



June & July 2009

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Newsletter Editorial Staff:

- Esther Blacklock—
Cook's Nook
- Kyle Tator—
Project Reports
& Announcements
- Loretta Torres—
M. Gardener Bio's
& Guest Columnists
- Loretta Torres—
Newsletter Layout
& Editor
- Miriam Moore—
Contributing Editor

Valencia County Extension

Master Gardener News

NMSU Cooperative Extension Service
PO Drawer 1059
Los Lunas, NM 87031

Kyle V. Tator
Valencia County Agriculture Agent
505.565.3002

Contributions from the readers are being solicited on the different topics. As an incentive to your participation, Kyle says that articles written on the headings (dark text) shown in the newsletter will be awarded 1.0 hour of volunteer time when printed. Please submit your article to the editor for the subject heading by the 20th of the month.

What's Happening This Month?

If you have questions, announcements or knowledge of events coming up, please bring these to the attention of the editor for this column, Kyle Tator at ktator@nmsu.edu, or at 565-3002.

VCEMG Newsletter Announcements:

Plant Clinics will be posted:
<http://valenciaextension.nmsu.edu/valencia-county-extensio.html>

Sign up with Kyle for your new VCEMG Shirt.

VCEMG Volunteer Hours Due:
Wednesday, September 30, 2009
No later than 4:00 pm
*A minimum of 40 volunteer hours are due to the Extension Office on, or before this date.

Next VCEMG Meeting:
Tuesday, July 21, 2009
Advisory Board: 9:00 am
General Meeting: 10:00 am
Extension Office

All About Us:

We would like to get to know you, too. So send a little story about yourself for the newsletter to senyas@qwestoffice.net, aka Loretta Torres and let's be friends.



This month say "Hello" to Esther Blacklock who is a nearly three year VCEMG Veteran, the current "Cook's Nook Editor" and an all around nice person.

I was born in Los Angeles, California, the oldest of four children. We moved around a bit as seems to have been typical of the post WWII era.

Some of my earliest memories are of "helping" to mow the grass and "helping" to harvest radishes in my Dad's small vegetable garden. My Mom was subjected to my "help" as well, picking bouquets of flowers she would have preferred to remain in her flower beds.

I went to Jr. High and High school in Spokane, Washington then it was back to southern California for me and a career in nursing, primarily in the emergency dept. I acquired the houseplant habit during these apartment living years.

I married in 1976, moved into a house with a yard and picked up vegetable gardening again.

We moved to Edgewood, N.M in

1981 and I planted a very large vegetable garden not considering the work I was taking on. I learned to can, dry and freeze my produce.

We moved to Valencia County a few years later. I planted a smaller garden and became interested in native plants and water conservation issues.

I worked a few years as a N.M. Realtor, which presented a great opportunity to become acquainted with the diversity of New Mexico and meet many interesting people.

I've lived in New Mexico for 28 years and enjoy it immensely.

My husband and I have about 2½ acres, a pet cow and a cat. I enjoy walking the ditches and checking out the native vegetation. Native plants, soil and water conservation issues are still of interest to me along with vegetable and flower gardening, natural methods of pest control, etc. I guess the Master Gardener program is just what I need!

I enjoy sewing, photography and reading in addition to gardening.



Yard & Garden--By Dr. Curtis Smith

Dr. Curtis Smith is an Extension Horticulture Specialist with NMSU's Cooperative Extension Service.

Question: I planted mammoth Russian sunflower seeds in April. They germinated quickly on my upstairs deck with its strong east sunlight. When they were about 8-inches high, I transplanted them into my yard which is walled in, but gets good sunlight from noon until sunset. They are in a north-facing site. Now they do not look good. They are leggy and have lost all leaves from about 9-10 inches down. What am I doing wrong? Can I move them in pots back to my deck at some point?—*Loni G.*

Answer: Based on the information you have written, I suspect you are observing several problems associated with transplanting.

When you moved the plants to your yard, they went from a protected location with morning sun to a more exposed location that has brighter sunlight and more heat. They are also probably more exposed to the wind. The loss of the lower leaves is probably disposal of "shade leaves" that were formed in the more protected location as the plant develops "sun leaves" that are better adapted to the new location.

You may also be seeing transplant shock as the plants are trying to develop roots in the landscape soil which is probably significantly different from the potting soil

in which you started the seedlings. Potting soil is more acidic than most New Mexico soils and contains less mineral salt that can stress the plants, especially if they are drying more quickly in the exposed location in your garden. Addition of significant quantities of organic matter (well-decomposed compost) to the garden before transplanting helps avoid this. If you fertilized, you may have over fertilized. If you did not add fertilizer, nutrients may be needed. You should irrigate the plants frequently in the first few weeks after transplanting to prevent drying as the transplants develop more extensive root systems in the garden. Then as the roots develop, you can water less frequently, but more deeply. Organic mulch (several layers of newspaper, straw, bark, wood chips, or other mulch material) may also help conserve water and speed development of a good root system.

You should see your plants continuing to develop if you fertilize lightly and irrigate appropriately. They will develop new, larger leaves, and continue to grow. Repotting and moving them back to the deck will probably not be necessary and may do more harm than good. Next year you may want to plant the seed directly into well-prepared garden soil and avoid transplanting and transplant shock.



