NMSU-Doña Ana County Cooperative Extension Service
September-October Newsletter

College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences

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Doña Ana Cooperative Extension Service, 1170 N. Solano, Suite M,
Las Cruces, NM 88001

Phone: (575) 525-6649
Fax: (575) 525-6702

Agronomy/Horticulture Program Admin: Professor Jeff Anderson, Extension Ag Agent

Editor:
Marcia Adams, Certified Master Gardener
glizard2017@gmail.com

Questions: dagarden@nmsu.edu

Photo Source: Pinterist

EDITOR'S MESSAGE

Thank you Tropical Storm Harold for finally kick starting some rain after a truly hot and dry summer. The ground got soft enough that I could finally weed the veggie patch and I found two hiding tomato plants!

We are catching the scent of roasting chiles, which always means fall is coming. I'm sure we are all crossing our fingers for milder days ahead and chilly nights to come.

Welcome to the Master Gardener Class of 2024! I know you are all enjoying and feeling a bit overwhelmed by all the knowledge being thrown at you. Relax. It will sink in eventually, and you will continue to learn in the years ahead as you put your learning and skills to work. I've reprinted the *Mission and Outreach Statement* provided to me by the Master Gardeners in Sandoval County, to help you along.

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PHOTO CREDITS

Photos in the funnies were taken from Facebook.

The information provided in the Honey Do List has been gleaned from prior newsletters, and is attributed in part to *Month-By-Month Gardening in the Desert Southwest* (Mary Irish, 2002); *Southwest Planting Tips by the Month* and *Tucson Gardening Calendar* (Tucson Botanical Gardens), and *The Desert Gardener's Calendar: Your Month-by-Month Guide* (George Brookbank, 1999).

DISPATCH FROM THE FRONT LINES

Hello Everyone!

As you can probably imagine most of our Hotline calls right now are about watering and water (or lack of it) stressed plants. The extreme heat we had a while back took its toll which was then compounded if homeowners didn't increase watering. But even though they may look ragged now most plants will recover.

Some however will not, e.g. annuals or newly installed plants. When talking with homeowners be sure to verify plant species, how long it's been in their landscape and how, when and how much they water. The AZ. Ext. publication "Watering Trees and Shrubs" (AZ 1298) is a great one to share with homeowners. https://cales.arizona.edu/extension/ornamentalhort/waterquality/watering_trees.pdf

We're also getting some tomato questions, specifically "When will I start getting tomatoes!". Remind them of the heat induced pollen sterility issue, assure them production will pick up when the temperatures cool off and remind them to keep caring for the plants.

That's all for this dispatch and remember to "Garden smarter, not harder!".

Sylvia Hacker
DACMG Hotline Coordinator

DONA ANA COUNTY EXTENSION MASTER GARDENERS
MISSION AND OUTREACH

NMSU's Master Gardener program trains volunteers the art and science of gardening. Dona Ana County Extension Master Gardeners educate and serve our communities in sustainable high desert gardening.

OUTREACH is the single most important volunteer function we provide. Outreach is the communication between a Master Gardener and members of the public. Master Gardeners conduct outreach to assist the NMSU Extension by educating the public.

Outreach methods include in person (information tables at public events, presentations, garden tours), via telephone (hotline), and written (hotline e-mails). We also accept walk-ins during hotline hours. We welcome and try our best to understand questions. We ask questions. We may ask for photos or samples.

At public outreach activities it's important to be available to the public. Talking amongst ourselves can make the public avoid interrupting our conversation and that's not the impression we want to give. Make eye contact. Wave people over! Smile!

We know numerous science-based resources that we can make available. We can provide the public with website resources as well as brochures from NMSU and other respectable institutions. These include but are not limited to the following:

- NMSU/County Extension Services Publication (aces.nmsu.edu/pubs/_h/).
- Educational institutions in the Southwest including publications from Colorado State University, University of Arizona, Texas A & M, Utah State University.
- Books by recognized local experts and the Native Plant Society of NM
- Consultation with NMSU Faculty

WHAT WE DO

We provide scientifically based answers that are relevant to our unique climate and conditions.

If we don't know the answer, we say so and offer to research the question and follow up with the individual later.

WE DO NOT

Recommend specific vendor services (landscapers, pest control, etc.).

Answer questions from commercial growers or farmers. These questions go to the extension agent.

Give out contact information (phone numbers or e-mails of staff).

Conduct home visits. Refer these to the extension agent.

Guess at answers to questions.

Thanks to the Sandoval Extension Master Gardeners for providing this information.

WHEAT VS. BARLEY
What's the Difference?
From: Marcia Adams

BARLEY

WHEAT

A good friend of mine lives in the Pacific Northwest, in Eastern Washington State. Unlike the coastal area of Washington, the eastern side is much drier and sparsely forested. He lives in the Palouse area, named for the Palouse River. Its claim to fame is its farming,

It is characterized by gentle rolling hills covered with wheat fields. The hills were formed over tens of thousands of years from wind blown dust and silt, called "loess", from dry regions to the south west. Seen from the summit of 3,612 foot high Steptoe Butte, they look like giant sand dunes because they were formed in much the same way. In the spring they are lush shades of green when the wheat and barley are young, and in the summer they are dry shades of brown when the crops are ready for harvest. (1).

My friend is a retired professional photographer, and he posts a lot of his work on Facebook. The other day he commented that he is just now learning the visual difference between fields of wheat versus barley. That gave me the idea to put this together for the newsletter.

First, both grains are members of the Poaceae (grass family). They are in the same tribe, Triticaceae, but in different genera. Barley is the genus *Hordeum* whereas wheat is *Triticum*.

The following text has been excerpted from EpicGardening.com.(2)

The plants have such a similar structure, it's no wonder they are both used in cereal grain production in the same manner. Because they are so similar, it's very difficult to tell the two plants apart before they reach maturity. That's because the seeds – which form late in the reproductive phase – have very different structures. One way to tell the difference between barley and wheat is to examine the auricles or the ear-shaped areas where the grass branches from the stem of the plant. Barley auricles do not have hairs and branch out from the stem. Wheat auricles are much smaller and hairier.

Each plant has spikes that produce seed heads. Here, barley and wheat differ slightly. The seed head of barley produces 20 to 60 grains, whereas that of wheat produces 30 to 50 grains. The seeds themselves have very distinct differences too. While both barley and wheat have seed coverings called the lemma and the palea, those of the grain wheat are loosely fitted, while the outer layer of barley is fused to the inner seed.

