Graceful leaves of Mexican feather grass (Nassella tenuissima) sway gently with the breeze and add texture, contrast, and interest in the landscape. Classified as a cool-season grass because it stays green in winter, Mexican feather grass is unlike any of the other ornamental grasses because it can remain viable all year long. This thin leaved grass grows in a dense fountain-like clump 12 to 36 inches tall and as wide providing shelter for wildlife. The leaves are rolled tightly inward, giving the appearance of a wire or needle, hence the other common name: Texas needle grass. The flower, or inflorescence, is golden tan and extends approximately six to twelve inches tall above the leaves. Hardy to 20 degrees F, Mexican feather grass is a moderate grower and water user that grows in full sun to partial shade for best results. One drawback to the Mexican feather grass is its tendency to self-sow and may spread out of the designated bed so deadhead if you do not want volunteer seedlings next season. Large established plants can be divided, but this process is usually not very successful. If desired, cut back old shabby plants in early to mid-February for new growth. This plant is virtually pest and disease free. Use the Mexican feather grass in mass plantings or clumps in rock gardens, or as an accent with bolder textured plantings. It is native to North America in the mountains in west Texas and adjacent New Mexico south to central Mexico. Planting Mexican feather grass adds a dramatic softening touch to harder-edged plants and architecture.
Companion Planting

Native plants play a very important role in our landscape, not only in the preservation of local plant types, but also in their support role in insect and animal life. It is not that difficult to incorporate native plants, but it is important to choose carefully. Look at the bloom time and flower color, but also the height and spread of the plant. There are many native flowers that become very aggressive in the presence of water which is great in the desert or perhaps in a xeric rock garden, but maybe not so fabulous for your vegetable garden area.

Native flowering plants around vegetable gardens and orchards attract local bees and other pollinators for fruit production, and many support our local and migrating birds, in addition to butterflies.

Plant Disease Control Measures

1. Keep the Garden Clean – Plant debris should be disposed of as soon after harvest as possible.
2. Rotate Crops – Traces of a disease one year may result in a serious infestation the following year.
3. Purchase Virus-Resistant Plants – Plants should be certified virus and disease free.
4. Look for the initials Z, F, N or all three in combination. This indicates that the plant is resistant to verticillium wilt, fusarium, and nematodes.
5. Destroy Infected Plants – Cut out infected plant parts and destroy diseased plants. This prevents the disease from spreading to healthy plants. Do not put infected plants into a compost pile.
6. Promote Healthy, Vigorous Plant Growth – Invite beneficial fungi, bacteria, nematodes and insects to the planting area by not using harsh chemicals in or around the garden.

September Reminders

1. Time for fall vegetable and flower planting.
2. Be on the lookout for whiteflies!
3. Order spring bulbs to plant next month.
4. Do not fertilize perennials this month.
5. Begin to plant cool-season annuals.
6. It’s the ideal time to plant succulents.
7. Time to plant strawberries.
8. Start to prune poinsettias and adjust light cycle.
9. Apply a final application of fertilizer to Bermuda for the year.
10. Divide perennials that are overgrown.
11. Begin to over seed your lawn late this month.
12. Perfect time to plant spring flowering perennials.
**You know you’re a Master Gardener if you take every single person who enters your house on a “garden tour.”**

**September Planting**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beans</th>
<th>Cilantro</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beets</td>
<td>Chard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bok Choy</td>
<td>Cucumbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broccoli</td>
<td>Endive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brussels sprouts</td>
<td>Greens/Lettuce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>Kohlrabi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carrots</td>
<td>Garlic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cauliflower</td>
<td>Leeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Onions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parsnip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parsley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Radish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rutabaga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shallots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Turnips</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Before you plant those root crops**

It sounds illogical, but sometimes, adding more bugs to your garden will help decrease the total population.

Trichoderma are fungi that colonize the root system. Their presence stops harmful fungi from colonizing the same root area. They effectively stimulate root development and increase a plant’s ability to handle environmental stress i.e. temperatures extremes.

Mycorrhiza or "Fungus roots" which are symbiotic with the plant roots on which they occur. This mycorrhiza relationship facilitates the sharing of some of the plant’s storehouse of organic compounds (which are essential to fungi, as they are to all living organisms). In addition, water is exchanged along with the organic compounds for assistance from the fungus in the absorption of nutrients like phosphorus and some other minerals. There are endo- and ectomycorrhizae, the endo- aiding in material uptake, the ecto- forming a rhizosphere protecting the roots from potential pathogens or diseases.

Bacteria fall into four functional groups. Most are decomposers that are especially important in immobilizing, or retaining, nutrients in their cells, thus preventing the loss of nutrients, such as nitrogen, from the root zone. They are also responsible for the biochemical breakdown of organic matter into organic compounds and nutrients, and ultimately into its original components. These "good" bacteria are called rhizobacteria, because they occur in the rhizosphere. These bacteria produce a variety of chemicals that stimulate plant growth. While common in natural settings, their populations are often very low or absent in nursery potting soils, urban environments and disturbed manmade landscapes.

Beneficial Nematodes are live microscopic organisms that occur naturally in soil throughout the world. They are parasitic to insect pests that typically have a developing (larval or pupal) stage of life in the soil; however, they have been known to also parasitize above ground stages of adults, nymphs and larvae.

