

GARDEN "A" - TOM & DEB

In 2007 Tom and Deb moved from the Pacific NW to desert gardening. The transition was made easier by the many organizations devoted to desert plants and landscapes. Soon after arriving they volunteered at TBG and joined TCSS. Tom has been working on staff at TBG as a gardener since 2010. The property came with some large specimens including a huge *Myrtillo cactus geometrizans* that was thankfully too tough to die in the bad freezes we have endured lately. Like many gardeners, they've largely sacrificed the formality of a planned garden for the plants. The plants come from many sources: friends and family, plant sales, cast-offs from work, volunteers stuck to a pack after a hike, and TCSS rescues. With a



few exceptions, their garden is a collection of arid desert plants, many chosen to attract birds, butterflies, bees and other welcome wildlife. To keep all of this thriving they have installed gutters and cisterns in the back, passive water harvesting system in front and drip irrigation in front and back (and for pots). They replaced the grass area with artificial turf, renovated the pool area, did hardscape upgrades and added metal art.

LOT SIZE: 0.41 acre lot

SOIL MIX: Right now, they've settled on a potting mix of 20% organic, 20% coir and 60% pumice.

WATERING: Watering is based on the needs of plants. They designed the irrigation system with one line for the front and one for the back. Given the diverse water needs for shrubs and trees at various levels of establishment, they use variable emitters almost exclusively. It's extra work but allows for better regulation of each plant's water requirements.

PESTS: They're not too heavy-handed with pests. They patrol for cactus beetles, etc., nibbled (or ravaged) plants are caged, moved to the back or replaced with rabbit resistant species. They don't spray; all weeds are pulled by hand. Fortunately Javelina raids are rare occurrences.

TIPS: They've learned so much from so many sources, including TCSS. If you are new to desert gardening there are many sources in Tucson where you can gain information, join a group or volunteer. Special mention to Alec MacKinnon, the Pedaling Arborist. He assisted with the passive water system in the front and is their arborist. Also, Terry Christensen, Wind Walker Design did all of the metal work.

PLANTS OF INTEREST: *Euphorbia antisyphilitica*, *Yucca baccata* ssp. *Thornberi*, *Opuntia undulata*, *Manfreda maculosa*, *Cleistocactus strausii*, *Agave parviflora*, *Grusonia bradtiana*, *Echinocereus pentallophus*



They replaced the grass area with artificial turf, renovated the pool area, did hardscape upgrades and added metal art.



GARDEN "B" - CHRISTINA'S GARDEN



Christina grew up in Colorado, but visited Arizona and New Mexico frequently and always loved the desert landscape. When she moved to Sierra Vista in 2001, she got involved with the UofA Cooperative Extension low water-use landscaping program and became more interested in adding cactus and succulents to her property (plus low water-use flowering perennials to attract birds and butterflies). Her projects on this garden, which she has owned since 2012 include a complete renovation of the back garden and pool area and partial renovation of the front cacti gardens. She has replaced

inadequate drip irrigation system; added numerous hummingbird and butterfly-attractant perennial flowers; moved Desert Spoons (*Dasyliirion wheeleri*) from the pool area to areas away from walkways; added decomposed granite around plants and walkways to control weeds and reduce evaporation; added two water features; added LED spotlights on key plants; added saguaros, hedgehogs, agaves, succulents and mammillarias to various areas; added Arizona rosewoods as a screen behind the pool area; added trees to the west of the house for summer shade; cleaned out overgrown cacti and shrubs in the "wild" part of the property. Special features include natural desert outside the walls, hummingbird and butterfly garden, with many seed-bearing plants for birds within the walls. Water features to attract birds, lizards and animals. My yard contains many multi-headed Desert Spoons. The front is graced by a large Joshua tree and a soap-tree yucca. Everything was designed to attract, feed and provide habitat for wildlife.



LOT SIZE: 1 acre

SOIL MIX: I do not use anything except the native soil and my plants seem to be happy. I allow the leaf and flower petal "litter" to work its way into the soil as a natural fertilizer.

WATER: I adjust the drip irrigation on a seasonal basis and try to use as little water as possible. All of the plants are native or desert-adapted for low water use (with the exception of three citrus trees).

