas in the park for over 30 years. Seeds are collected within five miles of project locations and planted in the park's nursery, called the Center for Arid Lands Restoration.

Despite many success stories, the restoration program faces tough challenges in the future that the park is working to overcome. Speaker Neil Frakes, Vegetation Branch Chief in the Division of Resource Management at JTNP, will introduce us to the center and to some of its success stories.

Frakes, who has been at JTNP since 2015, oversees a variety of vegetation based

programs at the park, including native plant restoration, invasive plant species management, field botany and climate change monitoring.

**5:30 p.m.** Plant exchange. Bring pups, cuttings, plants to share with others. Even if cannot bring plants feel free to adopt and watch your garden grow.

**6 p.m.** Regular DHSCV meeting with presentation by Neil Frakes

**7:30 p.m.** Refreshments

**Where:** Hoover Room, The Living Desert, 47-900 Portola Ave., Palm Desert. Free

## More Upcoming Events

Here's a cache of events and meetings of interest to members of the Desert Horticultural Society of the Coachella Valley and fellow gardening enthusiasts. Read more at [www.deserthorticulturalsociety.org](http://www.deserthorticulturalsociety.org).

**Aug 13, 14 31st annual Intercity Show & Sale:** Cactus and succulent show and sale. 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. LA County Arboretum, 301 N. Baldwin, Arcadia

**Sept. 21 UCR Master Gardener Program:** Information session from 9-11 a.m. UCR Palm Desert, 75-080 Frank Sinatra Drive, Palm Desert. RSVP: [rmolaiz@ucanr.edu](mailto:rmolaiz@ucanr.edu)

**Oct. 1 UCR Sustainable Landscaping Workshop:** Drought-proof landscaping, desert gardening tips, what to plant when, desert pollinators. Free. UCR Palm Desert Auditorium, 75-080 Frank Sinatra Drive, Palm Desert. RSVP [here](#).

**Oct. 1 San Diego Botanic Garden Orchid Clinic 2016:** Four education sessions offered. Orchid sales. 10 a.m.-3 p.m. \$14, seniors \$10. 230 Quail Gardens Drive, Encinitas. [Sdbgarden.org](http://Sdbgarden.org)

**Oct. 1, 2 Gubler Orchid Festival:** Orchid nursery tour, orchid classes, jazz music, food vendors and more. Benefits Morongo Basin charities. 2200 Belfield Blvd., Landers. [\[orchids.com\]\(http://orchids.com\), \(760\) 364-2282. Also, free tours 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Saturday.](http://gubler-</a></p></div><div data-bbox=)

**Oct. 15 11th annual Desert Garden Community Day:** Classes, demonstrations, information booths feature garden design and plant selection, DIY grass removal, irrigation, mulching, pruning and more. 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Free. UCR Palm Desert, 75-080 Frank Sinatra Drive, Palm Desert. [Deserthorticulturalsociety.org](http://Deserthorticulturalsociety.org)

**Oct. 17 Presentations by author Andrea Wulf:** "Founding Gardeners", 2-3:30 p.m. Rancho Mirage Library, 71-100 Highway 111. "The Invention of Nature," 5 p.m. reception,

## Events, cont'd

6-7:30 p.m. talk, UCR Palm Desert, 75-080 Frank Sinatra Drive, Palm Desert. Both free.

