Rare Milkweed attract Monarch butterflies

The Monarch Watch Organization was “over the moon” with excitement when University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Master Gardener Anne Marie Lardeau sent them one cup of rare, desert native Milkweed seeds. Last year, Lardeau spoke via email to the Monarch Watch Organization and found out that they did not have the rare, desert Milkweed on their list. Lardeau told them that Cooperative Extension had such plants.

Lardeau began the collection process a year ago at the Lifelong Learning Center’s Demonstration Gardens. Monarch butterflies deposit their eggs on the Asclepias subulata as they migrate from west to east and vice-versa. The caterpillars feed on the plants.

“It certainly was a long, involved process,” explained Lardeau. “The spring crop failed due to high winds that released all of the seeds into the air.” During the second harvest, Lardeau used panty hose she cut into thirds and tied at the ends and placed over the pods to capture the seeds. When the pods were ready to release the seeds, they were deposited into the mesh from the hose.

“The 10 Milkweed plants created about two ounces of seeds, equivalent to one cup,” Lardeau added. These were the first donation and the first desert Milkweed seeds the Monarch Watch Organization received from Nevada.

Besides the Milkweed plants, Cooperative Extension’s Demonstration Gardens host close to 1,000 different plants—from native desert plants to fruit trees to vegetables.

“I try to collect seeds from other native desert plants, mostly flowers, at the Gardens,” explained Lardeau.

“The flower seeds are then donated to Nellis Air Force Base’s Environmental Grove; the City of Henderson Parks Department; the Las Vegas and Pittman Washes; and two local elementary schools for their school garden project.

Lardeau graduated from the Southern Nevada Master Gardener training program in 2012. Her passion to beautify the barren washes in the area led her to seed harvesting. She has conducted extensive research to find out what (Continued on page 2)
seeds in the Demonstration Gardens have value and what organizations might be interested in seed donations.

The Master Gardener program teaches sustainable desert gardening practices, including proper plant selection and care, disease and pest management and water-efficient gardening. To become a Master Gardener, an individual must complete 80 hours of horticultural instruction and volunteer 50 hours on community projects each year. The Master Gardener title can only be used when performing volunteer work on behalf of the University.

Master Gardeners are volunteers who teach, assist and work with community partners on projects across the Las Vegas valley. Projects are on-going at Acacia Park, the Springs Preserve, Doolittle and Lieburn Senior Center Community Gardens, the Research Center & Demonstration Orchard and Nellis AFB Environmental Grove. Additional program information is available on the Master Gardener Facebook page.

(Marilyn Ming, Marketing/Public Relations Specialist)

The heat is on...how to keep your cool!

Las Vegas has been off to a slow start this year with our hot summer weather. Although we are all thankful for the early relief, we know it will soon be scorching. Summer heat is no surprise in Las Vegas. It is a ruthless and even deadly problem. According to the Center for Disease Control, nearly 400 Americans die from heat waves each year, many of them older adults who don’t realize when they are in danger from overheating.

One reason that older adults are susceptible to heat-related illnesses is poor circulation, which is critical to the body for cooling. Deep body fluids with raised temperatures travel through the blood stream to the surface of the skin for cooling. Poor circulation can obstruct this process. Additionally, individuals with poor circulation tend to feel cold in air conditioned spaces. Reaching for a sweater when it's hot out, limits the bodies cooling ability. Older adults also don't sweat as effectively. Sweating is an important mechanism that allows cooling as the damp skin dries. Although not really a problem in Las Vegas, humid climates may prevent the surface of the skin from drying and therefore don’t cool the body.

Those at greatest risk for heat stress include people over 65 years of age, those that are overweight, have heart disease, dementia, diabetes and other chronic medical conditions. Certain medications are also affected by extreme heat, including diuretics and others prescribed for hypertension and Parkinson's disease. Heat stress can result in five major illnesses: heat rash, heat syncope, heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Heat rash is the mildest condition. It is a skin irritation caused by excessive sweating during hot, humid weather. The rash looks like a red cluster of pimples or small blisters particularly in the neck, upper chest, in the groin, under the breasts, and in elbow creases.

Heat cramps can occur in individuals who sweat a lot during strenuous activity causing a loss of salt and moisture in the body, especially in the muscles such as those of the abdomen, arms or legs. In addition to standard care for heat illnesses, individuals on a low salt diet or have heart problems should seek medical attention.

Heat syncope, better known as fainting or dizziness episodes usually occurs after a sudden rising from prolonged sitting or lying during high temperatures.

Heat exhaustion occurs when there is excessive loss of water and salt, usually through excessive sweating resulting in pale skin, extreme weakness, dizziness, shallow breathing, confusion and nausea.