**The Garden in Bloom**

The Garden in Bloom is a series of year round, month-by-month flower gardening classes designed to educate people on producing a fabulous ongoing display every month of the year!

Classes are every First and Third Wednesday of the Month at the Clark County Fair garden.

**Veggies by the Season**

Veggies by the Season is a series of year round, month-by-month gardening classes designed to educate people on producing timely vegetables in their back yard gardens.

September 11 – Planting
September 25 – Composting

5:30 p.m. -7:00 p.m.
Cost is $3.00 per class

For more information call Denise at 702-397-2604 x 4
Great Basin Permaculture Takes on Challenge of Growing Sustainably in Arid Nevada Environment

When Las Vegas-based sustainable agriculture enthusiast Jessica Penrod decided to begin learning about permaculture, she sought out local study courses in vain. Permaculture is the branch of sustainable agriculture that reaches back to pre-industrial times for inspiration as to sustainable uses of land; it combines horticulture, design, architecture and engineering in a philosophy which encourages followers to treat each landscape as a waste-minimizing ecology. As such, it’s well suited to Nevada’s desert environment, where water and soil are inherently scarce resources.

Eventually, Penrod and her friend and fellow gardener Tiffany Whisenant met local flower store owner Peter Frigeri at a First Friday, a monthly cornucopia of art, people watching, and food trucks that has become a staple of the thriving downtown Las Vegas scene. They began to exchange permaculture books: “we started a book club of three!” Penrod laughs.

Over time, the group decided to put their learning into practice, founding a non-profit, Great Basin Permaculture, and partnered on a 5,300 square foot parcel of land inside the four acre Vegas Roots Community Garden, based near downtown Las Vegas. “It was your classic abandoned lot,” Penrod notes. Like most new non-profits, Great Basin lacked much in the way of funding, so supplies were scavenged and donated; for instance, manure was donated by members of the community.

The farm’s first plants were mesquite trees, primarily for the coverage that they provide, but also for the oft-neglected beans, which they grind into a flour “so good it tastes like chocolate” according to Penrod. Over time, they’ve been joined by many other crops including artichokes, herbs, beans, corn, squash, date palms, and nut trees. Most are edible, but even those planted for forage or ground cover have found other uses. A Mexican visitor pointed out that dry birdhouse gourds, originally grown as ground cover, can be filled with alcohol, which then cures to create a tonic for internal bleeding.

The group takes a novel approach to their farm, brainstorming ideas that might work in the challenging arid environment. Permaculture allows for a wide variety of disciplines, with
some members interested in design, while others focus on vermiculture. Penrod’s day job is as a flight attendant, and she finds inspiration in her travels; “I try to find a permaculture garden in whichever city I’m in, whether it’s Buenos Aires or Little Rock.” Donations are always welcome, whether in the form of fruit trees or compost, and the team will often build a project around these. “We’ll always find a place for a new plant,” Penrod notes.

One particular triumph has been water conservation. “Our bills have never risen above $15 per month, even in the summer,” Penrod says. That’s a few dollars less than the average residential water bill in the city. This has been achieved by using water-retaining sunken beds, watering only at night, and installing drip irrigation for some crops, but Penrod’s biggest tip is Christmas tree mulch, spread as widely as possible; “it does a great job of keeping moisture in the soil.”

Funded by various in-kind donations, such as one from the Native Seeds Search in the form of heirloom seeds, the “core group” of Great Basin is only around five people, but they’re supplemented by a large revolving group of volunteers. The group encourages volunteers to donate as much or as little time as works for their schedule, and offers a variety of events to engage them, from monthly meetings and lectures from knowledgeable speakers to Saturday morning ‘work bees’.

On April 5th through 7th – the organization hosted the third annual “Madre Tierra” Permaculture Conference, offering a combination of instruction from experienced permaculturist Larry Santoyo, founder of EarthFlow Design Works, and hands-on activities. True to the spirit of the organization, part of the weekend was spent installing wicking beds – a method that allows more food growth with less water and waste – at local art gallery Blackbird Studios.

The group also has regular meetings for people interested in exploring and learning about Permaculture principles and design. The group meets together to read and study as well as do hands on activities. They invite experts and individuals who have completed design certification to speak with them about design. They identify, develop and institute projects in the community. Develop and present workshops that others interested can come and learn. Simply put, to have fun, help the planet and its people.

When ask about Great Basin’s vision for the future, they describe their mission as “to inspire sustainable choices for our dry land community through education and action.” Penrod’s goals for the Permaculture Learning Garden are clear; “ultimately, we’d like to create a sustainable food forest that duplicates the patterns found in nature, here in the desert.”

http://greatbasinpermaculture.org/

For complete article: http://seedstock.com/2013/04/03/great-basin-permaculture-takes-on-challenge-of-growing-sustainably-in-nevadas-challenging-arid-environment/
The Garden in Bloom
Month by Month

Come join us and learn how you can ensure a fabulous ongoing display every month of the year!

**Location:**
Clark County Fairgrounds
1301 Whipple Ave
Logandale, NV 89021

**Time:**
5:30 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.

**Cost:**
$3 per class

**When:**
Every first and third Wednesday in the month at the Clark County Fair Demonstration Garden next to the fine arts building.

This class is **Hands-On!**

The University of Nevada, Reno is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, creed, national origin, veteran status, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation, in any program or activity it operates. The University of Nevada employs only United States citizens and those aliens lawfully authorized to work in the United States.