There are six basic wheat types. Each item below discusses their names and their growth habits:

- Hard Red Winter Wheat: this plant grows in fall, and is harvested in spring. It's commonly used in whole grain wheat products, as well as all-purpose flours. It is cultivated in the Central US Plains and Montana, Idaho, and California.
- Hard Red Spring Wheat: this wheat is planted in spring and harvested in mid-summer. It's typically grown in Montana and North and South Dakota. This grain wheat is used to fortify bread due to its high protein content.
- Soft Red Winter Wheat: sown in fall and harvested in spring. It's grown in the northeastern portions of the United States and is often incorporated into pastries.
- Soft White Wheat: planted in spring and harvested in late summer to early fall. Grown in Michigan, Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, this plant is used for its outer bran layer, making it excellent for whole wheat products.
- Hard White Wheat: sown in early spring and harvested in early fall in the Dakotas. It is typically used to make noodle dough but is also great for those in search of whole grains.
- Durum Wheat: in mid-spring, this wheat is planted, and it's harvested in late summer. It's grown in North Dakota, Montana, Arizona, and California.

There are two basic barley types. Each item below discusses their names and their growth habits. Both species can be sown in spring and fall, and mature in 60 to 70 days. They are chiefly grown in Idaho and Montana. Note that distinct versions of each type probably don't exist anymore due to genetic modifications in selective breeding of the plants:

- Six-row Barley (*Hordeum vulgare*): the most commonly cultivated barley. Called 'six-row' because the spikelets on the seed head produce 3 kernels arranged in six rows around the stalk. The kernels are smaller and the husk of this barley is substantial. This is most commonly used for animal feed, although recently it has been used in alcohol production in the United States.
- Two-row Barley (*Hordeum distichum*): not as common as six-row. In this species, the grain is arranged in two rows around the stalk. The kernels are larger than that of six-row and have less protein and husk content. This is the premier barley used in past and present beer-brewing.

Agriculturally, both barley and wheat are grown on a mass scale. However, wheat is ranked second as a worldwide dietary staple. Humans on average make it 19% of their diet. Compare that to rice at 20% and you begin to see just how important whole grain wheat is. Barley on the other hand comes fourth in the ranking. Growers cultivate it in areas where wheat cannot grow, usually in extremely high altitudes. Wheat and barley are both incredibly important crops in their own right.

Barley and wheat are processed in distinctly different ways during production. Wheat is usually milled into wheat flour, wheat bran, or whole wheat flour. Whole grain wheat flour is the result of milling wheat without extracting the wheat bran and wheat germ. In refined wheat flour, the germ and wheat bran are removed. Whole wheat flour thus has a grainier texture than white flour or plain wheat flour. White flour comes from milling just the endosperm layer of the seed. The process indicates why whole wheat flour and regular wheat flour are very different with different health benefits. Whole wheat flour gets the “whole grain” distinction that points to healthful benefits consumers look for in stores.

Barley doesn’t need to be milled to be consumed. Instead, it’s processed into hulled barley which is used in cereals and salads. Sometimes it is processed one step further into pearled barley, which is just polished hulled barley. Hulled barley, therefore, is considered whole, whereas pearled barley is not. Both hulled barley and pearled barley have high amounts of dietary fiber. When it comes to alcohol, malt is an essential part of the process of production. Raw barley is soaked in water for 8 hours, dried, and then soaked for another 8 hours to create malt.

It’s interesting to note that the remnants of the plants post-harvest are used with near-identical results: as a source of straw, particularly useful to us as gardeners as a type of straw mulch.

We’ve talked a little about the uses for specific types of wheat and barley and have determined each is more appropriate in certain situations. Barley is the premiere grain used for alcohol production. People do eat barley whole, thrown into soups and salads, but half of the US barley crop goes to animal feed. Livestock, such as pigs, chickens, sheep, and goats eat barley and then become food for people.

We’ve touched on the ways people eat wheat. The processing of white wheat and other wheat types makes it possible to consume it in bread, pastries, pasta, and doughs of all kinds. It’s used in breakfast cereals and is sometimes employed for brewing white ales (much less than barley, though).

When it comes to essential nutrients, barley beats wheat every time. Barley’s high nutritional content directly relates to the processing used to make the grain commercially available. Because barley is not milled, it loses fewer nutrients and retains more fiber. White wheat, on the other hand, loses nutrients in the milling process.

Both have health benefits and both are a rich source of insoluble fiber for the human digestive system. But the wheat needed to support the digestive system pales in comparison to barley. When it comes to fiber and control of blood sugar, wheat is not as good as barley. Wheat bran contains soluble fibers needed to lower blood cholesterol which in turn assists with blood sugar control. Low blood sugar contributes directly to the prevention of heart disease. Barley is better if you want to improve blood sugar control overall. The high content of beta-glucans in the grain makes it a more effective food medicine. When it comes to fiber, wheat does have health benefits, but barley has more nutrients and iron content. It’s great for those who want to increase red blood cells to combat anemia.

Whole grain barley is a great source of clinical nutrition. It’s packed with B vitamins and assists with weight loss. People who drink a glass of barley water before each meal are more likely to lose weight according to medical research. On the other hand, improper consumption of wheat can prevent weight loss. Barley is also considered an excellent ally in the prevention of colon cancer. Those who consume 6 ounces per day can decrease their risk of colon cancer by 15 to 20%.

It’s worth mentioning that those who don’t tolerate gluten should not seek out barley as a gluten-free option. Both grains contain gluten, albeit in different formats. If you have gluten sensitivity, both grains will cause problems. Celiac disease, for instance, is a chronic condition that results from the consumption of the two grains we are currently discussing, among others. Celiac disease is accompanied by digestive issues, chronic inflammation, and over time consumption of gluten can cause the very issues that these grains can treat in those without celiac disease. Those with celiac disease will experience the tell-tale stomach pain and chronic inflammation from barley just as they would most wheat fiber. So note that neither of these is good for those with sensitivities to gluten.

REFERENCES

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http://www.sevenwondersofwashingtonstate.com/the-palouse.html

Sources:

(1) http://www.sevenwondersofwashingtonstate.com/the-palouse.html

(2) https://www.epicgardening.com/wheat-vs-barley/

The Palouse

10 THINGS YOU PROBABLY DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT PUMPKINS

By Rosane Oliveria, UC Davis, October 25, 2018

What says "October" more than the sight of a beautiful orange pumpkin?

