



WaterSaver Newsletter

October 2012

Shady Characters

A landscape with shade offers a cool and inviting oasis. Now that our blistering summer heat is over, it's a perfect time to tap into a wide variety of interesting and appealing shade-loving plants that can be planted now. Even many sun-tolerant plants grow, flower and fruit better with protection from intense midday sun.

The anchors to any shade garden are trees. In fact, you may already have a spot under a broad spreading mesquite or palo verde that would be the perfect location for plants that appreciate shade. The light shade these trees cast allows you to grow a great number of plants in this protected microclimate. The east side of your home is ideal for plants that require partial shade. North sides of homes have lots of winter shade, but almost no shade in the summer. The south side of your house is exposed to the sun the longest in the summer. Deciduous trees or vines are perfect for this location as they provide summer shade and allow winter sun through to warm your home.

Here are different ways to create additional shade:

- Plant small trees or tree-like shrubs near taller, open-spreading trees. Try [Mexican bird of paradise](#), [Texas mountain laurel](#) or [Texas olive](#).
- For instant shading, build an arbor, pergola or other shade structure. A wood beam structure provides the perfect frame for shade coverings of wood lattice, lath, sections of ocotillo fencing, shade cloth or colorful fabric 'sails'.
- Fast-growing vines can be planted on arbors to provide shading overhead. Choices include [Hardenbergia](#), [primrose jasmine](#), or [pink trumpet vine](#) which grow rapidly to provide overhead shading in just a season or two.

Follow this link for more information on [shade loving plants](#). If you have questions on plants for shade visit the Water Conservation web site at www.chandleraz.gov/water, call the office at 480-782-3580 or email us at conserve@chandleraz.gov.

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Upcoming Events

October 11

[Sprinkler Design & Installation](#)

October 18

[Drip Irrigation System Installation](#)

October 25

[Yard Watering & Timer Programming](#)

October 20, 21

[Desert Botanical Garden Plant Sale](#)

October 20

[Fall Festival and Plant Sale](#)

October 30

[Pruning & Maintaining Your Landscape](#)

November 8

[Smart Irrigation Controllers](#)

See complete schedule at www.chandleraz.gov/water

Ask A Garden Goddess





Monthly Watering Advice

October

Fall is here, and it's a great time to replace lost plants or install a new landscape. Soils are still warm, which encourages root establishment, but water needs are not as demanding, allowing for greater success. In fact, water needs for plants are about half as much as they were in June. Recommendations below are for plants that are established in the landscape (in the ground about 2 years).

Lawn watering:

- Summer grass (Bermuda) - once every 6 days
- Overseeded cool season grass (rye) - 4 times per day for first 7-10 days to germinate, then once every 3 days

If trees and shrubs are on the same valve:

- Desert Adapted - once every 21 days
- High Water Use - once every 10 days

Tree watering:

- Desert Adapted - once every 24 days
- High Water Use - once every 12 days

Shrub watering:

- Desert Adapted - once every 18 days
- High Water Use - once every 9 days

Groundcover and vine watering:

- Desert Adapted - once every 18 days
- High Water Use - once every 8 days

Cacti and succulent watering - once every 28 days

Annuals watering - once every 4-5 days

Wildflower watering - once every 1-2 days to germinate, then once every 3-5 days

Reduce your landscape watering 30 to 50 percent by adjusting your irrigation each season. "[Landscape Watering by the Numbers: A Guide for the Arizona Desert](#)" will help you determine how much water to apply and how long to run your system. request a free copy at www.chandleraz.gov/water or visit the interactive Web site at <http://www.wateruseitwisely.com>.

Bonus tip: New plantings need more frequent watering. After planting, water every 3-4 days in weeks 1 & 2, every 6-7 days for weeks 3 & 4, every 7-10 days in weeks 5 & 6, and then gradually extend time between irrigations until plants are established.

Note: These recommendations are a general guideline only and may need to be modified for your specific site conditions.

My Yellow Bells are being eaten by something. What is it?

This year both Yellow Bells and Orange Bells have been targeted by a small caterpillar that munches on tender flower buds and leaves.

The best way to control them is to spray your plants with a product that contains Bt (pronounced Bee Tee) a bacteria ([Bacillus thuringiensis](#)) that only targets caterpillars. It is safe for humans, pets and fish. (A similar product is used to control mosquitoes in standing water).

Bt is sold under various labels such as Thuricide, Dipel, Safer Caterpillar Killer, etc. Mix according to directions and spray on the plant. Caterpillars eat the treated leaves and die within 3 -4 days. Repeat applications may be necessary.

Email your question to GardenGoddess@chandleraz.gov



Caterpillar damage

Water Wise Tips



Grandpa always said "Be good. Have fun. Get it done."

We thought we'd take a break from the usual 'water tips' and have some fun with water instead.

If you've been reading the Water Wise Tips for the past year or so you might have learned a few interesting things about water conservation. Some of the following links will test your skills while others are

Plant of the Month

Mesquite (*Prosopis* spp.)

Mesquite trees are extremely adaptable and tolerant to a wide range of growing conditions. They adjust to little or abundant water, and will survive during times of drought by slowing down their growth. Some specimens have a twisted character many believe is a result of having gone through drought periods; others attribute this as a result of pruning techniques. Mesquites have supplied shade, food, and medicine for people of the desert for ages.



just good 'ol fun!

- [The Hydro Game](#)
- [Tip Tank](#)
- [Bert & Phils Water Busters](#)
- [The Water Family Game](#)
- [H2O University](#)
- [Where's My Water?](#)

[Mesquites](#) have dark green leaves, rough, dark bark, and a nice sculptural growth habit. They produce yellowish cream colored catkin flowers in the spring, followed by seed pods varying in shape and size. Depending upon the variety, the canopy spreads to a mature width between 20 to 35 feet. Mesquites must be encouraged to develop extensive roots in order to maintain stability. This is done by watering along the perimeter of the canopy and not at the base of the trunk. All mesquites blend in well with a garden or natural landscape. See the header above for close up of leaves.

Mesquites are most attractive when grown as a multi-trunk tree. Once a mesquite has grown to the desired size, reduce the irrigation to slow future growth.



For more landscape choices and design ideas to help you create a vibrant, attractive, colorful low water use landscape try [Water Wise Landscaping in Chandler](#).

Water Conservation E-News

This monthly newsletter will help you create stunning landscapes that use less water. Each issue is packed with personalized watering advice, notices about upcoming events, timely tips to maintain a healthy landscape, plus ways to reduce your water bill. Read past issues here - [WaterSaver newsletter](#).

[Sign-Up Now](#)

Sincerely,
Water Conservation Staff

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Questions or comments? We want to hear from you! Contact us at conserve@chandleraz.gov

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