PESTS: The dense growth and the natural shapes of the plants encourages lots of lizards and birds to make my flower gardens their homes, and this seems to keep down the insect pests. Weeds are controlled by the thick layer of decomposed granite. Occasionally I have to trap pack rats, but try to keep the natural part of the yard cleaned up to discourage their occupation.

TIPS: Visit the UofA Cooperative Extension gardens, read books on desert landscaping, attend any lectures by Master Gardeners or other organizations, visit other people's gardens.

PLANTS OF NOTE: *Yucca brevifolia*, *Dasyliirion wheeleri*, *Yucca elata*, *Sophora secundiflora*, *Justicia californica*, *Agave vilmoriniana*, *Opuntia basilaris*, *Pachycereus marginatus*



GARDEN "C" - REGIS & NANCY

Regis & Nancy relocated to Tucson from Virginia in 2012. The uniqueness of cacti and succulents compared to the plants they were familiar with in Virginia inspired their interest in desert plants. When they bought the house in 2011 the lot had very little landscaping. (only a few cacti, creosote, palo verde, some oleanders, a few dwarf orange trees and agaves. Since there was a water drainage issue in the back yard, they started landscaping the back yard. They worked in stages over two and a half years. First, installing the patio across the back of



the house, then adding the stucco retaining walls, dry river beds,

and gravel ground cover. Initial planting focused on the area in front of the stucco wall and assorted cacti behind the wall. They expanded the gravel areas in the back and front yards. The last stage in the back involved installing the curved berms of planting soil covered with gravel, five Peruvian mesquite trees, more gravel area, a flagstone path, and adding two more drip irrigation zones. Finally, they expanded the drip system to the front of the house, added the flagstone path and plantings adjacent to the driveway. They have a small rock garden on the left corner of the back yard; a window garden in the patio area; a collection of cacti behind the retaining wall on the left side of the back yard; and a small collection of agaves in the right rear corner of the yard behind the berms. In addition to the gravel areas, they have kept some natural desert areas around the house. They have participated in TCSS



cactus rescues and sales to acquire plant material for their landscaping – including ocotillo, mamms, barrels, hedgehogs and teddy bear cholla. (They plan to place marker flags on the plants acquired from TCSS for the tour). Their collection of pots and container plants have been acquired principally from Tohono Chul sales, Bach's, B&B, Civano, Desert Survivors, Mike Ellis, Lowe's, and Home Depot.

LOT SIZE: 1.25 acres

SOIL: Generally cactus soil from Lowe's or Home Depot for pots and containers.

WATER: We try to acquire plants native to or adapted to the local desert so that, once established, the water requirements should be low. We studied water requirements for the plants and have five different drip irrigation zones. For each zone, we determined the number of drip heads and flow rate according to the size of each plant and its water needs so that each plant gets the proper amount of water. In hotter months, we increase the watering frequency

and in cooler months we decrease the frequency. Most plants have now been in the ground for about two years, and we hope to cut back on watering so that only newer plants get supplemental water.

PESTS: Back yard wall keeps out larger animals and screens around gate and at wall openings for excess rain water flow. Bait boxes for rodents. In the front yard, we try to use plants that are unattractive to animals.

TIPS: When bare root ocotillos are planted, they do well with frequent watering. We put ours on a 30 minute drip every other day in the warm/hot months, and cut back to twice a week in the cool months.



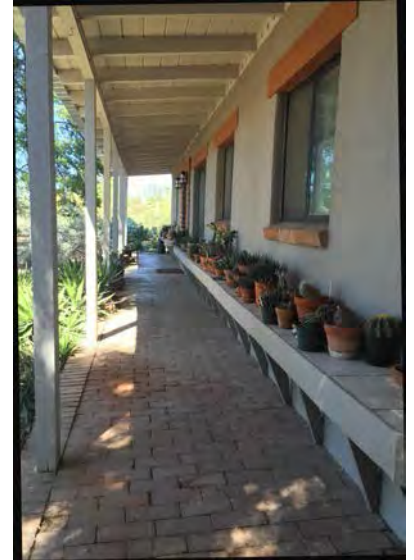
PLANTS OF NOTE: *Agave deserti*, *Yucca brevifolia*, *Encelia farinosa*, *Grusonia standleyi*, *Cylindropuntia ramosissima*, *Dasyliiron quadrangulatum*, Aloe "Crosby's Prolific", *Dasyliiron wheeleri*

