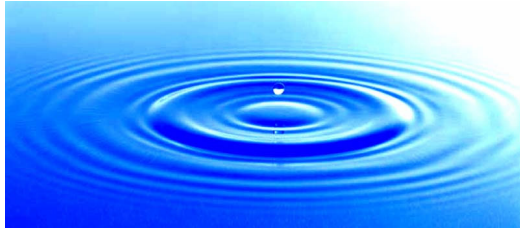


Ponderings



Water Harvesting

Water is an integral part of everyone's life. In our arid desert environment, water becomes an even more precious resource.

This month's program will focus on water harvesting. In its simplest definition, water harvesting is the capture, diversion, and storage of rainwater for plant irrigation and other uses. It is one of the oldest known gardening methods.

A rainfall water harvesting system has three components: the supply (rainfall), the demand (landscape water requirements), and the system that moves the water to the plants. Storage is an additional element which is optional. Systems can range from barrels and small

berms to complex catchment areas and distribution systems.

Some of the benefits to harvesting rainwater include a reduction on the dependence on ground water and the amount of money spent on water; reduction in off-site flooding and erosion by holding rainwater on site; and, rainwater is a clean, salt-free source of water for plants.

Resources:

<http://www.ci.tucson.az.us/water/harvesting>

<http://rfcd.pima.gov/wh/info.html>

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

Official
Newsletter of
The Tucson
Watergardeners

Volume X, Issue 2

March 2008

NOTEWORTHY:

- Dues must be paid by the end of March:

\$15.00 Single

\$20.00 Household

- Annual Plant Sale now set for Sunday, May 4th., at Reid Park 8:00 am — 1:30 pm.



Ponders Calendar

General Meeting

Thursday, Mar 27st 7:30 PM @ Junior League of Tucson 2099 E River Road

Program: Water Harvesting by Catlow Shipek (Watershed Management Group (WMG), a non-profit organization based in Tucson)

Door Prizes: Share your extra plants & stuff!

Board Notes

No March Board meeting. Mark your calendar for the next TTW Board meeting on April 17th. Host is Ken Canada.

Inside this issue:

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Collier Elementary School Grant

“We welcome anything that enhances our physical school campus and learning environment,” was the feedback from Dr. Joyce Geranis, Collier Elementary School Principal. Dr. Geranis was referring to the school atriums that include a small water garden created with a \$936 grant from The Tucson Watergardeners.

It was a specific class and teacher that adopted the water garden project in the 2004-2005 Academic Year and applied for the grant. Since that time, both the class and teacher have moved on. However, the water garden



remains as a key feature in Collier’s busy atrium corridor. It is the sound of water in this central meeting place that serves as a calming backdrop for parents waiting for their children, as well as occupational and physical therapists awaiting a student. Hand painted tiles by Collier students provide the splashes of color that catch the eye and enliven the whole atrium. These tiles frame the water garden project.



To promote water gardening in our community, TTW has awarded six grants. Collier is one of these grants.



Dr. Geranis expressed that the pond remains intriguing for her students. The children can observe changes in the life cycle of plants and the impact of weather on the Collier water garden, as examples. Like other Arizona schools, Collier has extremely limited discretionary school funding. This makes grants very important to the school. In addition to the water garden, the atrium also houses other grant projects, such as a series of desert landscape paintings.

Dr. Geranis is appreciative of what the Tucson community, including The Tucson Watergardeners, continues to do for Collier Elementary in the form of grant giving. In an effort to contribute back to the community that has been so generous with her school, Dr. Geranis has involved Collier in making Ben’s Bells. She feels that Collier’s participation in Ben’s Bells is part of paying it forward.

Editor’s Note. Thank you to Dr. Geranis for giving TTW interview time in her busy schedule. This was one trip to the Principal’s Office that was delightful —not anything like those remembered from a childhood long, long ago. Based on the TTW visit, a proposal to refresh the Collier Watergarden is also being developed, and has been discussed at the February TTW Board meeting.

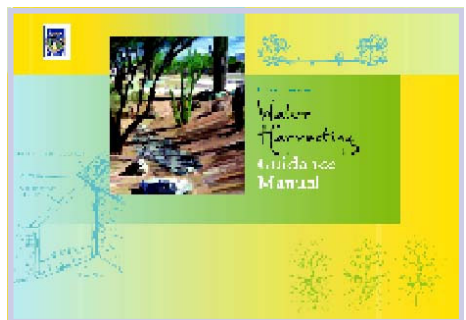


I would encourage everyone to pay their 2008 dues by our next meeting on March 27th. As of now, we have about a 35% renewal rate, and would like to finish this process so we can publish a more complete Directory in April. There are many benefits to renewing your membership, including discounts at the upcoming Plant Sale!