A central element in many fall festivals, the pumpkin is a beloved symbol of autumn.

Fittingly then, National Pumpkin Day is celebrated every year on October 26, a holiday designed to give thanks to this popular squash native to North America. And, of course, pumpkins have become a symbol inseparable from October 31's Halloween.

So, how much do you know about pumpkins? Test your knowledge below.

10 things you probably didn't know about pumpkins:

1. The word "pumpkin" originates from "peopon," which means "large melon" in Greek. It then evolved to "pompon" in French and "pumpion" in Britain. The Americans later changed it to "pumpkin," the name we still use today.
2. Every year, the US produces 1.5 billion pounds of pumpkin. 80 percent of this crop (around 800 million pumpkins) are ripe for picking in one single month of the year — October.
3. Over 45 different varieties of pumpkin exist. They range in color including orange, red, yellow and green, and they boast names like Hooligan, Cotton Candy, and Orange Smoothie.
4. Technically a fruit, the pumpkin is a winter squash in the family Cucurbitaceae which includes cucumbers and melons.
5. Every single part of a pumpkin is edible: the skin, leaves, flowers, pulp, seeds, and stems.
6. Interestingly, pumpkins are 92 percent water.

7. Naturally low in energy density, pumpkins are an excellent source of potassium, vitamin A and beta-carotene, the powerful antioxidant that gives orange vegetables and fruits their color.

8. Scientists believe that pumpkins originated in North America about 9000 years ago. The oldest pumpkin seeds have been found in Mexico and date back to somewhere between 7000-5550 B.C..

9. Pumpkins (along with other forms of squash) were a historically important food staple among Native Americans. They would grow the squash along river banks next to maize and beans, a planting technique that was called the “Three Sisters Method,” which allowed the three crops to sustain each other. Corn served as the trellis upon which the beans could climb; beans were nourished by the sunlight and kept the corn stalks stable on windy days, while also nourishing their soil; and pumpkins sheltered the corn’s shallow roots and prevented weeds from taking hold.

10. The practice of carving Jack-O’-Lanterns was brought to America by Irish immigrants. In their homeland, the Irish used to carve Jack-O’-Lanterns out of potatoes or turnips, but upon arrival in America, they began to use pumpkins instead because they were far easier to carve. The tradition of the “Jack-O’-Lantern” stems from an Irish legend about a man named Stingy Jack who was a somewhat unpleasant character famous for playing tricks on people.

Regardless of how much you know about pumpkins, this much is sure: one of the best ways to enjoy one is to eat one!

PHOTO SOURCE: https://mygardenlife.com/garden-tips/10-types-of-pumpkins-to-grow

THE STORY OF THE CORNUCOPIA: IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME

SOURCE: https://herebydesign.net/the-story-of-the-cornucopia-its-all-greek-to-me/

For my mother, Thanksgiving décor meant a white tablecloth and fine crystal. But as a child, I longed for more. So once I had my own household, I added the cornucopia. The horn-shaped basket packed with fall fruits and vegetables filled my spirit with holiday joy. In my mind, it was the very essence of the harvest season.

That being said, I later discovered that the origins of the cornucopia had nothing to do with a basket, nor was it meant to contain fruit. It all started with a goat named Amalthea.

AMALTHEA AND THE HORN OF PLENTY

Cornucopia, or *cornu copiae,* translates literally to horn (*cornu*) of plenty (*copiae*). In the English language, it also means abundance. But while the word may have Latin roots, its origins are firmly rooted in Greek mythology.

In Greek legend, the cornucopia refers to the horn of Amalthea, the name of the goat who fed the infant Zeus on Crete. According to one version of the myth, Zeus broke off one of Amalthea's horns and gave it to the nymph daughters of Melisseus. In so doing, he endowed it with the power to be filled with whatever its owners desired.

Other accounts say Amalthea was herself a nymph, and it was she who fed the god (with goat's milk). When the goat accidentally broke off one of her horns, the nymph filled it with fresh herbs and fruit and gave it to Zeus as a gift.

Whatever the reason for the horn being separated from the goat, Zeus is said to have so loved Amalthea that he placed her among the stars as the constellation Capra, (which is Latin for goat). Today we know her as Capricornus (horned goat), or Capricorn.

SYMBOL OF ABUNDANCE

Other legends associate the horn of plenty with Fortuna, the Roman goddess of luck, fate and fortune. As the giver of abundance, she is often depicted bearing a cornucopia.

Throughout the ages, the cornucopia has been a fixture in classical art. You'll find it in paintings and on buildings and coins where it has become synonymous with the harvest and abundance. In fact, there are entire towns, businesses, jails and temples named after it. And in Washington, DC, it appears five times on the U.S. Capitol.

THE PILGRIMS PROBABLY DIDN'T HAVE A CORNUCOPIA

While it is unlikely that the Pilgrims had a cornucopia, Americans have nonetheless adopted the vessel as one of the most popular Thanksgiving decorations. As a symbol of plenty, it's a natural fit for a lavish table. Nowadays, however, it usually takes the form of a basket rather than an actual horn (although there other materials available.) People traditionally fill it with fruits, but vegetables, nuts, flowers and leaves are also popular.

Still, there’s something about the story of the goat Amalthea that I find especially heart-warming. This Thanksgiving when I set the table, I’ll be thinking of her and the abundance she represents, a harvest wish for plenty to cultures throughout the ages.

US WILDLIFE MANAGERS AGREE TO REVIEW THE PLIGHT OF A WESTERN BIRD LINKED TO PIÑON FORESTS

Source: https://apnews.com/article/endangered-species-pinyon-jay-climate-change-1f21143ad13e06db73b1b1cc643a0f9a BY SUSAN MONTOYA BRYAN

Updated 3:51 PM MDT, August 16, 2023

Photo Credit: Christina Selby

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — U.S. wildlife managers announced Wednesday that they will investigate whether a bird that is inextricably linked to the piñon and juniper forests that span the Western United States warrants protection under the Endangered Species Act.

The pinyon jay's numbers have declined over the last half-century as persistent drought, more severe wildfires and other effects of climate change have intensified, leaving the birds with less food and fewer nesting options as more trees die or are removed.

