



Chandler • Arizona



WaterSaver Newsletter

March 2013

Space Invaders

We all recognize the noxious weeds in our gardens and landscapes, but some cultivated plants have escaped into our state's wildlands. These non-native plants steal water from desirable landscape plants and have the frightening ability to infest and destroy entire ecosystems in a short period of time. Here are a few examples of pushy plants to avoid:

- [Mexican Palo Verde](#) (*Parkinsonia aculeata*) - This tree grows 'like a weed' especially near ditch banks or anywhere it can find a little extra moisture. Very messy, thorny & short lived. Opt for other Palo Verde species that are better suited for urban landscapes.
- [Desert Broom](#) (*Baccharis sarothroides*) - An evergreen plant with nearly leafless stems this is a case of reverse invasion by a native. Female plants produce dense clusters of tiny seeds with cream colored puffs that carry them far and wide. Their aggressive nature enables them to overpower other landscape plants in a heartbeat. Pull them when they're young before strong roots form.
- [Giant Reed](#) (*Arundo donax*) - Often mistaken for bamboo, this giant cane is aggressive! Perennial root clumps can expand to 10-20 feet in diameter and canes may grow up to 20 feet tall. It is a concern along the Gila, Salt, San Pedro and Verde River systems as well as smaller creeks and streams.
- [Fountain Grass](#) (*Pennisetum setaceum*) - This coarse bunching grass seems like a harmless accent plant, but it has escaped urban landscapes and is invading rangelands. It competes with native plants and reestablishes rapidly after burning. The cultivar '**Purple Fountain Grass**' is sterile and a much better choice.

These are just four plants to steer clear of. Learn about the dozens of other [invasive species](#) in Arizona and find out what you can do to help stop the spread.

If you would like to schedule a free consultation with one of our landscape, irrigation or conservation experts give us a call at 480-782-3583.

In This Issue

- [Space Invaders](#)
- [Upcoming Events](#)
- [Monthly Watering Advice](#)
- [Ask a Garden Goddess](#)
- [Plant of the Month](#)
- [Water Wise Tips](#)

Upcoming Events

- March 2
[SRP Water Expo - FREE](#)
- March 5
[Pruning & Maintaining Your Landscape](#)
- March 9
[Chandler "Smart" Landscaping](#)
- March 16 & 17
[Plant Sale at Desert Botanical Garden](#)
- March 18 - 24
[Fix a Leak Week](#)
- March 19
[Basic Yard Makeovers](#)
- March 26
[What's Bugging You?](#)

See Spring class schedule at www.chandleraz.gov/water

Ask A Garden Goddess





Monthly Watering Advice

March

We've had some great rainfall (and [groppe/graupel](#)) in February but temperatures are on the rise. Warmer days are nudging Bermuda grass and other cold sensitive plants out of dormancy. These recommendations are for plants that are established in the landscape (in the ground about two years).

Lawn watering:

- Dormant summer grass (Bermuda) - Once every 12 days
- Overseeded cool season grass (rye) - Once every 6 days

If trees and shrubs are on the same valve:

- Desert adapted - Once every 25 days
- High water use - Once every 12 days

Tree watering:

- Desert adapted - Once every 30 days
- High water use - Once every 14 days

Shrub watering:

- Desert adapted - Once every 21 days
- High water use - Once every 10 days

Groundcover and vine watering:

- Desert adapted - Once every 21 days
- High water use - Once every 10 days

Cacti and succulent watering - No water needed

Annuals watering - Once every 5 days

Native wildflowers - Once every 10 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. Chandler residents can request a free copy at www.chandleraz.gov/water or visit the interactive Web site at <http://www.wateruseitwisely.com>

Bonus tip: It will be a good wildflower year thanks to the rains. Visit the Desert Botanical Garden website at <http://www.dbg.org/> and select "Wildflower InfoSite" from the Gardening/Horticulture link on the left menu bar to find reports on statewide wildflower sightings and best places to go.

I want to add a small patch of grass to my back yard. What kind is best?

You're in luck! Salt River Project (SRP) has done research on this as part of a water conservation study and demonstration project. Six varieties of grass (turf) were studied for 18 months to assess which ones promote reduced water application, need less maintenance, have vigorous growth, uniform color, and extended growing seasons. These included Bull's-Eye, Midiron (EZ Turf), TifSport, Celebration, Princess 77 and Sea Isle1 Paspalum.

SRP created artificial drought scenarios that cut water applied to the grasses over a three-month period by 10%, 20%, and 30%, respectively.

They also studied artificial turf, and various irrigation systems along with soil amendments designed to retain moisture.

Complete results are available on their [Desert Wise](#) website.

Email your question to GardenGoddess@chandleraz.gov

Water Wise Tips



Grandpa always said "Even if you're on the right track, you'll get run over if you just sit there".

Speaking of running, you might think you're a pretty fast runner. Are you faster than a running toilet? To find out, join the chase for the running toilet at the One for Water 4-Miler on March 9. It's also the debut of the running sprinkler.

This is a fun local race that offers something for everyone - a fast course, desert scenery, fabulous prizes, swag, food, and a "tank chaser" to beat a running toilet. Whether you're an intense or laid back runner, this chip timed 4-mile loop run promises a unique blend of the traditional race with some distinctive moments.

Plus you'll get your hands on the newest and coolest tools

Plant of the Month

[Hummingbird Trumpet](#) (*Zauschneria californica*)

As the name implies, hummingbirds are attracted to the vivid scarlet flowers of this herbaceous, low-growing, perennial plant. Numerous, foot-long stems grow from the base and hold green leaves which are covered with fine hairs making them velvety to the touch. From July to November the plant blooms with tubular 1.5 - 2 inch flowers which have four deeply bi-lobed petals serving as a virtual nectar bar for hummers.



Also known as California fuchsia, it grows best in filtered

to help you find and fix leaks. The family fun festival offers leak-fixing demos, kids activities, music, food and more!



Come celebrate Fix A Leak Week by checking out the details on the [Fix A Leak Week](#) web site.

shade or afternoon shade in well drained soil.

[Hummingbird trumpet](#) is drought tolerant but looks best with occasional to infrequent irrigation. Be careful not to overwater in summer as these plants do not like wet heavy soil. Stems are somewhat brittle and may break in strong winds. If plants become 'leggy' they can be cut to within inches of the ground in February.



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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The WaterSaver newsletter is published by Chandler's Water Conservation office and is just one more way we're providing Chandler utility customers with inspiring ideas at a reduced cost.

You have received this newsletter because you requested a subscription, asked to receive information from us, or have been identified by Water Conservation as someone who could benefit from the information.

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

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