GARDEN "D" - EVELYN & PETER



On a trip to New Mexico in the early 1970's, Evelyn became fascinated by the great variety of cactus forms and that began a lifelong interest in cactus and succulents. After relocating to Arizona and spending more time with cactus and succulents she grew to appreciate their numerous textures and subtle color relationships. With a degree in Botany, Peter's preference remains with flowering plants. Peter and his parents bought this home in 1972. In 2000, Evelyn and Peter returned to a house that had been rented for fifteen years with a yard bare of almost all vegetation except for trees, prickly pear, and a few agaves and aloes. Prior to moving, they had turned a dilapidated stable into a livable casita and were beginning an extension on the main house. The 60' x 50' land behind the stable/casita had been worn down by years of horse traffic. It was eight years before planting began there in earnest with the winter freezes and summer droughts making it a challenge. It was much easier

to keep the cactus and succulents alive in one of our shaded areas. A shelf was built across the front of the house where potted cacti are displayed. Peter has concentrated on the trees and potted cactus while Evelyn has worked more with the cactus and succulents both potted and in the yard. Another planting area has opened up this past year on the southwest side when neighbors walled off their property and left us with a lengthy bare space. Today only the front garden is on tour.



LOT: The lot is 1.75 acres.

SOIL: Some organic material along with either perlite or pumice

PESTS: The one insect pest we have is flightless boring cerambycids. As an insect collector, Peter gathers them up. We do have a variety of wild animals which live or travel through the property, including Javelinas, bobcats, rabbits, and coyotes. A mountain lion has been spotted cutting across the property. Currently, badgers, which are nocturnal, are digging large holes around the back especially near the compost bin. Usually, they move on, but ours seem to have found a home.



NEIGHBORHOOD PLANTS of INTEREST:

One of the tallest boojum in Tucson is just a short distance north of the their lot on the west side of Via Rancho. According to a couple of our members, it measures nearly 32 feet in height. (The tallest is at The Ghost Ranch on Miracle Mile) Homeowners Cheryl & Tom Furrier, who have cared for this treasure for 23 years, tell us that their house was built in 1959 and they believe it was originally occupied by nuns who may have received the boojum for a gift. About 5 years ago it began to split at the top. It seems to be quite healthy and happy. You are welcome to stop and take photos.



GARDEN "E" - PEGGY'S GARDEN BILL & PEGGY

When Bill & Peggy were hunting for a house in Tucson about five years ago, Peggy told Bill she had only two really important requirements for our new house:

- 1) That it have a good place for a garden
- 2) That it be close to Tohono Chul.

Peggy was a "plant nut" and if you doubted that, you had only to read the license plate on her green station wagon which said... PlantNut. She worked at Tohono Chul as a volunteer, planting, selling plants, guiding tours, and thoroughly enjoying it all. So, when she set out to make a garden for



their home, she had a lot of background knowledge. She had many helpful friends from Tohono Chul, and had Scott Calhoun advising her as well. Sadly, Peggy died late in 2014. She would have been delighted that you are coming to see her (their) garden. They've had many visitors to the garden but this is their first official tour. Peggy was very much interested in cactus and succulents for at least fifteen years. She had such a garden when they lived in Tempe, but the garden she produced here in Tucson is much better planned and far more colorful. Aside from the work in the gardens there has been little done to the property since they bought it. They raised the wall around the front garden from two feet to four feet to give it a little more privacy. The front garden now contains seating, lighting, and a very pleasant fountain making the area quite delightful for a small group of guests.