### **Oct. 19 UCR Master Gardener**

**Program:** Information session, 9-11 a.m. UCR Palm Desert, 75-080 Frank Sinatra Drive, Palm Desert. Free. RSVP: [rmolaiz@ucanr.edu](mailto:rmolaiz@ucanr.edu)

### **Oct. 26 DHSCV regular meeting:**

Presentation by Neil Frakes of Josh-

ua Tree National Park, Division of Resource Management. 6 p.m. Hoover Room, The Living Desert, 47-900 Portola Ave., Palm Desert

### **Nov. 12 Desert Palm Oasis Ecology:**

Leading desert biologist and author James Cornett talks about desert fan palms. Class presented by Desert Institute at Joshua Tree National Park. 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. CSUSB Palm Desert Campus. \$80, \$90, includes

text "Desert Palm Oasis" by Cornett. [Joshuatree.org](http://Joshuatree.org), (760) 367-5535

**Nov. 12 Field trip:** 9 a.m. Medicinal Plant Walk Chorizo Canyon, Palm Desert. More information later

**Dec. 8 Field trip:** 10 a.m. Sherman Library & Garden, Corona del Mar, Roger's Garden Nursery, Irvine. More information later.

## Insects 101: Tarantula hawk



*Photos & Text By Brian K. Rolf*

**Common name:** Tarantula hawk

**Scientific name:** *Pepsis thisbe*

**Size:** ~2 inches

**Range:** From California to Texas

One of the most fascinating creatures that visit the milkweed plants in our front yard are tarantula hawks. These are very large bluish-black wasps with orange wings that lumber through the air crashing into the milkweed.

They do hunt tarantulas, but the adults feed on the

nectar from milkweed and other flowering plants. Their young are the ones that feed on a living tarantula host.

The adults will seek out and sting a living tarantula. The sting for humans is very painful but not life threatening. A sting will paralyze a spider. The adult tarantula hawk will drag the paralyzed tarantula back to a previously hole dug in the ground. The tarantula will be buried with a single egg laid on the tarantula body.

Underground, the egg hatches and the wasp larvae will burrow in to the living tarantula where it will feed on the living host consuming the non-vital organs. After several weeks the larva will grow and then finally pupate into an adult where it will start the cycle over again.

Brian K. Rolf is owner of Seattle Bug Safari, a traveling bug zoo. [brolf@seattlebugsfafari.com](mailto:brolf@seattlebugsfafari.com), (425) 829-4869



## How do fan palms survive in the desert?

Always wonder how the desert can support verdant, water-loving desert fan palms? Here's where to find out. Noted desert biologist James Cornett will teach a new class, "Desert Palm Oasis Ecology," on Nov. 12 for the Desert Institute at Joshua Tree National Park.

The class will examine unique aspects of the desert fan palm and its significance in rare desert spring environments where it occurs. Five palm oases occur in Joshua Tree National Park and more than 150 exist in the Sonoran and Mojave deserts of California and Baja California. The desert fan palm anchors the oasis and is the only palm native to North America.

Cornett will also discuss new information on the impact of global warming on palm numbers and distribution. The class will be held from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the CSUSB Palm Desert Campus. Fee is \$80, which includes a textbook, "Desert Palm Oasis," written by Cornett and the campus parking fee.

The Desert Institute is the educational arm of the Joshua Tree National Park Association. It offers dozens of courses in cultural history, natural science, survival skills and the arts from September through May each year. To see a Fall 2016 catalog, go to [joshuatree.org](http://joshuatree.org) and click on Desert Institute.

### To register:

Phone: (760) 367-5535

Online: [joshuatree.org](http://joshuatree.org)

Email: [desertinstitute@joshuatree.org](mailto:desertinstitute@joshuatree.org)



Students in a Desert Institute class study a desert fan palm oasis in the Coachella Valley Preserve, Thousand Palms. Photo by Jamie Lee Pricer

## Palm Springs Library spotlights books donated by DHSCV



The Palm Springs Library has featured a collection of books related to gardening and landscaping donated by the CVHSD. Photo by Jamie Lee Pricer

An array of more than 100 books donated this year by the CVHSD has been on display this summer at the Palm Springs Library.

The mass of the collection of horticultural reference books came from Glenn Huntington, a founder of the Society, who donated them to the society. For several years his books, and others donated by members, were available to check out at the society's meetings. However, because of storage and issues relating to managing the collection, the Board of Directors decided to give the collection to the library.

