



Steve M. Lucero,
County Program Director

Lynda Garvin
Agriculture/Horticulture
Agent

Sandoval County
Extension
PO Box 400
Bernalillo, NM 87004

Ph: 505-867-2582
Email: Sandoval@
NMSU.edu

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Editor:
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Sandoval County Master Gardener Newsletter

<http://sandovalmastergardeners.org/>

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Sandoval County

January 2019

President's Corner

Happy New Year!

We have a lot of wonderful things planned for 2019. Starting with the 2019 Intern Training class with all the materials available online.

Sandy Liakus is joining Lynda Garvin as Sandoval County Master Gardeners on the NMSU Advisory Team.

Project Chairs need to go to our Website and check their project information. Make any changes necessary and add dates for your events. This will be helpful to members wanting to volunteer.

As Project Chairs you can request time on the agenda during the monthly Board meetings.

If you are planning to start seeds for your gardens keep in mind that we will be holding our 4th Annual Plant Sale at the final Intern class and on the last Sunday in April at the opening of the Corrales Growers Market. We will need all kinds of plants; vegetables, herbs, succulents landscaping and house plants for the sale.

SCMG members are always invited to attend all Board meetings. The monthly Board meetings in January, February, March and April will be in the third Tuesday each month at 10am.

The meetings are held at the Health Commons Building 1500 Idalia Road, Rio Rancho.

Julia

Lynda's Corner

Happy New Year! What an amazing year we've had in the SCMG program. Some roller coaster rides for sure but we continue to develop our classes and projects to take us into the rapidly changing future.

In 2019 I'd like to see the program amplify our efforts to increase awareness and outreach for food security and resiliency. One way to address both is by saving your own seed.

Every time you buy a new packet of seed you are starting from square one. Each time you save seed from a plant grown in your garden you are selecting seeds that are adapting to shifting climate and weather patterns, and specifically to the soils, water, sunlight, and micro-environments in your gardens and landscapes.

In partnership with Bernalillo County's Horticulture Agent, Sara Moran-Duran, we are developing the Sandia Seed Steward program. Starting with the AAEMG and SCMG groups, we will have intensive seed saving training in the spring and sending out seed stewards to save seed for themselves and seed libraries in our respective counties. We hope to have a big seed swap in the fall.

We continue our efforts on nutrition and food literacy with the Garden2Table Sandoval project, having recipe demonstrations and tastings at Senior Centers throughout the County.

A new project also beginning this spring will be the development of a vegetable demonstration garden in front of the County

Health Commons in the Sandoval County Government Complex. Stay tuned for more details. Wishing you a healthy, productive, and enjoyable year. Thank you for all you do. It's an honor to work with you.

Lynda



Anasazi Beans

2019 MASTER GARDENER INTERN CLASSES START JANUARY 15, 2019

Classes begin January 15 and meet every Tuesday afternoon 12:30 to 5:00 through April 30.

Classes will be held at the Sandoval County Administration Building,
1500 Idalia Road, Room 2047 Bernalillo, NM 87004



Sandoval County Master Gardeners

Continuing Education Classes, 2019

January - February Schedule

FREE & OPEN to the public

DATE	TOPIC	DESCRIPTION	PRESENTER	TIME	LOCATION
Tues Jan 8	Raised Bed Gardening & Composting	Raised beds in the high desert present many useful management options for home gardeners. Soil, amendments, mulches and irrigation methods are well contained by raised beds. This class will cover set-up, irrigation, mulching, and sheet composting for soil fertility in a raised bed.	John Zarola SCMG	7:00 - 8:30 pm	Meadowlark Senior Center * <i>Gardening with the Masters</i>
Thurs Jan 24	Simple Structures for your Garden to Improve Results	Learn how to improve productivity, conserve moisture, and reduce labor by building the following: a. Raised beds b. Self-Watering System that needs recharging only about once a week c. Shade Structures	David Butler SCMG	1:30 - 3:00 pm	Meadowlark Senior Center * <i>4 Seasons Gardening</i>
Tues Feb 12	Growing Orchids	This presentation will give information about how to successfully grow orchids and, more importantly, how to make them re-bloom. We will discuss the correct amounts and timing of light and moisture needed.	Diane Scott Boles SCMG	7:00 - 8:30 pm	Meadowlark Senior Center * <i>Gardening with the Masters</i>
Thurs Feb 28	How to Overcome the Challenge of Growing Tomatoes in Sandoval County	Heat, wind, and disease bearing insects are some of the major challenges faced by tomato growers in Sandoval County. Discover ways to minimize their impact by selecting the best varieties of tomatoes to grow here and using row cover and shade cloth.	Sam Thompson SCMG	1:30 - 3:00 pm	Meadowlark Senior Center * <i>4 Seasons Gardening</i>

**Meadowlark Senior Center, 4330 Meadowlark Ln SE, Rio Rancho. Tel: (505) 891-5018*

Reminder to Current SCMG Veterans...

The following criteria is required, by 30 Sept 2019 to retain your status:

20 volunteer hours; 10 outreach hours, 10 Continuing Education hours and current on dues.

Intern training and the Continuing Education classes at Meadowlark Senior Center are both excellent ways to pick up your education hours.

Beneficial of the Month

Ground beetles

(Order: Coleoptera; Family: Carabidae)

These beetles are fast-moving, relatively large predators that attack a wide range of insect prey; a few species eat seeds and play a role in reducing the weed seed bank in the soil. They are typically black in color, often with a metallic sheen.

Since they are nocturnal, they often pass undetected in the farm and garden, even though they may be present in high numbers. At first glance they may be mistaken for the large, black 'darkling' beetles (Family: Tenebrionidae) that are active during the day (particularly in desert areas), but differ in having a much flatter abdomen.



