



WaterSaver Newsletter

November 2011

Natures Big Reveal

Normally we think of leaves as being green - a result of the chlorophyll pigment trapped inside. But like clockwork every autumn, the leaves of non-evergreen trees change color dramatically. This big reveal is an interim step in a process that prepares trees for dormancy in winter. Cooling temperatures and shorter days trigger the process in which cork-like cells form at the base of leaves and block delivery of nutrients. This causes green chlorophyll to break down "unmasking" other pigments that have been there all along.

In the case of yellow leaves, carotene and xanthophyll are the yellow and orange pigments commonly found in flowers, and in foods like carrots and bananas. The brown hues in the leaves of some oaks, ash and other trees are formed by tannins - bitter substances responsible for the color and flavor of tea.

But the most dramatic color - red - is revealed by the pigment anthocyanin. Formed when sugars in the leaves break down, its a potent antioxidant common in many plants such as beets, red apples, and purple grapes (and red wine). The brightest colors are seen when late summer is dry, and autumn has bright sunny days and cool nights that dip into the low 40's Farenheit.

To learn where to see fall colors in Arizona and the Southwest call the U.S. Forest Service toll-free autumn color hotline at (800) 354-4595 and press 3 or visit their website at www.fs.fed.us/r3

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Upcoming Events

November 3 -

[Irrigation](#)

[Maintenance](#)

November 8 -

[Pruning and](#)

[Maintaining Your](#)

[Landscape](#)

November 10 -

[Drip Irrigation Design](#)

[& Installation](#)

See complete schedule at www.chandleraz.gov/water



Monthly Watering Advice

November

Our winter rains often begin this month so take advantage of this "free" water. Use the 'off', 'stop', or 'rain' setting on your controller to stop the watering cycle for a week or so without disturbing your programs. Recommendations below are for plants that are established in the landscape (in the ground about 2 years).

Lawn watering:

Summer grass (Bermuda) - once every 14 days

Overseeded cool season grass (rye) - 4x per day for first 7-10 days to germinate, then once every 7-10 days

If trees and shrubs are on the same valve:

Desert Adapted - once every 24 days

High Water Use - once every 11 days

Tree watering:

Ask A Garden Goddess



What are the best trees to plant for fall color?

For brilliant color you just can't beat the Chinese Pistache. A native of China it grows at a moderate rate to 25-40 feet tall and 25-30 feet wide and can stand cold temperatures down to -20 degrees F. This desert-adapted tree's leaves turn orange/red to maroon in November. If you are lucky

Desert Adapted - once every 27 days
 High Water Use - once every 12 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 - if needed
 Annuals watering - once every 5 days
 Wildflower watering - once every 1-2 days to germinate, then once every 7 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.

Bonus tip: Rainwater is very beneficial for your plants, and it's free. You can harvest rain by contouring your yard with small berms, channels, or swales to direct water runoff to your plants. For a downloadable booklet on harvesting rainwater, visit <http://ag.arizona.edu/pubs/water/az1052.pdf>

enough to have a female tree, you'll get the added bonus of red berries.

Fallen leaves can be put right in the compost pile or mulched on-site by mowing over them if your tree is in a lawn. Other good tree choices can be found online in [Water Wise Landscaping in Chandler](#).

Email your question to GardenGoddess@chandleraz.gov



Chinese Pistache

Water Wise Tips



Grandpa always said "Life is simpler when you plow around the stumps."

Whether planting, growing or harvesting Grandpa thought it best to live in harmony with some obstacles instead of confronting them head on. Eventually the stumps would weaken and could be removed more easily..

Grandpa always had smart advice. Speaking of smart.....this month we can all make smart choices when it comes to water use. Twelve questions will [test your Water IQ](#) and may reveal whether or not any of you might be water geniuses. Try it!

It's often surprising how much water touches our lives indirectly. In late November we'll be giving thanks for what we have and enjoying time with family and friends.

About 48,000 gallons of water are needed to produce the typical American Thanksgiving dinner for eight people. This includes the water needed to raise the crops and process the ingredients used for this special meal.



Plant of the Month

Pink Muhly Grass
 (*Muhlenbergia capillaris*)



These spectacular, non-invasive, ornamental clumping grasses are versatile and require very little maintenance.

The beauty of [muhlenbergias](#) are their whispering foliage that sways in gentle breezes. They provide seeds, cover, and nesting materials for wildlife. The common species range in height from 1-½ to 5 feet and have a variety of seed head colors, textures and patterns. They bloom from August to November. Muhlenbergias love full sun, but tolerate part shade, are tolerant of drought, heat and cold, and can handle most soil conditions.

The delicate pink flower spikes of [Pink Muhly Grass](#) are specially attractive when backlit by early morning or late afternoon sun. Group several plants together for a meadow effect.



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

Water Conservation E-News

The WaterSaver newsletter will help you create stunning landscapes that use less water. Each month you'll receive personalized watering advice, notices about upcoming events, timely tips to maintain a healthy landscape, plus ways to reduce your water bill - all delivered right to your in-box.

[Sign-Up Now](#)

Sincerely,
 Water Conservation Staff

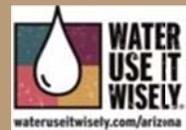
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Questions or comments? We want to hear from you! Contact us at conserve@chandleraz.gov

Save!

Bring this coupon to any free City of Chandler water conservation class or workshop to receive a free gift.

Offer Expires: November 8, 2011