The collection has been on display

since July on shelves to the left of the reference desk. A weekly check since mid-July has shown varying numbers of books on the shelves.

"They have been popular," said librarian Sharon Ballard. Already cataloged, most of the books will be integrated into the library's regular collection about Aug. 20, she said. A handful will be located in the library's Special Interest Section that features books specifically about the Coachella Valley.

To see a list of the books, go to the Society's website at [deserthorticulturalsociety.org](http://deserthorticulturalsociety.org) and click on Members.

## From the Board

Among matters the DHSCV Board of Directors discussed, reviewed or approved at its July 26 meeting are:

Founding member and president emeritus Paul Ortega will stand as acting president until the election at the annual membership meeting in January.

At the suggestion of Field Trip chairman Robert Musial at least one of the field trips scheduled for 2016-2017 will include bus transportation rather than carpools. Some of the trips: Medicinal Plant Walk in Chorizo Canyon, Palm Desert; Sherman Library & Garden, Corona del Mar; Native Plant Nursery at JTNP, and by bus and overnight to Boyce Thompson Arboretum, Superior, Ariz. and Tucson Botanic Garden, Ariz.

Arrangements are underway to host Johanna Silver as a speaker during Desert Community Garden Day on Oct. 15. She is the Sunset magazine garden editor. Her new book, "The Bold Dry Garden: Lessons from the Ruth Bancroft Garden" is expected to be released by publisher Timber Press in early October.

With the UCR Palm Desert campus and the Rancho Mirage Library, DHSCV will co-host Andrea Wulf, lecturer and author of "The Brother Gardeners," for two talks in October.

The next Board of Directors meeting will be at 3:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 27 at Rancho Mirage Library.

## Got great ideas for the Society's future?

The Board of Directors wants members to participate in planning the society's future and is asking us to fill out an online survey.

"We want to enhance membership experiences and further develop the scope and effectiveness of the Horticultural Society," said Acting President Paul Ortega. "The board would appreciate it if members would take a few minutes to complete the survey. It will help us make appropriate plans for our thriving organization," he said.

Questions will focus on members' ideas for projects, interests in volunteering and thoughts on the society's direction. Plans call for collating the responses, printing results in The Chuparosa and posting online this fall. The survey is different than the survey new members are asked to fill out. Those are managed by Membership Chairman Marie Strom.

The survey was organized by Special Events Coordinator Lisha Astorga, Volunteer Coordinator Jeanine Black and Jessyca Frederick.

## Want to learn more about desert gardening?

Put UCR Palm Desert on your fall calendar if you would like to learn more about sustainable gardening or joining the Master Gardeners program.

First, if you want to join the Master Gardeners program you must attend a free information session at UCR Palm Desert from 9 to 11 a.m. either on Wednesday, Sept. 21 or Wednesday, Oct. 19. Those in the program learn about gardening in the desert, share that information with the community through volunteer work, educating and training other home gardeners in safe and sustainable gardening practices.

University of California Cooperative Extension specialists will offer Master Gardeners more than 50 hours of instruction. In return,

Master Gardeners volunteer in the community and continue their gardening education. The program is open to individuals who wish to increase their knowledge and horticultural skills—no previous experience is necessary.

Second is a Sustainable Landscaping Workshop from 8:30 a.m. to noon Saturday, Oct. 1. Discussions will focus on drought-proof landscaping, desert gardening tips, what to plant when and desert pollinators. On hand to answer questions will be Master Gardeners and experts from UC Cooperative Extension and UCR.

RSVP: Rosa Olaiz at [rmolaiz@ucanr.edu](mailto:rmolaiz@ucanr.edu)



## Hardy Calliandra withstands poor soil, salty water

By Bryan Stone

In the early '80s, my afternoon fresh off the school bus included a walk over to the local grocery store to buy round pink cakes filled with whipping cream for 25 cents. In addition to seeing my grandparents, it was a routine I looked forward to on weekdays.