Environmentalists also are concerned that without the pinyon jay — a social bird that essentially plants the next generation of trees by stashing away the seeds — it's possible the piñon forests of New Mexico, Arizona, Nevada and other Western states could face another reproductive hurdle.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's decision to review the jay's status comes in response to a petition filed more than a year ago that included research showing the species' numbers have declined by an estimated 80% over the last five decades, a rate even faster than that of the greater sage grouse. "This decision moves us one step closer to reversing the trend of one of the fastest declining birds in North America," Peggy Darr of the group Defenders of Wildlife said in a statement. "Without pinyon jays, we stand to lose iconic Southwestern landscapes, cultures and cuisines intimately tied to piñon pine nuts."

Piñon-juniper forests cover more than 75,000 square miles (190,000 square kilometers) in the United States, and wildlife managers in several Western states already have classified the bird as a species of greatest conservation need.

Nearly 60% of the jay's remaining population can be found in New Mexico and Nevada, but its range also includes central Oregon and parts of California, Utah, Wyoming, Oklahoma and Mexico's northern Baja California.

Defenders of Wildlife pointed Wednesday to research published this year that indicated one hypothesis for the birds' decline was habitat loss and degradation due to climate change. Another was land management policies that call for the thinning or removal of piñon-juniper forests to reduce wildfire threats or improve habitat for other species. And development has resulted in the clearing of trees to make room for homes as Western cities expand.

Fewer trees mean less food for the birds, and previous research has shown that the jays will forgo breeding when piñons are scarce.

Pale blue with a white bib, the pinyon jay typically mates for life and can be choosey about where to build a nest. For example, taller and older trees aren't high on the list as they typically have less foliage and can double as perches for potential predators.

While environmentalists say there still is much research to be done on pinyon jays, it was well known by the 1970s that the birds' habits revolved around harvesting, stashing and later retrieving pine seeds. In one case, a researcher watched a bird carry 56 seeds in one trip.

Drought and high temperatures also have been shown to affect the production of piñon cones, forcing the birds to fan out over hundreds of miles when food is scarce.

Researchers have said that understanding the bird's needs and effects on its habitats will be fundamental to managing Western environments to ensure pinyon jay colonies can be protected.

The Fish and Wildlife Service also agreed to review the status of the bleached sandhill skipper. a butterfly with golden-orange wings that has been the focus of a fight over a geothermal energy project near the Nevada-Oregon state line.

The proposed power plant would be outside the butterfly's habitat, an alkali wetland that spans about 2 square miles (5 square kilometers). But environmentalists are concerned that tapping underground water sources likely would affect the flows that support plants where the butterflies lay eggs and get nectar.

MEDITERRANEAN HOUSE GECKO

(*Hemidactylus turcicus)*

A have a lot of these little non-native cuties in my patio at night, high up on the walls. My daughter was fascinated with them when visiting this summer so we looked them up and found the common name “Moon Lizard.” Sylvia Hacker educated me further:

“Our local population started with an intentional or accidental release back in the...70's, I think. There use to be a small animal pet store on south Solano that went bankrupt. The word was they released all the animals they couldn't sell. The geckos first showed up in the University Hills part of town and have since spread. Our native species feed on the ground. The MedGeck's are climbers and feed on vertical surfaces or in trees and shrubs. They will attack and eat cockroaches. Good lizzies!”

Range: Las Cruces, Alamogordo, Deming, Elephant Butte, Soccoro, and Albuquerque

Other Names: Turkish House Gecko, Med Gecko, Gecko, House Gecko, Turkish Gecko, Moon Lizard

Description: They rarely exceed 15 centimeters (5.9 in) in length, have large, lidless eyes with elliptical pupils, and purple - or tan-colored skin with black spots, often with stripes on the tail. Their bellies or undersides are somewhat translucent. In countries where the species has been introduced, they are not considered invasive due to their habits and small size; they rarely threaten populations of native animals.

Similar Species: The Texas Banded Gecko and Western Banded Gecko lack enlarged tubercles on the body and expanded toepads and both species possess functional eyelids.

Venom: None

Habitat : Found around homes and walls, hide in cracks during the day

Behavior: Nocturnal, they are usually found hunting insects on vertical surfaces. They will frequently be found around lights which attract moths. They are one of the few lizards that make a vocalization. They make a short high pitched chirp, usually repeated a few times.

Hibernation: Probably inside garages or cinder block walls

.**Reproduction:** Mates from March to July. These geckos are sexually mature in a year or less. Females lay 1 - 2 calcereous eggs in communal clutches 1 - 3 times per year from April to August. When present, eggs can be seen under the translucent belly skin of females.

Diet: A variety of small invertebrates

SOURCE: http://nmherpsociety.org/reptiles/lizards/hemidactylusturcicusturcicus/index.html

PLANT OF THE MONTH - SEPTEMBER
Kurapia

Suggested By Jeff Anderson
SOURCE: https://kurapia.com/ Plugs can be ordered on-line

Kurapia is a highly versatile, drought tolerant groundcover that replaces traditional lawns, groundcovers, and erosion control plants. Kurapia establishes fast, is easy to control and can be mowed into a low cushiony turf. You may also let it bloom into a lush groundcover. Growth rate depend on amount of daylight hours, soil fertility & climate.

Kurapia was developed in Japan by H. Kuramochi and was perfected at Utsunomiya University. Taken from a variety of Phyla that grows natively in Japan, Kurapia has revolutionized landscaping all over the world. People are seeing the amazing environmental benefits in both commercial and residential spaces. Currently it's the bestselling groundcover in Japan where it is also used on highway shoulders and other public utility areas.

Kurapia can be used for many landscaping designs, including:

•Extreme weather
•Heavy slopes
•Irregular watering
•Irregular pH, salinity
•Foot traffic

Kurapia's light water requirements and easy maintenance saves you money while behaving reliably year after year.

Hardy to Zone 7B

PLANT OF THE MONTH-OCTOBER

Oxalis palmifrons

(Palm-leaf False Shamrock)

SOURCE: https://worldofsucculents.com/oxalis-palmifrons-palm-leaf-false-shamrock/

This species is native to South Africa. It occurs from Roggeveld Mountains near Sutherland to near Ceres and Laingsburg in Western Cape, growing on stony slopes and flats.

