



Special Interest Articles:

- Cactus
- Woodpecker Tree Damage
- Weed Growth



Individual Highlights:

- Texas Mountain
- Laurels 2
- Sugaros 3
- Tree Trimming 3
- Fabulous Finds 4



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Spring has Sprung!

It's hard to believe that just a couple months ago we had "snow" here in Festival Ranch. We're now beginning to enjoy the regrowth of plants that died back and the blooms on the cactus are springing forth!

March and April are by far the busiest time of the year when it comes to gardening here in Festival! It is the time to prune frost damaged plants, replace plants that didn't survive, fertilize, and pre-emerge your yard to prevent weeds.

Many have chosen to replace frost sensitive plants with cactus for a year round beautiful look:



We're working on a catalog of cactus choices on our website so check back frequently. It can be viewed under the "Plants and Cactus" tab.

With the high winds that we've experienced in our community, Festival Ranch has been

inundated with weed seeds! If you haven't done so already, be sure to have pre-emergent applied to your yard to prevent the ongoing weed growth!

Also, as a final spring reminder you should make sure you've fertilized your palms and citrus now. If you're a *do-it-yourselfer* a good fertilizer to use are the stakes that you can install right next to the drippers. Be sure to follow the manufacturer's specified directions.

For a deep root feeding on your plants and trees, contact Festival Landscaping for the *best* fertilizing treatment out there!

Woodpecker Tree Damage

This year we've noticed a number of trees that have become the target of woodpeckers. Sapsucker damage is characterized by rows of closely spaced holes in a tree's trunk or branches. Tree selection is random, but the birds usually choose a few favorite areas and attack them repeatedly.

Once they've chosen a favorite spot, it is very hard to get them to leave.

Thus, begin control as soon as the problem begins. Do not wait until a pattern develops.

Visual repellants seem to work wonderfully. One particular method we've found that seems to work is wrapping tin foil (2-4" strips) around the areas that are being attacked. Leave this on until you are sure the woodpeckers have found a new place to begin drilling their holes!



How Fast Do Weeds Grow?



We've all seen it, you remove a weed one day and come back a couple days later and there are 10 taller, larger weeds in its place! Arizona is notorious for weed invasions within our communities. I suppose the weeds were here first, but we're certainly not giving them squatter's rights!

In general, weeds grow much faster than most garden plants.

According to the website, The Phytophactor, "Weeds are plants that are adapted to disturbed habitats. In nature disturbed habitats occur wherever something messes things up, and they can be small places like the disturbance of an uprooted fallen tree or big like after fire or storm

damage. Such disturbed habitats are generally short-lived patches in unpredictable locations, so **weeds are speed demons of growth and reproduction because they must reach reproductive maturity in a hurry and make lots of seeds so that some of their offspring have chance of dispersing to a newly disturbed place.**

OK, here's the bad news. Gardening and agriculture are disturbances. **Human activities have provided weeds with opportunities for success on a massive scale. The more you do the more disturbances you create. And since, as a biological safety precaution against unforeseen weeding, weed seeds do not all germinate at once, this weed seed**

bank in your soil is ready to replace all those weeds you worked so hard to remove."

So, what's the bottom line? Without pre-emergent treatment, even when weeds are removed from your yard they can return almost immediately.

What can be done to help control weed growth? Always be sure to have your yard treated with pre-emergent twice a year to help in preventing the reproduction of these obnoxious weeds. Sorry weeds, you're being evicted!



References:

phytophactor.fieldofscience.com/2009/07/do-weeds-grow-faster



Texas Mountain Laurel Caterpillar Control

About twice a year you will notice that your beautiful Texas Mountain Laurels become infested with the larvae of the Pyralid Moth that feed on leaves, young twig growth and immature seed pods. There's nothing you can do to stop them from coming, but you can treat the tree to get rid of the caterpillars and stop the damage they are doing!

Apply a product called Bacillus thuringiensis (BT). BT is a naturally occurring, soil borne organism that has gained recent popularity for its ability to control certain pests in a natural, environmentally friendly manner. It comes in a concentrated form and can be purchased at some

nurseries or online. It controls loopers, cabbage worms, tomato horn worms, leaf rollers, gypsy moths and many others. Insects stop feeding and die within 2-3 days of ingestion. It will not harm beneficial insects!