Years later this memory always popped up when someone asked me about the espaliered plant on the wall at the grocery store — it was a *Calliandra haematocephala*, also known as Pink Powder Puff. After working on a property with poor draining soil and water with high salinity, the espaliered Calliandra no longer remind me of cake, now they remind me how tough they are.

I was first impressed by Calliandra when I was working on a property that switched its water source from a groundwater well to a pond fed by canal water. The pond was a terminal water body (like the Salton Sea) and with no outlet, the salt in the water built up over years (also like the Salton Sea). After watering for a week anything within wind shot of lawn sprinklers burned, all of the annuals withered, plants watered by drip emitter were extremely stressed and the grass was unhealthy looking.

One problem with this salty irrigation water is to how soil holds

water. When there is a lot of salt in the soil, the salt holds the water and soil nutrients to it, so plants' roots no longer access water or nutrients, a problem for most plants. To my surprise, the Calliandra survived this irrigation change.



*Calliandra californica* 'Baja Fairy Duster'

According to [theplantlist.org](http://theplantlist.org), the hardy Calliandra species includes more than 130 varieties naturally found in the Southern and Northern Americas. The three we commonly use in the Coachella Valley are *Calliandra californica*, *C. eriophylla* and the *C. haematocephala*. All have similar flowers ranging slightly in size, with colors that vary from red

to pink. Two of them, fairy duster types, are low water use, which if you control your water well can increase the blooming.

### *Calliandra californica*

From Baja California the Baja Fairy Duster has the darkest foliage of the two fairy dusters and the reddest flowers, but is also the most sparse. Bipinnate compound leaves (born in pairs) sometimes have a bluish green tinge. *C. californica* is a low-maintenance plant requiring little water. To maintain its form, occasionally thin it out by removing the thickest branches, unless you like a woody winter appearance.

Winter can be hard on this subtropical genus. Damaged foliage and branches should be removed as soon as temperatures start to warm up. I have seen this variety grow to almost six feet tall and four feet wide. I often use *C. californica* to break up the visual effect of mass plantings of Texas ranger and to accent Vitex or Texas laurel.

### *Calliandra eriophylla*

The smaller of the two Calliandra commonly known as fairy duster, *C. eriophylla* grows to approximately three feet high and four feet wide with pinkish (and at rare times white) flowers. In my opinion it is more attractive, with its fernlike leaflets.

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## Calliandra, cont'd



*Calliandra eriophylla*

The habit of *C. eriophylla* is more open and needs less pruning than the *C. californica*. *C. eriophylla*'s native range is from Southern California to West Texas.

Like most Sonora Desert plants *C. eriophylla* is slow growing. It is best used in a landscape with other desert native varieties or behind a light colored boulder. You get more impact when you plant it as an individual, but I have seen them mass planted. To get the most out the fairy duster make sure it is planted in full sun. Watering depends on soil type and location.

### *Calliandra haematocephala*

Also known in Bolivia as the powder

puff tree, this *Calliandra* is mostly used as an espalier, but also can stand free form up to 10 feet high and wide. Sometimes this *Calliandra* is sold as *C. inaequilatera* in a bush or mounding form.

*C. haematocephala* is not a low-water plant and needs a moderate amount

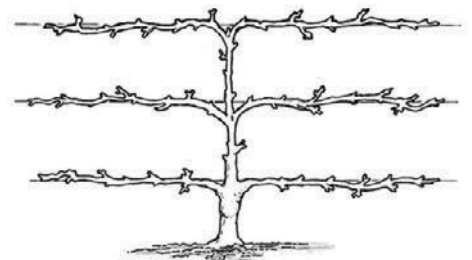


*Calliandra haematocephala*

of supplemental irrigation, but it can grow almost anywhere, even in poor draining soils if watched and carefully maintained. *C. haematocephala* can grow in the shade as well as full sun. Just remember that when planting in shade the distance along stems between buds will

elongate, leaves will get bigger, and growth will slow down. In the shade *C. haematocephala* will fill in, it will just take longer than if it were in full sun.