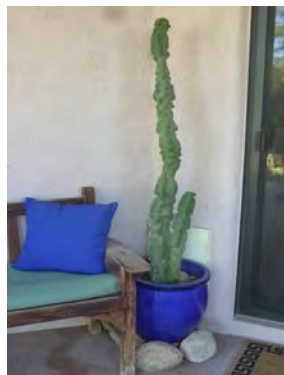
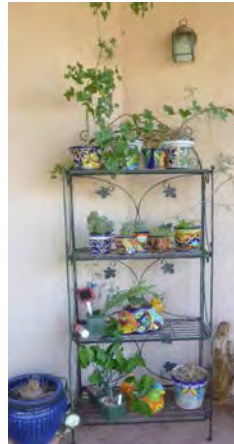
Planting includes a wide variety of aloha cactus and other blooming plants. The back garden includes a wide variety of agaves, other cactus and deciduous blooming plants.

LOT SIZE: ¼ acre but the gardens you will tour are: The Front Garden which is approximately 22ft. by 36ft and the Back Garden which 41ft by 58ft including the brick patio 16ft by 54ft

WATERING: We installed a drip system and generally cut cool season watering to about ¼ that of the hot months.

PESTS: Pests are quite rare, both front and rear gardens are fenced so the mammals hereabout are excluded. Snakes are seen occasionally (no rattlers) and we encourage them to go elsewhere. We have quite a few ground squirrels about but not in the garden – they've stay out of the garden except when they're very young and then they are very cute and welcome.

PLANTS OF NOTE: Aloe striata, Astrophytum ornatum, Calliandra californica, Tephrocactus articulatus, Agave Colorado, Gossypium thurberi, Leuchtenbergia principis, Thelocactus bicolor



GARDEN "F" - BARBIE & JOHN

Barbie became interested in cactus and succulents in the early 1970's when she worked for Exotic Plants in Chicago. They have lived in this house for 20 years. In 2001 they hired Peter and Carrie Nimmer to redesign their "back yard" providing new walls and hardscape in order to grow a garden without battling the animals. They have stapelias, aloes, agaves, manfredas, gasterias, pedialanthus, plus containers of mixed succulents. Some cacti, too. Barbie likes mixing succulents with drought tolerant flowering shrubs and vines and planting wildflowers among the cactus and succulents in the ground and in pots. .



Joshua trees seem to like the neighborhood. They have several.

LOT SIZE: Our property is .8 acres. Most of it is not cultivated.

SOIL MIX: Nothing special, I need a good recipe

WATERING: Rain water makes the succulents smile. We have a 2800 gal. Rain harvesting tank in back of house. I use a hose or watering can for succulents.



PESTS: Ignore, curse, or pluck off if possible. Sometimes just move them.
Crunch cactus beetle.

TIPS: Gardening is about moving plants around til they are happy, or tossing if they never want to grow.



PLANTS OF NOTE: An Agave Bovicornuta which hopefully will be blooming in the front yard, Morawetzia sericata, Agave geminiflora, Aloe striata, Agave victoriae-reginae, Mammillaria karwinskiana ssp. nezapensis, Agave bracteosa, Lobivia silvestrii, Yucca brevifolia



Garden "G" - HARRY & BECKY



Harry & Becky started traveling to Tucson for a couple of winter months in 2006 and were struck by the beauty of the desert. In 2008 they purchased a fixer-upper and started the process of renovation. One of the first things they did was to go to a Tucson Cactus and Succulent Society plant sale and join the organization. They loaded their convertible with plants that day. Plants were sticking out of the trunk, the back seat, and the passenger side of the car. Other members took pictures and laughed with them at the "cactusmobile". They have been hooked ever since.

They have renovated the house and property over the last 7 years. They redid the front and back courtyards, created paths throughout the property, built a fire pit and steps to the wash and planted hundreds of cactus. They have stayed mostly with plants that are native to the area, using rescued cactus whenever possible. They have attempted to recreate a typical desert landscape while adding a few interesting species not common to the Sonoran desert and feel fortunate to have good examples of nursery trees in the yard. It has been exciting to see saguaros and pincushions spring up from seed.



LOT SIZE: We have about an acre. We have owned the property for a little over 7 years. There were very few cacti on the property when we purchased it. The cactus had been removed to make room for an RV shed and parking.

SOIL MIX: We use native soil from our yard mixed with sand from the wash behind our home for all our planting needs.