Heat stroke, the most serious heat-related disorder, occurs when the body’s temperature rises rapidly (up to 106 degrees within 10-15 minutes), the sweating mechanism fails, and the body is unable to cool down. Without medical attention, heat stroke can lead to death or permanent disability. Heat illnesses are easier to avoid than they are to treat.

So follow the A-B-C-D-E’s:

A - Air conditioned buildings are your friend! Spend at least some of your day in a cool air-conditioned space like a mall or theater.

(Continued on page 4)
Before you dive in

7 swimming tips that could save your life

1. Test the depth of the water by going in feet first, even at swimming pools, and obey all No Diving signs. Diving accidents are an important preventable cause of spinal cord injuries, and most diving-related spinal cord injuries result in paralysis of both arms and legs.

2. Swim with a buddy, not alone, and stay in designated areas with lifeguard supervision. Inexperienced swimmers should wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device.

3. Keep within arm’s length of young children in the water, and never ask an older child to watch a younger child. Even though they may have had lessons, children under 4 may not be developmentally ready to swim.

4. Check for rocks, broken glass, and other sharp objects before entering the water in rivers, lakes, or oceans.

5. When swimming at beaches ask the lifeguard about waves and riptides, which could be a safety concern.

6. Stay out of the water during bad weather, especially lightning storms.

7. Never drink alcohol when you are swimming. Alcohol impairs your judgment and coordination and alters your body’s ability to stay warm.

Sources: American Red Cross; American Academy of Pediatrics

Hope Health—No. 10121

Two July gardening workshops scheduled

Join University of Nevada Cooperative Extension on Saturday, July 11 and July 25 for two Gardening in Small Places workshops. July 11, the dirt on soil and July 25, organic gardening.

If you’ve gardened in other parts of the country and then tried to garden here, you’ve noticed that the soil is different. Our Mojave soils are infertile, salty and alkaline – fine for desert natives – but not good for much else. Due to the hands-on nature of the soil class, the size is limited.

There is a lot of talk about organic gardening, yet people have different ideas about what this means. Some think it means using no pesticides at all, while others think it means using non-GMO seeds. When in reality, organic gardening is so much more. Both workshops are from 8 a.m. to noon.

Homeowners and other interested parties are welcome to attend. Class space is limited to 25 and pre-registration is required. There is a $25 fee per class which covers class materials.

To register for the soils class, held at the Lifelong Learning Center (8050 Paradise Road, Las Vegas, Nev.), email Elaine Fagin at or call 702-257-5573. To register online, visit Eventbrite.com.

To register for the organic gardening class, held at the Lifelong Learning Center, email Elaine Fagin at or call 702-257-5573. To register online, visit Eventbrite.com.

Upcoming Gardening in Small Places workshop dates are August 22, landscape design; September 19, native plants; October 3, tree selection; and November 21, growing fruit at home.
Whole

(Continued from page 2)

B - **Breaks** should be taken in cool, shady areas regularly while outdoors.  
C - **Clothing** should be lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting and breathable (cotton not synthetic). Wear hats that are loosely woven and don't trap heat. They should also be broad-brimmed to cover the entire face.

D - **Drink** fluid frequently. If you are properly hydrated, you should never feel thirsty (e.g. one cup every 15-20 minutes). Avoid alcohol, iced coffee, soda and other highly caffeinated drinks as they are dehydrating. Enjoy frozen treats with a high water and low sugar content, like sugar-free Popsicles (make your own using juice) and eat fruit with a high water content, like watermelon.

E - **Exposure** to the sun or extreme heat should be minimal or completely avoided. Take a cool shower or bath or sponge bath.

Yes, July is here! When you’re chicken lays a fried egg, your seatbelt feels like a branding iron and your thermostat reads “Are you kidding me?” it’s time to take extra precautions and stay cool! Look at the bright side, at least you can wash and dry your clothes at the same time!

**Anne Lindsay, Exercise Physiologist**

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**Nevada Naturalist Spring Graduation**

Cooperative Extension’s Nevada Naturalist Program’s Spring 2015 class held their graduation on Saturday, May 30. To become a Nevada Naturalist, participants complete a minimum of 60 hours of classroom and field education, 20 hours of volunteer service, and a project on an environmental topic of their choice.

Projects for 2015 include: Presentations on Badgers, Tarantulas, and Monarchs; a herpetological education module for youth; a “Natural Nevada” card game; southern Nevada wildflower flash cards and board game; a desert edibles workshop; Camp NV Naturalist, and more.

The next session of Nevada Naturalist Program begins in September. For more information email or call Denise Parsons at 702-948-5906.

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If you are interested in a S.T.E.M. summer day camp or overnight camp for your child, contact 4-H at 702-257-5538 or email Karen Best.

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