Easily kept under control more than other vine plants due to its slower growth habits, you have time to hand prune *C. haematocephala*. I prune these similar to grape vines getting ready for winter. Make sure you leave plenty of foliage on the plant. Not every *C. haematocephala* plant is the same, but if you want to hand prune it is best to structure the espalier similar to the illustration below.



When you're shaping it, look at the new growth carefully. For each stem you're evaluating, if you see any new stems whose diameter is greater than half the diameter of the parent stem, prune it back to approximately one-third of an inch from where the newer stem meets its parent stem.

Bryan Stone is a certified arborist and horticulturist. Born and raised in the Coachella Valley, he is a licensed landscape contractor.



## This & That

### ***DWA customers can water on weekends***

Desert Water Agency customers can now water five days a week. Citing "local and statewide water supply conditions, above average temperatures and a decision by the State Water Resources Control Board to change the way percentage savings requirement are calculated for water agencies," the DWA board of directors added Saturday and Sunday to the outdoor water schedule through Oct. 31.

Allowed hours have not changed and remain only before 7 a.m. and after 7 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and now also Saturday and Sunday. [dwa.org](http://dwa.org)

### ***Is it even hotter with water-saving plants?***

Studies reported in the "Los Angeles Times" questioned the benefits of tearing up lawns and replacing them with "gravel, turf, decomposed granite and a wide range of drought-tolerant plants." Water-saving benefits are undisputed. But some experts wondered if using "less water... would ultimately make the city hotter."

Considering a climate model similar to Los Angeles' one study published in Geophysical Research Letters found a "lawn-less Los Angeles would heat up to 3.4 degrees warm-

er during the day that it is now." However, the study also found that the drought-tolerant vegetation "has an average nighttime cooling effect of about 5.4 degrees."

Granted the desert climate differs from L.A.'s, which is tempered by coastal breezes, but it would be interesting to know if our evenings were indeed cooler now that so many lawns have been removed. [Latimes.com](http://Latimes.com)

### ***DWA accepts applications for turf buy back grants***

Desert Water Agency will release applications for its popular turf buy back grants starting Wednesday, Aug. 17. Here is basic information about the program, with some new changes.

Applications will be online. If you don't have a computer, the district suggests using one at a public library. Applicants must submit a bid from a landscaper or a budget for the project.

Rebates are for \$1 per square foot. Single-family residents can also apply to [SaveOurWaterRebates.com](http://SaveOurWaterRebates.com) for funding starting in late August. The rebate can be used toward a 1:1 replacement of artificial turf for grass.

For single-family homes, if there is a fence, hedge or wall between the street and your project, it is ineligi-

ble. Backyards are not eligible.

Turf must be in place when you apply. No retroactive turf removal projects will be approved. Applicants must provide a before and after photo for conversions.

Single-family home applications will be processed first come, first served. Large-scale projects will have until noon Friday, Sept. 30 to submit and will be judged by scoring criteria.

Remember, rebates are considered taxable income by the IRS.

To apply: [dwa.org/turf](http://dwa.org/turf)

### ***Water savings in state top 500 billion gallons***

In about the last 13 months, the state has cumulatively cut water consumption by 24 percent, very close to the 25 percent target, says the State Water Resources Control Board.

That's about 571 billion gallons of water saved and enough to provide 8.8 million people, or the population of the state of Washington, with water for a year.

### ***IWA customers can water 7 days a week***

Indio Water Authority has expanded its outdoor watering hours to before  
**Continued on page 9**



## Plant of the Month: *Dalea greggii*

By Troy Bankord

This soft, silvery groundcover quickly mounds to 1-2 feet' in height but spreads to 6-8 feet in width, if desired. It requires fairly low water and grows quickly.