Oxalis palmifrons is a dwarf stemless geophyte with stunning foliage, which is quite unlike any other *Oxalis*. The slow-spreading patch of ground-hugging rosettes spreads to 2 feet (60 cm) in 10 years. Each symmetrical rosette is composed of glaucous green, 3-dimensional, miniature palm-like leaves. Bulb is ovoid with hard dark brown tunics and up to 1.6 inches (4 cm) long. This plant is a winter grower that does not emerge until late fall when it is topped with white flowers with a funnel-shaped yellow tube held just above the foliage. It remains evergreen all winter, finally going dormant when the heat of summer arrives.

Oxalis can be grown indoors as a houseplant or outdoors in the garden. They can be found in garden centers in the fall or early spring.

These plants need bright indirect light to grow well and produce flowers. They can often bloom all winter if kept in a sunny spot. Keep the soil barely moist but never soggy. Allow the top 2 inches (5 cm) of the soil to dry out before. It is best to water your *Oxalis* from the bottom so that the thin, fragile stems of the plant don't get waterlogged and the soil stays loose. *Oxalis* plants grow best in cool temperatures between 60 to 70 ºF (15 to 21 ºC) during the day and 55 to 65 ºF (13 to 18 ºC) at night. The soil should be loose and sandy rather than rich and organic. Feed your plant monthly when actively growing with a basic houseplant food at 1/2 the recommended strength. Never feed an *Oxalis* when it is dormant and the bulbs are resting.

To propagate *Oxalis*, simply split the plant into smaller plants and place them in their own pots. Keep it out of direct sunlight until new shoots appear.

EDITOR'S NOTE: While hardy to 7b to 11b: from 5 °F (−15 °C) to 50 °F (+10 °C), these would probably do best as a patio or house plant in Las Cruces. If not available in stores, it can be ordered on-line.

SKIN BENEFITS OF CASTOR OIL

Castor oil is a multipurpose vegetable oil that people have used for thousands of years. It's made by extracting oil from the seeds of the *Ricinus communis* plant.

These seeds, which are known as castor beans, contain a toxic enzyme called ricin. However, the heating process that castor oil undergoes during production deactivates the ricin, allowing the oil to be used safely.

Castor oil has a number of medicinal, industrial, and pharmaceutical uses. It's commonly used as an additive in foods, medications, and skin care products, as well as an industrial lubricant and biodiesel fuel component.

In ancient Egypt, people burned castor oil as fuel in lamps, used it as a natural remedy to treat ailments like eye irritation, and even took it to stimulate labor in pregnancy.

Castor oil is rich in ricinoleic acid, a monounsaturated fatty acid. These types of fats can be used to moisturize the skin. They act as occlusive moisturizers, which prevent or reduce water loss through the outer layer of the skin.

Castor oil is used in cosmetics to promote hydration. Manufacturers often add it to products like lotions, makeup, and cleansers.

You can also use this rich oil on its own as a natural alternative to store-bought moisturizers and lotions.

Many popular moisturizing products found in stores contain potentially harmful ingredients like preservatives, perfumes, and dyes, which may irritate the skin and harm overall health. Swapping out these products for castor oil can help reduce your exposure to these additives. Plus, castor oil is inexpensive and you can use it on both your face and body.

Castor oil is thick, so people often mix it with other skin-friendly oils — like almond, olive, and coconut oil — to make an ultra-hydrating moisturizer. Though applying castor oil to the skin is considered safe for most, it can cause an allergic reaction in some people. To be safe, try a small test patch to see if you may be allergic.

Suggested By Jeff Anderson

SOURCE: https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/castor-oil#2.-A-natural-moisturizer

RECIPE OF THE MONTH - SEPTEMBER
PEACH BURRATA SALAD

Dot Wyckoff shared this recipe from Giada De Laurentiis

For the Salad:
•6 ripe yellow peaches cut into wedges*
•1 cup pitted fresh cherries
•1/3 cup chopped fresh basil
•1/4 cup chopped fresh mint
•Pinch of red pepper flakes\
•2 T good quality extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
•1T good quality balsamic vinegar, plus extra for drizzling
•1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
•8 ounces fresh burrata, drained and patted dry
•1/2 teaspoon flake salt, such as Maldon

For The Bread:
•1 tablespoon olive oil, or more as needed
•8 slices from a rustic Italian loaf

Instructions

1.In a medium bowl, combine the peaches, cherries, basil, mint, red pepper flakes, olive oil, balsamic vinegar and ½ teaspoon kosher salt. Set aside and let the mixture marinate for at least 30 minutes at room temperature, or up to 2 hours in the refrigerator.
2.Meanwhile, heat a stovetop grill pan over medium-high heat. Brush the bread slices with oil and grill until lightly marked on both sides, 4 to 5 minutes total.
3.To serve, spoon the peach and cherry mixture onto a platter. Tear the burrata into bite-sized pieces and arrange them over the salad. Sprinkle the flake salt evenly over the cheese and drizzle the cheese with a little extra olive oil, balsamic, and fresh herbs if desired. Serve with the grilled bread.

- Dot says 3 large peaches were plenty

SERVINGS: 6 253 cal per serving

RECIPE OF THE MONTH - OCTOBER
PAN SEARED COD IN WHITE WINE TOMATO BASIL SAUCE

For the White Wine Tomato Basil Sauce:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 large cloves garlic, finely minced
- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 teaspoon salt (more to taste)
- 1/4 teaspoon fresh ground black pepper (more to taste)
- 1/4 tsp crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, sliced in half
- 1/2 cup fresh basil, finely chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon fresh lemon zest
- 1 teaspoon granulated sugar

For the Cod:

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 and 1/2 pounds fresh cod, cut into 4 fillets (or four 6 ounce fillets)
- Salt and pepper

Instructions

For the White Wine Tomato Basil Sauce:

Heat oil in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Add crushed red pepper flakes and garlic and sauté for 1 minute, or until garlic is fragrant. Add the cherry tomatoes and cook, stirring occasionally, until they're soft and blistering, but still hold their shape, 9 to 12 minutes. Add in the white wine, stir, and allow the mixture to come to a gentle simmer. Stir in the basil, lemon juice, lemon zest, salt, sugar, and pepper and cook for 2 minutes. Transfer the sauce into a bowl and set aside until needed.

For the Cod:

Heat oil in a large sauté pan over medium heat. Pat the cod dry with paper towels. Then season both sides of cod with salt and pepper.