2009 VCEMG Advisory Board

Jeff Nickelson	864-3688
Cindy Moya	866-1078
Yvonne Riley	869-2119
Esther Blacklock	864-6001
Loretta Torres	869-9409
Kyle Tator	565-3002

Cook's Nook - Spinach

Contributions or suggestions for this column will be gratefully accepted as a written, word or notepad file by its editor, Esther Blacklock, by e-mail estherb616@yahoo.com



Though it's still cool, some of the early, cool season crops are starting to produce and one of my favorites is Spinach. Spinach is one of the most versatile of vegetables, good in eggs, salads, as a vegetable side dish, etc. Following is a quick and easy recipe good for a light lunch, or an anytime snack.

Let us know what is coming up in your garden and how you are preparing it. It's always fun to try new dishes and see what other folks are enjoying. Anything fresh from our gardens is especially tasty!

Easy Spinach Quesadillas

1 tortilla, flour or multi-grain
 1/3 cup grated cheese (Monterrey Jack, mozzarella, etc...)
 Fresh spinach, coarsely chopped and cooked
 Onion, finely chopped
 Oregano
 Salt & Pepper



- Cut tortilla in half.
- Squeeze excess liquid from cooked spinach.
- Sprinkle $\frac{1}{2}$ of the cheese on tortilla half. Add spinach and onion. Sprinkle with oregano, salt and pepper to taste. Top with remaining cheese and tortilla half; press together lightly.
- Cover loosely with foil and broil until cheese is melted, or fry in a very small amount of olive oil.
- Cut into wedges and serve with sour cream or salsa if you like.

Los Lunas Farmers Market News

Hi to all,

It looks like the Los Lunas Farmers' Market is on track to begin June 16th as planned. The community support has been terrific.

The Steering Committee is working on obtaining grant money for advertising and New Market expenses. Licensing and sign permits are being applied for. Signs are being ordered and posters made. We need some more vendors but slowly, folks are filling out their applications and getting them in with payment for their space.

Be sure you pass the news to your friends and neighbors about the market and watch for articles in the paper, too.



Taste the Difference!

Garden Books in Review by Nancy Erickson

A Field Guide to the Plants and Animals of the Middle Rio Grande Bosque

is a collaborative project by five authors from the Museum of Southwest Biology, the Drylands Institute and The University of New Mexico Herbarium.

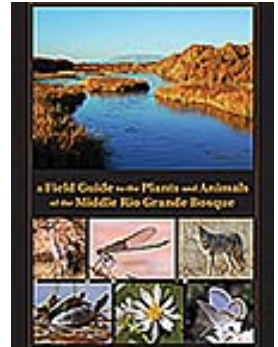
The authors, Jean-Luc E. Cartron, David C. Lightfoot, Jane E. Mygatt, Sandra L. Brantley and Timothy K. Lowrey, are experts in the various fields covered in the book. They wrote this book to educate the public about this important natural resource. They consider the “linear oasis from the spillway at Cochiti Dam to the headwaters of Elephant Butte Reservoir” a unique gem that needs to be better understood and preserved. Another goal was to provide the public with one book they could use to identify the various inhabitants of this area.

In a recent lecture about the guide, co-author David C. Lightfoot acknowledged there are more comprehensive bird guides, plant books, butterfly and dragonfly guides, but to try and carry them all on a trek through the Bosque could be burdensome at best. They wanted to produce one field guide that would be a useful substitute to owning or carrying a small library in order to be familiar with the inhabitants of this ecosystem.

The authors estimate there are more than 400 vertebrates, 2000-3000 invertebrates and 800 vascular plant species that live here in our Bosque. They identify over 200 of the most common and most notable of each. They are full color pictures of each of these to make identification easier, and information about which of the 6 habitat types within the ecosystem that they can be found.

It is an easy to read reference guide for anyone living in or visiting the Bosque ecosystem. It would have been very useful when my children were young and asked “Mom, what’s that?” either in the backyard or on a nature hike. At about three species to a page, there is not room for in depth information, but over 700 full color photos make it valuable for identification.

The book has numerous corporate sponsors, which make it possible to sell it for just under \$22.00. It is available through UNM Press.



Valencia County Extension Master Gardener Newsletter

NMSU –Valencia County
Cooperative Extension
Service Office

Kyle Tator,
Extension Agriculture Agent
PO Drawer 1059
Los Lunas, NM 87031

PHONE:
(505) 565.3002

FAX:
(505) 565.1316

E-MAIL:
KTATOR@NMSU.EDU

We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://valenciaextension.nmsu.edu>

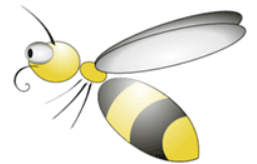
Committee Contacts

Home Visits	Kyle Tator	565-3002
Newsletter	Loretta Torres	869-9409
Photo Archivist	Paul Gardea	865-3281
Plant Clinics	Kyle Tator	565-3002
Publicity	Nancy Erickson	866-3533
Testing	Yvonne Riley	869-2119
Treasurer/Records	Cindy Moya	866-1078

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead, Anthropologist 1901-1978

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