An interesting alternative to lawn when planted in sweeping masses or formations, it is also a great choice for steep banks where erosion is prevalent.

Don't fret when viewing the plant in a nursery container, as they never look terrific (they detest being in containers).

*Dalea greggii* has fuzzy, purple-pink blossoms in the spring and early summer and although they are not extremely showy, the bees love them.

They don't like their feet wet and should not be installed on the same



watering zone as lawn or water loving plants, as they could potentially die of root rot.

Our sandy soils prove to be a plus for their proliferation. This plant thrives in full and reflected sun and although low in maintenance, weed

and volunteer growth in the plant mound should be kept in check.

*Troy Bankord also contributes our monthly maintenance article. You can read more about him there.*

## This & That, cont'd.

6 a.m. and after 6 p.m., seven days a week. This is an increase from the agency's previous Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday watering schedule.

The decision to ease restrictions was based on local and statewide water supply conditions, as well as the State Water Resources Control Board's decision to change the way

percentage savings requirements are calculated for water agencies throughout California.

IWA offers offer free indoor water conservation kits, outdoor irrigation audits and several rebates including washing machines, low-flow toilets, turf removal, irrigation equipment and smart controllers. [IndioWater.org](http://IndioWater.org)

## **Master Gardeners sets plan for free classes**

Word is out that the Master Gardeners will hold free classes open to the public on the third Thursday of the month starting this fall at the Cathedral City Library. Watch for more news in the October issue of The Chuparosa.

## Maintenance by the Month: August & September

By Troy Bankord

Ugh! Boy, were we spoiled by such an incredibly long spring or what? Well, we're paying for it now. This summer has been deathly hot, with temperatures well above 110 week after week.

A number of our favored plantings can moderately tolerate our summer sun and temperatures when given a reprieve. But this summer is different. It is normally in August that one notices succulents succumbing to relentless high daytime and nighttime temperatures. When the nighttime temperatures hover near the 90-degree mark, most succulents can't breathe and simply collapse. Be careful not to overwater them. Sandy, well drained soil is best to prevent their being 'water-logged' during their hot dormancy period.

### **Garden clean-up**

With the additional watering that comes with soaring summer temperatures, weeds appear. Pre-emergents can be applied to plants, beds and landscape areas to minimize germination and weed spread in the future. Applied in a granular form, pre-emergents (such as 'Preen') should be broadcast and then watered in to effectively kill any weed seeds.

Plantings really should NOT be cut back or reshaped this time of year.

In the spring, our plantings flush out with a surge of new growth, which is intended to shade themselves through the summer months. Light trimming is favorable during the summer months to keep plantings looking tidy and healthy. Severe sunburn and even death can occur when allowing them to grow too much and then trimming them too much in one sitting.

ALWAYS give your plantings a good drink after trimming them. Light removal of dead wood in your plants and trees is ok this time of year, but be careful not to expose too much of the interior as the bark could sunburn, peel and the plant could die.

### **Watering**

Water is your insurance policy for a healthy garden. A good watering system is vital. You can spend money again and again on planting replacements, maintenance services and so on. It's convenient to say "it just wasn't the right plant for the area... or "John's crew just doesn't know what they're doing" when in reality most of the problem with your garden may be a watering system riddled with shortcomings.

Never have I seen lawn valves watering with plants on a drip system or plantings on bubblers in the shade watering on the same valve as plantings on drip emitters in

the full sun (sarcasm, of course).

The most efficient way to water—which costs a little more money initially—is to water all the sunny plantings together, shade plantings together, the trees on a separate zone or two, lawns watered on exclusive zones.

This minimizes water waste while maximizing water utility, especially when lawns are overseeded in October, requiring 3-4 waterings daily while the seed is germinating. Installing a timer with multiple programs (A, B, C, D—for example) offers flexibility based on the water needs of each zone. My favorite timer is a Raindial, due to its flexibility and programming ease.