The larval stages develop in the soil (for up to 2 years, depending on species) and prey on other soil-dwelling organisms, including some pests.

Beneficial of the Month material courtesy of NMSU ACES: [Pocket Guide to the Beneficial Insects of New Mexico](#)

Second Beneficial of the Month

Rove beetles

(Order: Coleoptera; Family: Staphylinidae)

These insects are unique among the beetles in having very short wing cases (elytra) that leave most of the abdominal segments exposed. This allows them to flex the abdomen upwards and towards the head in a defensive posture that resembles a scorpion. They cannot sting, however, and instead capture their prey with their mandibles. They vary in size from a few millimeters to 1-2 cm and consume a range of prey, including insect eggs, aphids, and small moth larvae. The larval stages live in the soil and feed on other invertebrates.



Typical Rove beetles. Note short wing cases and exposed abdominal segments. **(Photos by Mick E. Talbot)**

Beneficial of the Month material courtesy of NMSU ACES: [Pocket Guide to the Beneficial Insects of New Mexico](#)

Southwest Plant of the Month

Blue flax

Linum lewisii

Plant Form: Flower
Plant Size: 1' x 2'
Plant Type: Perennial
Water Usage: Low
Sunlight: Sun, partial shade
Colors: Purple



Physical Description: Dainty, 1", sky-blue, cup-shaped flowers on multitude of long, wand-like stems, lined with small, linear leaves.

Care and Maintenance: Short lived but reseeds well. Fragile petals drop when flowers are picked or disturbed.

Gardener's notes: Flowers last only one day but are quickly replaced by many waiting buds, spring into summer. El Paso native easily grown from seed. *L. perenne* is a nearly identical, less adapted eastern species often found in seed mixes. Several yellow to golden flowered El Paso area natives also worthy of use.

Southwest Plant of the Month material courtesy of NMSU ACES <http://desertblooms.nmsu.edu/plantadvisor/>
photo: easywildflowers.com

Southwest Plant of the Month

Blue ranger

Leucophyllum zygophyllum

Plant Form: Shrub
Plant Type: Evergreen
Sunlight: Sun
Plant Size: 3' x 3'
Water Usage: Low
Colors: Blue, Purple



Leucophyllum zygophyllum 'Cimarron'

Physical Description: Small evergreen shrub with rounded, compact form. Young branches are erect and silvery, drooping and turning grayish-tan with age, and the small, soft woolly leaves are also silvery gray-green which contrasts well with the 1/2" long bell-shaped, purplish to pale lavender-blue flowers that follow summer and fall rains.

Care and Maintenance: Occasional pruning out of older branches helps invigorate a mature plant. Avoid overwatering/poor drainage.

Gardener's notes: Generally smaller than other *Leucophyllums*. Native to eastern Chihuahuan desert of Mexico. Cultivar "Cimarron" is somewhat less sensitive to over watering.

Southwest Plant of the Month material courtesy of NMSU ACES <http://desertblooms.nmsu.edu/plantadvisor/>
photo: <https://www.monrovia.com/plant-catalog/plants/822/cimarron-texas-ranger/>

Landscapes Need Irrigation in Winter

Water once a month, on a day when the temperature is above freezing.

from [Southwest Yard and Garden, November 5, 2005](#)

by *Dr. Curtis Smith, PhD, NMSU Extension Horticulture Specialist (retired)*

Most outdoor plants aren't visibly growing in the winter; however they aren't dead and still need water. Their root systems may continue to grow even after the top is dormant, but we can't see the roots grow. Water is needed for root growth.

Plants need much less water in the winter because water loss from the plants is greatly reduced, not totally stopped. Evergreen trees and shrubs still have leaves and continue to use water (at a reduced rate). Deciduous trees and shrubs have lost their leaves but their twigs contain water, which is slowly lost to our dry New Mexico air. This water must be replaced. Grass leaves are often brown and dry, but the crowns of the plants are still living and need water. Some gardeners overseed their summer lawns with winter grasses that remain green, and they certainly need water. Even the perennials we can't see (bulbs below ground and other plants that die to the ground each winter) need water to live and resume growth in the spring. Even though plants aren't actively growing, they need water to remain alive.

The plants described above are using water at different rates. **Most can be maintained in adequate health if they are watered once a month**, except the green winter grass that will need to be watered more often. This means applying enough water to moisten the root zones of the plants. The root zones of trees and shrubs occupy a fairly large volume of soil and require soil moisture to a depth of at least two-to-three feet. Dormant perennials have smaller root systems and often require soil moisture to only a depth of one foot. If there has been sufficient natural precipitation in the form of rain or snow, additional irrigation will not be needed; however, if it has been dry for a month or if the natural precipitation has not been sufficient to moisten the soil deeply enough, supplemental irrigation will be needed.

When the ground is frozen, the water in the soil has frozen. It is not possible to irrigate through this layer of ice, so supplemental irrigation must be supplied before the ground is frozen or after it thaws. Frozen ground does indicate moisture in the soil, but perhaps not enough for the plant to survive the winter. Deep watering before the ground freezes is the best way to assure adequate water when the ground will freeze for long periods. In regions where the ground freezes only briefly, irrigation once a month during the winter is the best practice.

Additional Note from Dudley Vines, SCMG: *If you're using drip irrigation (and I hope you are), you will have run it for an hour or two, because it is slow (typically ½ to 1 gallon per hour). Check to make sure water is flowing, because you may have ice in the distribution tubing if the recent weather has been below freezing. Freezing doesn't hurt drip tubing, but you'll have to wait for frozen tubes to thaw before you can irrigate. Be sure to drain garden hoses before putting them away if you water by hand.*