Place cod in the oil and cook until golden brown, about 3 minutes. Carefully flip the cod over and continue cooking for another 3 to 4 minutes, OR until it's cooked through.

Pour the white wine tomato basil sauce over the cod, let the sauce warm up for a minute, then remove from heat and serve at once.

Prep: 15 minutes Cook: 25 minutes Total: 40 minutes 4 servings - Dot Wyckoff

HONEY DO LIST - SEPTEMBER

ORNAMENTALS:

- Sow seeds of California poppy, columbine, calendula, candytuft, and alyssium.
- Plant winter annuals such as dianthus, stock, snapdragon, pansies, bachelor buttons, nemesia, statice, wallflower and forget-me-not.
- Continue planting mums.
- Continue dividing iris and other clumping perennials (Shasta daisy, wood violets, Mexican feathergrass, and other ornamental grasses).
- Buy spring flowering bulbs as they become available. Keep in a cool, dry place until ready to plant later in the fall.
- Begin forcing amaryllis and narcissus bulbs now for holiday blooms. Kalanchoes can also be forced into blooming using 12 hours of darkness per day for 4-6 weeks.
- Begin inspection, repotting, and pest control of patio plants before bringing them in for the winter.
- Keep plants watered deeply, decreasing frequency as temperatures begin to reduce.

TREES:

- Plant trees (see previous article by Marisa Thompson). Dig hole only as deep as the container's soil depth, but make it 2 to 3 times wider. Do not add soil amendments.
- Start root pruning established trees if you plan to move them in midwinter. Severed roots will begin to regrow, making a tighter root ball.
- Reduce irrigation to succulent trees such as willow in preparation for winter.
- Continue deep-watering pecans. Black pecan aphids can cause premature leaf drop and reduce nut quality, so treat with an appropriate insecticide.
- Harvest fruit promptly and maintain good sanitation practices.
- Remove suckers from the base of trees at the point of attachment.

VEGETABLES, FRUITS, AND HERBS:

- Finish planting leaf lettuces, collards, and mustard greens. Plant spinach seed.
- Continue to divide mints, marjoram, oregano, and chives.
- Plant perennial herbs such as rosemary, lavender, sage, and thyme.
- Prune summer damaged stems from rosemary, sage, thyme, and others.
- Fertilize perennial herbs with a side dressing of compost or regular fertilizer.

TURF/ORNAMENTAL GRASSES:

Seed cool-season grasses now. There is also still time to lay sod of warm-season grasses as well.

- Fertilize both cool and warm season grasses. This will be a final fertilization for warm-season types so use a 2-2-1 formulation or something higher in P and K.
- Apply a pre-emergent herbicide to established turf to control cool-season weeds.
- Reduce irrigation frequency to once a week, depending on temperature.

CACTI & SUCCULENTS:

- Most warm-season succulents grow fastest in late spring, slow down in the summer, and resume growing in the fall. This is an ideal time to plant agaves, yuccas, and cactus.
- Fertilize container-grown warm-season succulents. This will be the last for the year.
- Spread a layer of compost or mulch and scratch it lightly into the soil. This should be all the enrichment the succulents will need for the year.

ROSES:

- This is a good time to evaluate your roses and determine how well they endured the summer. If plants have lost over half their canes or had numerous yellow or dying leaves, they need to be relocated to a shadier or cooler space in your garden.
- Plan where you want new bushes in the spring. Look at catalogs, etc, and consider planning some of the newer shrub roses that require less maintenance. Look for plants that are rated for good heat tolerance and/or recommended by local rose experts.
- Container roses can be planted now, but water them deeply and frequently to get them established.
- Do not fertilize roses after this month.
- Prune gently and remove any dead canes. Take off yellowed or diseased leaves and clean around the base of the plants. Inspect for signs of cane borers (hollow canes). Cut the cane until there is no sign of borers, and coat the cut with Elmer's glue or clear nail polish.

PESTS:

- If your agaves have been infected with agave snout weevil, they will experience a slight drooping of leaves with only the tight bud erect on the plant. There is no cure, so the plant will need to be removed.
- If diseases have ravaged your prickly pear or cholla, cut them back severely to an uninfected part and water well to encourage new growth.
- Spray whiteflies with a soapy water solution if still active. Continue to rinse plants off to control aphids and spider mites.
- Use a sulfur-based fungicide to control powdery mildew. You can make a home brew with 1 teaspoon backing soda, 1 quart water, and 1 drop of liquid soap. Test on a few leaves first.

HONEY DO LIST - OCTOBER

ORNAMENTALS:

- Continue planting spring blooming bulbs such as crocus, anemone, and oxalis.
- As a general rule, plant bulbs to a depth of 3 times their diameter
- Plant cool-season annuals such as pansies, sweet pea, and flowering kale.
- Sow seeds of wildflowers including California poppy, toadflax, and larkspur. Keeps seedbeds moist through germination to the five true leaf stage. Then reduce watering as tolerated.
- Cool-season perennials and hardy natives such as gaura, penstemon, and salvia may be planted now.
- Begin seeding Iceland and Shirley poppies.
- Groom, repot, and prepare to bring patio plants in for the winter.
- If you are leaving tender plants in the ground for winter, then mulch them heavily.
- For large tender container plants, get blankets or other coverings ready.

TREES:

- Plant low-growing junipers.
- Continue planting winter hardy trees and shrubs, but wait to plant species such as red bird of paradise, true Palo Verde, Eucalyptus, and Oleander.
- Reduce irrigation frequency to established non-fruit bearing trees and shrubs.
- Continue to irrigate pecans.
- Continue root pruning proposed transplants.
- Spray fruit trees with dormant oil containing a copper fungicide after 7% of leaves have fallen.
- Continue with good orchard sanitation practices.

VEGGIES ETC:

- Plant onions, garlic, and rapidly maturing crops such as radishes now.
- Plant coriander, parsley, and dill seeds now.
- Chives, Mexican tarragon, oregano, rosemary, thyme, and winter savory may go in now.

- Propagate woody perennials like rosemary by layering.
- Reduce irrigation frequency to grapes in preparation for winter.

LAWN:

- Finish pre-emergent application to established turf.
- Finish seeding cool-season grasses.
- Fertilize cool season grasses and continue irrigation and mowing
- Stop fertilizing warm-season species and reduce irrigation frequency as winter dormancy nears.
- If you are through mowing for the year, winterize the lawn mower but wait till spring to tune it up.