I relocated to the Valley five years ago from Phoenix. Aside from the water restrictions, since coming here it seems customary to water plantings twice daily, due to our sandy soils which dry out very quickly. In Phoenix, things are quite different. Watering occurs once every few days—for an hour or two—due to heavier soils. Wells or natural retention basins are installed around each plant to capture the water, making it accessible to the root systems.

What I don't understand here is that drip systems are only run for 8 minutes and very seldom do I see wells created around the plantings



## August & September, cont'd

to capture what little water they are given. If a plant has a 2 gph (2 gallons per hour) emitter and it only runs for about 8 minutes, it only received about a cup of water. Nowhere NEAR enough to sustain any plant (or person!) for 6 or 8 hours in this heat.

One must think of trees and plantings as humans, when it comes to water and sustainability here. Berm your plantings to capture water and set your drip systems to water for 30 minutes, so the plants can actually get a bigger drink. Check your bubblers and emitters regularly, as our waters are extremely high in calcium and even "self-flushing and non-clogging" emitters clog here. Systems need constant monitoring.

The key is not to simply cut water usage... more importantly, HOW the water is utilized is key. Sprinkler heads watering one's lawn are useless if they are broken or maladjusted. If we're going to spend money on water usage, why not make sure the coverage is perfect? Doesn't it just make sense?

### Trees

With lawn removal, it saddens me to see all the mature trees dying here. Our trees have relied on water saturating their entire root systems for decades only to receive 3-2 gallon emitters (if that!) on their roots. If

at all possible, the same watering system should be maintained for the longevity of our trees. If that isn't possible, I've found that running a flexible, poly drip line around the root zone (in a serpentine fashion) from the trunk out to the canopy edge, installing emitters every 3' on the drip line, is extremely effective.

Planting right now can be accomplished successfully, but keep in mind that more water is going to be required to get them through searing temperatures. And remember... Plantings are used to receiving once- or twice-a-day watering at the nursery around the entire root zone. Watering one side of the plant on a drip system will not sustain your new plants. It's really best to deep water those not-yet-established plantings with a hose, flooding their entire root system.

Our summer-loving desert trees are most effectively planted this time of year when they are active, rather than during their dormancy in the late fall and winter.

### Fertilize

It's ok to fertilize actively growing lawns and plantings now only if they get sufficient water. Fertilizer is a salt and treating your plants will make them thirstier. Always make sure your plantings are pumped with water first, then fertilize and

deep water them. Citrus should have been fertilized around July 4. The last recommended fertilization for citrus will be around Labor Day.

*Troy Bankord has been creating 'Places of Peace' through connective landscape and interior design for almost 30 years. His award-winning projects have been featured in publications, on architectural tours and on morning segments and television shows for decades. In Arizona, his firm was the forerunner in implementing native desert plant species and their maintenance via natural and selective pruning practices.*

*Known by "Sunset" magazine as the 'King of Concrete Block' for his passion of adapting screen block into his designs, Bankord was also named 'Master of the Southwest' by Phoenix Home & Garden magazine in 2006. He is a graduate of Marquette University. [www.troybankorddesign.com](http://www.troybankorddesign.com), <https://www.facebook.com/TroyBankordDesign>*

## A Special Thank You to Our Sponsors



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[Carol Martin](#)

## Want to Get More Involved?

*We have so many opportunities for members to become more actively involved with the Desert Horticultural Society of Coachella Valley. Jump in!*

## Send Us Your Photos & Favorite Websites!

We like to show off photos of gardens or plants that horticulture society members have collected. Please send your jpeg photos at full size attached to an email with your name, where the photo was taken and information about the photo subject.

And, have you come across online gardens, educational sources or conservation links you like? Email links and photos to Jamie Lee Pricer at [jlp6@hotmail.com](mailto:jlp6@hotmail.com). We'll share them in future newsletters.