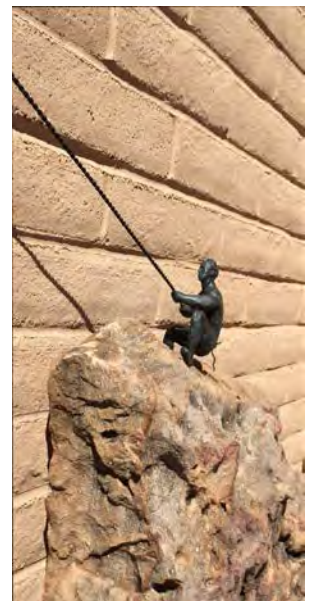
WATERING: We use as little water as possible. We do not have a drip system and hand water as necessary during the dry summer months.

PESTS: We try to create an environment that is not pest friendly. Trees and cactus are trimmed on a regular basis so that pack rats and other animals are not tempted to build nests. We occasionally find it necessary to trap pack rats and ground squirrels. We relocate them whenever possible.

TIPS: My number one tip is "JOIN TCSS!". The members of the society and its publications are a great source of information.



PLANTS OF NOTE: *Opuntia fulgida monstrosa*, *Agave Americana* var. *medio-picta*, *Agave lophantha*, *Opuntia engelmannii* var. *linguiformis*, *Stetsonia coryne*, *Cylindropuntia leptocaulis*, *Echinocereus pentalophus*, *Opuntia macrocentra*



GARDEN "H" - RON & MARGARET



Ronald and Margaret are Minnesota natives who have spent many winter vacations in Arizona since purchasing their first property in northwest Tucson in 1999. Following Ron's retirement as Minnesota Beef Council Executive Director in 2012, they began to spend 7 months in Tucson each year and have become Arizona residents. In 1995, Ron and Margaret did not know the difference between opuntia and ocotillo. They had never heard of prickly pear but quickly learned that pansies and petunias had limited relevance in Tucson. The Eustices became interested in cacti and succulents during the mid-1990s when they attended beef



conventions in Arizona. They fell in love with the culture and climate of Tucson and decided to call it home. They have been TCSS members since 2013. The previous owners had cleared much of the vegetation from the property for a series of paths and roadways to test-drive motorcycles. The property was nearly bare; with only three saguaros, one ocotillo, some mature trees, five oleanders and a few prickly pears. We tried to use as many rescued plants as possible acquired at TCSS sales and rescues. Ron has participated in nearly all TCSS plant rescues and has also volunteered at Pima Prickly Park and Tohono Chul. A 20 x 20 foot patio ramada behind the house was added in 2015, which will be used to provide additional shade for family and friends as well as protection for vulnerable plants. The landscape features a series of terraces, raised beds and pathways created from thousands of boulders and stones gathered around the property. Plants have been grouped by species and color in the terraces and raised beds. Ground cover includes Rosemary, Wandering Jew and ice plant.

LOT SIZE: 1.3 acre purchased in 2013

SOIL MIX: Twenty-five pick up loads of composted pony manure/wood shavings have been used to fill the raised gardens. Sand is used to fill holes when plants are transplanted.

WATERING: A drip irrigation provides moisture to help establish new plants. Once established, plants receive supplemental moisture only during hot and dry periods. Cactus and agaves receive no water.



PESTS: Rabbits are a major problem. Plans are to install 18" chicken wire on existing chain link fence.
TIPS: Ask questions, read and listen to experts.

Membership in organizations such as TCCS is essential.

SPECIAL PLANTS & FEATURES:

There are more than 75 saguaros of various sizes, all but three have been added since the Eustices purchased the property. There are 65 ocotillos, all but one were rescued and transplanted. A significant number of ocotillo have been grown from rescued canes. There are about 10 Joshua trees on the property.

Plans are to add additional saguaros, barrels, ocotillo and mammalaria from



TCSS plant rescues. . While most of the emphasis is on native plants, there is also interest in exotic species, which are adaptable to the local area such as a bottle tree, emu bushes and other Australian and South African plants.

PLANTS OF NOTE: Aloe striata, Agave titanota, Echinocereus triglochidiatus, Astrophytum capricorne, Simmondsia chinensis, Hesperaloe funifera, Agave celsii, Trichocereus pasacana, Agave filifera