CACTI & SUCCULENTS:

- At the end of the month, begin encouraging Christmas cactus to rebloom. Put plants in a cool location at night (55 – 65 degrees F). Keep plants completely in the dark for 12 -14 hours. Water regularly, but let plant dry out between watering. Flower buds will form in 4 – 6 weeks.
- For Christmas bloom, give Poinsettias 14 hours of uninterrupted darkness per day.
- Do not prune warm-season succulents this month. You can remove spent flowers anytime.
- Remove pups from agaves and replant this month.
- Container-grown winter succulents can be fertilized monthly starting this month. Use a soluble fertilizer at ¼ to ½ the recommended strength for houseplants. Do not fertilize plants planted in the ground this month.
- If cochineal scale is still a problem on cacti, hose them off with a strong jet of water.

ROSES:

- Allow plants to adjust to cooler temperatures and prepare for cold weather by reducing the frequency of water. Discontinue fertilizing.
- Mulch the root zone with 6-8 inches of light mulch, and include the bud union within the mulch.
- Keep the area around bushes clean of debris and fallen leaves.
- Yellowing leaves occurring at the bottom of the plant is natural die off; but if yellowing spreads upward on the plant, this is a sign of overwatering.

PESTS:

- Agaves infected with Agave snout weevil will cause a sudden drooping of leaves with only the leaf bud erect. These plants should be removed, as there is no cure.
- Disease can also affect prickly pear and cholla. Cut these plants back severely this month to an uninfected portion of the plant. Keep plants watered to ensure new growth.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Thank you, volunteers, for your services at the Farmers Market, July 4H State Contest, National Night Out, and Natural History Museum.

Lunch and Learn – Branigan Library 12 pm

September 12 – Fall Vegetable Gardening – Marcia Adams and Marcia Wilson

October 10 - Native Plants for Native Bees

Master Gardener Monthly Meeting 9:30 am

September 13 Extension Office

October 11 Extension Office

SNMSF September 23-October 1

Contact Dot Wyckoff if you haven't already signed up.

Setup and Decorate 10 am Setup on the 23rd.

2 shifts of 4 volunteers 9-5 (sign up all day or half day)

ALSO: September 26 for entries and judging

September 29th Ag Day

Contact Jeff Anderson or details. He needs 1 or 2 people.

Ongoing

Master Gardener Hotline, 9:00 am – 12:00 pm Tuesdays and Fridays, Master Gardener Office. Interns: Great chance to learn on the job working with a Certified Master Gardener. Call Christine at the office to let her know what days you plan to come in.

FUNNY PAGES

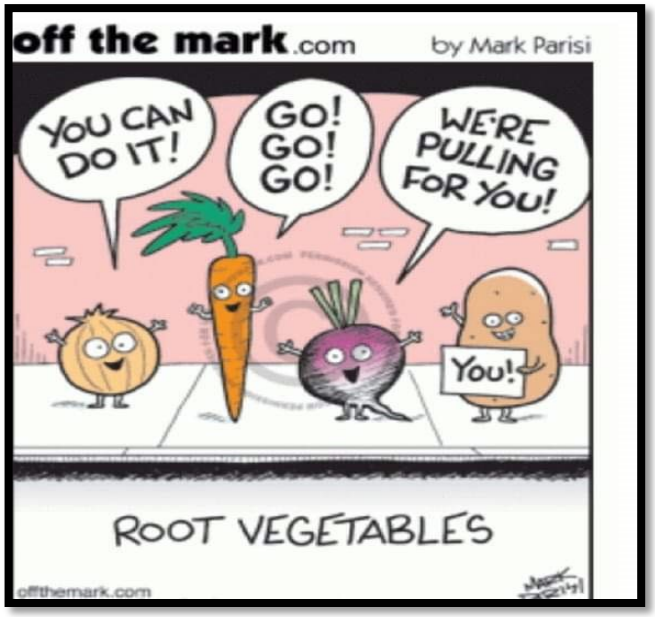

ALL IT TOOK WAS A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP!
offthemark.com
Get a signed print: otmCartoon@gmail.com ©2023 Mark Parisi Dist by Andrews McMeel 7-20
MARK PARISI

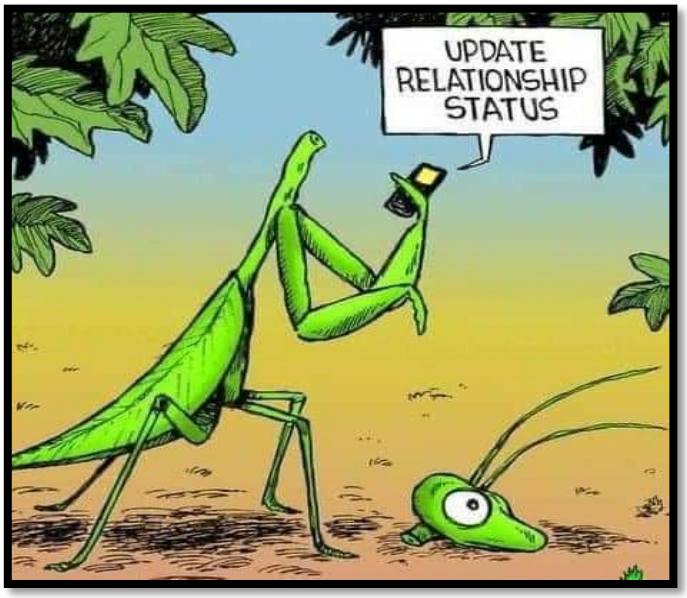

A RARE PHOTO OF A BABY CARROT CLINGING TO ITS MOTHER, BEFORE BEING EATEN BY A HEARTLESS VEGAN
STOP THIS CRUELTY NOW


I mowed my yard today, got a little bit dehydrated...