Thanks to Pam Glenn, Chairperson for our May Plant Sale, we have black mesh water plant baskets for sale at our March and April meetings. The baskets will be sold on a first-come-first-serve basis. The big square or kidney shaped are \$3.50 each; medium round are \$2.25 ea; and the small round or square are \$1.25 ea. You can also contact Pam in advance to be sure she brings what you would like to purchase.

Elizabeth Good

Free City of Tucson Water Harvesting Guidance Manual.
Download from: <http://www.ci.tucson.az.us/water/harvesting>



Time To Divide & Repot!

2008 TTW Committee Chairs

By-Laws: Gail Barnhill thepondlady@msn.com

E-Mailings & Field Trips: Casey Case casey@dakotacom.net

Grants: *On hold.*

Meeting Room Manager: Board members

Membership, Information, Literature & Post Card Mailings Chair: Ann Marie Bonito amb@nrgtucson.com

Program Chair: Mary McMacken azwhiner@yahoo.com

Property & Storage: Bill Hudson lloydhudson@cox.net

Publicity Chair: Renee Shane-Boyd rshaneboyd@aol.com

Refreshments: *Vacant.*

May Plant Sale: Pam Glenn pglenn4@cox.net

Public Garden Tour: Elizabeth Good gandegood@msn.com

(Looking for a Co-Chair!)

Clip and save.



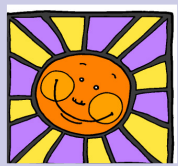
Ah, Spring! It's not too early to begin thinking about dividing your root bound water plants. If you have an old shower curtain or large piece of plastic, that's a step in the right direction to contain the messy business of re-potting. Tools such as scissors, spades, and even a hack saw or power Sawzall type tool need to be at your fingertips. Have on hand a bucket of water, so that plants won't dry out during the dividing process. Don't use a rich soil; *unscented, unimproved* kitty litter is a favorite of water gardeners. Fertilizer tabs or time release fertilizer is highly recommended. It's also very important to plan ahead in terms of the containers you will need!



Spider Lily



Going from root bound to repotted, not all water plants can be divided using the same methods. Carefully pull bulb plants apart by hand.



Watergardening Classifieds

Drums for Sale. Two 55-gallon plastic drums, with solid tops and two plugs, are available for \$10.00 each. These make terrific bio-filters, rain water collectors, or for making compost tea! Call and leave a message for Pam at 748-1417.

Sell or Trade Water Garden Items. Ad space is *free* to members! Write-ups on your water garden items must be in to the editor by the 4th of each month.

Go For Ideas!

Tucson Botanical Gardens 22nd Annual Home Garden Tour April 5-6 www.tucsonbotanical.org

Southern Arizona Koi Association 2008 Pond Tour May 3-4 www.sakoia.org

Thought for the Month: Location, location, location...is also true for plants.



2008 Future Programs

APRIL: All About Bees

MAY: Survivable Ground Covers

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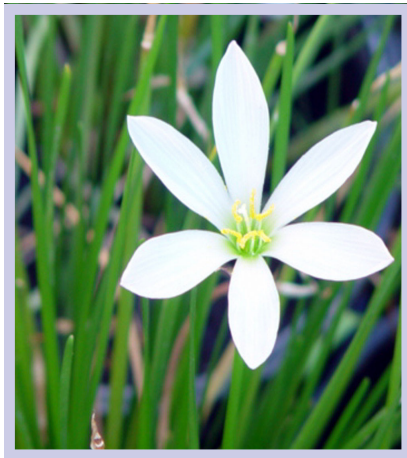
The Tucson Watergardeners
9651 E. Watson Drive
Tucson, AZ 85730



To help develop an interest in the creation and care of water gardens...



Aquatic Plant Profile



White Rain Lily (*Zephyranthes candida*)
Photo courtesy C. Case water garden.

The Rain Lily is from the Amaryllidaceae (onion) family and also goes by the name of Fairy Lily or Zephyr Lily. For the water garden, the Rain Lily is considered a tropical marginal or bog plant, with its origin traced to the marshes and bogs of South America.

This bulb perennial is a delightful marginal grower that loves hot summers, full sun, and boggy soils — a winning combination for our desert climate! The Rain Lily also likes to be kept partially submerged.

The Rain Lily blooms several times a season, and is particularly active in terms of blooming after a rainy period. Its crocus-shaped

flowers, with its needle-like foliage, can reach 12 inches in height, and spread to a 2 foot wide clump.

The cultivars of the Rain Lily come in colors such as apricot, yellow and pink. Use it to add texture around the edges of your water garden. The Rain Lily continues to bloom well after the other aquatic plants have given out in late summer or early fall.

Do you have a particular favorite aquatic plant you would like to share with the club? Let's feature your favorite here!