Rumor Mill

One common rumor we've heard buzzing around is that there is another type of Texas Mountain Laurel that is resistant to these caterpillars. Unfortunately, this is untrue. There is another variation of this beautiful tree called the Silver Peso. The growth patterns and flowers are the same as the Texas Mountain Laurel, however, these trees have a silver/grey colored leaf.

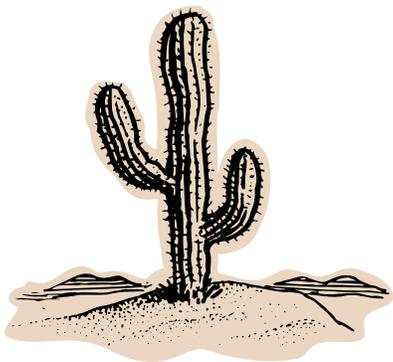
These trees must also be treated with BT to prevent the damage caused by the caterpillars.

New for 2013: *If you would like Festival Landscaping to apply the BT to your Texas Mountain Laurel for a small fee, please let us know. We will be carrying the product with us during the seasons of infestations and can apply it on-site as necessary.*



"In spring, Texas Mountain Laurel is a beautiful sight as it displays its dense, two to five inch-long, pendulous clusters of purple/blue, extremely fragrant flowers."

Edward F. Gilman and
Dennis G. Watson,
US Forest Service & Department
of Agriculture



“While a young saguaro takes nearly a decade to reach one inch tall, over many decades it can reach heights of fifty feet, making it the largest cactus in the United States”

WWW.PIMA.GOV

Saguaro Facts

We see these majestic Saguaro cacti on our way to and from our homes here in Festival Ranch.

Did you know...

- Saguaro cacti grow ONLY in the Sonoran Desert.
- Studies have shown that a Saguaro grows between 1 and 1.5 inches in the first eight years of its life!
- At 75 years old the cactus begins to grow arms that grow parallel to the body.
- A Saguaro without arms is called a spear.
- The arms grow to increase the plant’s reproductive capacity (it leads to more flowers and fruit).
- Saguaros grow from seed, never from cuttings.
- As many as fifty arms can be found on older saguaros with ages estimated to be 200 years old.
- Saguaros flower from April through June. The flowers open at night and are pollinated by bats, birds, and insects.
- A well pollinated fruit will contain several thousand tiny seeds.
- The cactus is protected by the Arizona Native Plant Law. No part of the cactus may be taken without a permit.



From The Kitchen of

Joan Ballentine,
Sun City Festival Resident



Saguaro Jam Bowtie Cookie Recipe

Sift together:	2 cups sifted flour	2/3 cups sugar	½ tsp baking powder
Blend in:	¾ cup butter	1 unbeaten egg	2 tsp vanilla
Set aside:	Saguaro Fruit Jam		

Place dough on a lightly floured surface. Divide dough into four parts. Shape each into a roll 13 inches long and ¾ inches thick. Place rolls on ungreased cookie sheet, 4 inches apart and 2 inches from the edge of sheet. Make an indentation ¼ - 1/3 inch deep. Fill depression with Saguaro Fruit Jam (about 1/3 cup). Bake at 350°, 15 – 20 minutes until lightly brown. While warm, cut diagonally to make “Bowtie”. Cook on wire rack.

If you bake like me you’ll probably need to see how these should look when you’re finished! We will update you with photos of these cookies so you know how they should turn out - but I’m sure they’re delicious no matter how they look!



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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.FestivalLandscaping.com

Meet the Crew

Jason Wanderi is celebrating his 1 year anniversary with Festival Landscaping in June!

Thank you Jason for all you've done for Festival Landscaping and the residents of Festival Ranch!

▪ Christian Larsen,
Foreman

▪ Matthew Johnson,
Foreman

▪ Jesus Vargas,
Crew Member

▪ Arsenio Clark,
Crew Member

▪ Jason Wanderi,
Foreman

▪ Martha Gonzales,
Crew Member

▪ Gavin Becker,
Crew Member



Feel free to approach any member of our team for questions or assistance with your landscape maintenance!

Fabulous Finds in Festival

The **Argentine Giant** (*Echinopsis candicans*), grows roughly to be about 2' tall and can sprawl together to take up about 3' of space. These cacti prefer moderate sun exposure and are cold hardy to about 10^o Fahrenheit.

The taller sections of cactus tend to fall over and if not damaged too badly will sprout "babies" to grow into an even larger cactus!



Argentine Giants have the most remarkable large white, pink, or red colored flowers. They bloom at night between March and April. Their blooms can reach up to 8" in size!

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