PLAY DEAD AS LONG AS YOU WANT, YOUNG MAN! THOSE BRUSSELS SPROUTS WILL STILL BE THERE!
Tap Photo
Options
Send in Messenger

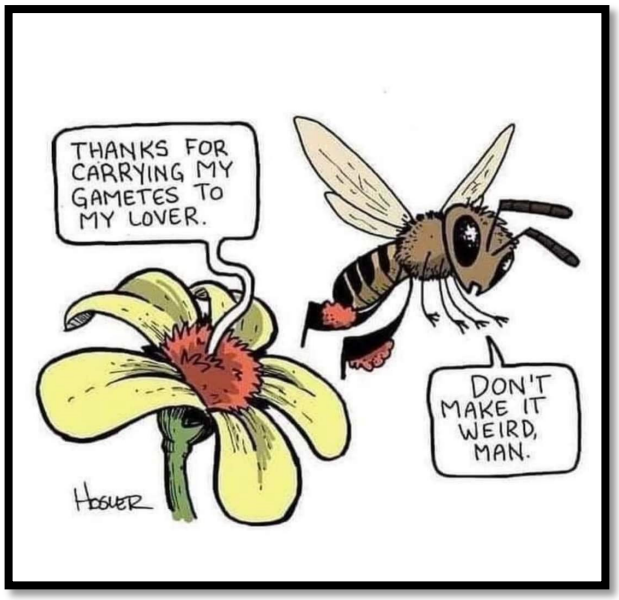

I do not grasp the concept of moderation

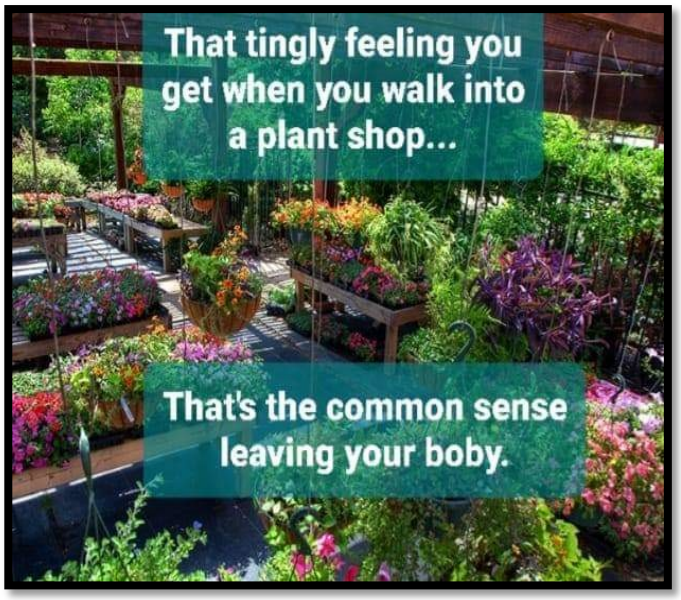

off the mark.com
by Mark Parisi
YOU CAN DO IT!
GO! GO! GO!
WE'RE PULLING FOR YOU!
YOU!
ROOT VEGETABLES
offthemark.com


UPDATE RELATIONSHIP STATUS

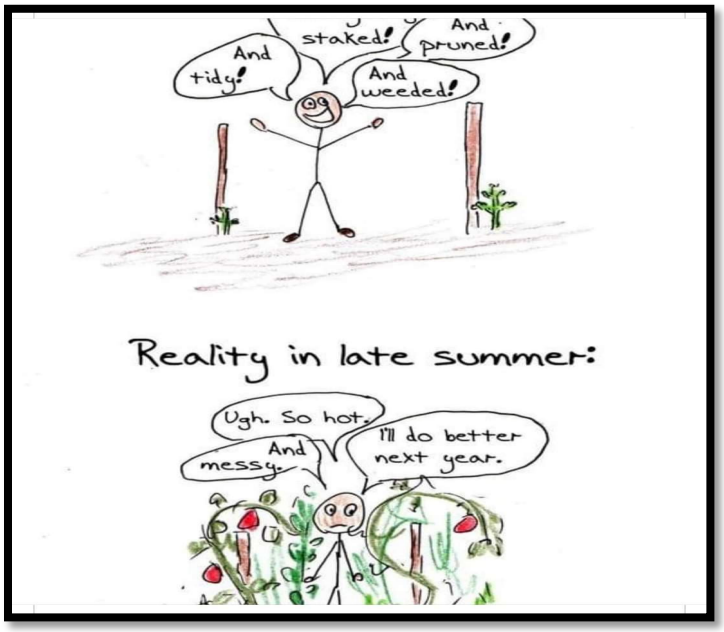

DESPITE ALL OF OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS WE OWE OUR EXISTENCE TO A SIX-INCH LAYER OF TOPSOIL AND THE FACT THAT IT RAINS.
grow Food NOT LAWNS

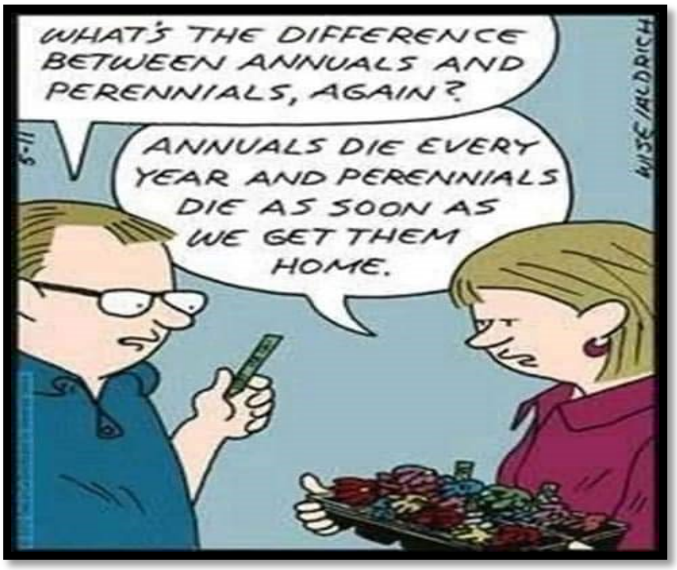

EVERY MORNING WHEN I GO TO WATER THE PLANTS IN MY GARDEN:
Your Saviour is here!


THANKS FOR CARRYING MY GAMETES TO MY LOVER.
DON'T MAKE IT WEIRD, MAN.
HOSLER


That tingly feeling you get when you walk into a plant shop...
That's the common sense leaving your boby.


ZUCCHINI RECIPE
CHANEL
CHANEL
NUMBER 243
imgflip.com


And tidy!
staked!
And pruned!
And weeded!
Reality in late summer:
Ugh. So hot.
And messy.
I'll do better next year.


WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ANNUALS AND PERENNIALS, AGAIN?
ANNUALS DIE EVERY YEAR AND PERENNIALS DIE AS SOON AS WE GET THEM HOME.
WISE/ALDRICH