

# Santa Fe Extension Master Gardeners Newsletter



## Annual Plant Sale Moves Online *Sales begin this month*

By Kathy Haq and Project Co-leader Bonnie Martin

What if you could buy a plant, put it in your garden and then watch it grow at different sites around town where others might enjoy it as well? Sounds magical (or maybe far-fetched), right? Well, that's more or less what you'll be doing if you purchase one or more plants at the Santa Fe Extension Master Gardeners 2021 plant sale. The sale is the organization's primary fundraiser, and every plant purchased supports more than a dozen garden projects in Santa Fe.

"Having to cancel our Annual Garden Festival in 2020 really put the SFEMG in a financial bind," explains Bonnie Martin, who along with Susie Summers is leading the organization of this year's

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plant sale. “Since this is our main source of income, we knew we had to do something different this year, so we are very excited about the preparations being made for our first-ever ‘Online Plant Sale.’ Although we needed to rethink our whole process, it is coming along quite nicely.”

Honorary Master Gardener Russ Funk used his familiarity with the mobile payment company Square to build a sales platform that will allow potential buyers to examine inventory before making an online purchase, says Martin. The online listings will include images, the common and botanical names of each plant, a brief description, sun and water requirements, and expected mature size and bloom times. Native plants and shrubs will be the dominant offerings, along with annual flowers, herbs and vegetable seedlings.

Detailed information about the inventory and ordering process will be available on the SFEMG website in the coming weeks. Master Gardeners and interns will be able to place orders from Friday, April 16, through Monday, April 19. An email reminder will be sent to this group a day or so before online shopping goes live. The sale opens to the general public on Wednesday, April 21, and continues through Wednesday, May 5. Curbside pickup will be available by appointment from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 8, and Sunday, May 9. Pickups will take place at the Santa Fe County Fairgrounds off Rodeo Road, and all COVID-19 public health requirements will be observed.

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Editor: Kathy Haq  
Art Director: Jannine Cabossel

Contact us at:  
[news.sfemg@gmail.com](mailto:news.sfemg@gmail.com)

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The sale is a huge volunteer undertaking, and the organizers have begun to recruit the many Master Gardeners and interns who contribute to the success of this event. “It’s a great way to earn the operational support credits needed for annual certification, and it’s an excellent opportunity for our interns to learn the ropes so they can take over in the years to come,” Martin says.

She and Summers offered a special shout-out to the sale’s operations manager, Mike McGeary, and to Pam Wolfe and Sherry Snyder for their knowledge of native plants and their role in providing plant descriptions for the online garden shop. They also expressed their gratitude to the “growing partners” participating in this year’s sale: Santa Ana Pueblo’s native plant and tree nursery, Waterwise Gardening and Reunity Resources.

“This is our first go at an online plant sale, and our goal is to make it run as smoothly as possible,” says Martin. “We hope the community will show its support for the SFEMG and help make this a ‘sellout event.’ Remember, Mother’s Day is Sunday, May 9, and whose mother wouldn’t like to receive some beautiful plants to accent her garden?”

Photo credit: 2018 plant sale by Kathy Haq

## Master Gardener Projects Supported by the Online Plant Sale

- Ask a Master Gardener outreach at more than a half dozen locations and the Santa Fe County Extension Office Hotline Assistant
- Garden at El Zaguán
- Harvey Cornell Rose Park
- Randall Davey Audubon Center wildlife, pollinator and native plant gardens
- Santa Fe Native Plant Project (SNaPP)
- Santa Fe Seed Stewards
- The Garden Journal (Radio Program)
- The Santa Fe Public Spaces Tree Inventory

In addition, the plant sale supports these Master Gardener demonstration projects at the Santa Fe County Fairgrounds: the cactus, herb and vegetable gardens; the Santa Fe Compost Action Team (SCAT) site; and the National Earth-Kind Rose Trial.

## A Message from SFEMG Board President Wendy Wilson

Welcome to April! Santa Fe County's COVID-19 risk rating has progressed to the Turquoise Level, which means spring here we come! I've had vaccines, done some traveling and come a lot closer to figuring out the landscaping for my new home. The promise of spring brings scads of gardening/seed/plant catalogs. Many I immediately recycle, some I page through and drool (I think we remember my delight in hydrangeas), and others I dog-ear to remember the plant(s) I want to order.



So, what do we need to be aware of when we get gardening catalogs and magazines? The March/April 2021 issue of Horticulture magazine has a list of "15 Winning Native Plants."

There is an article by Allison Fortner from the University of Georgia about biodegradable pots and what soil conditions they need to effectively break down. Another article by Chuck Otte is titled, "Welcome Back: a Few Tweaks to Spring's Gardening Routine Can Make Life Easier for Birds Returning North." All are well researched and written, but are they applicable to Northern New Mexico's soil, weather, water and wind conditions?

This is where training through the Santa Fe Extension Master Gardeners intern program is invaluable. We are trained to evaluate and determine the appropriateness of information for our area. New Mexico State University's Cooperative Extension Service — part of the College of Agricultural, Consumer, and Environmental Sciences and the umbrella organization for all Extension Master Gardeners chapters in the state — has excellent gardening tutorials, and Tom Dominguez, our County Extension Agent, is available to assess agricultural problems in Santa Fe County. Trust our dedicated Santa Fe Native Plant Project volunteers and their downloadable publication, "[A Guide to Native Plants for the Santa Fe Landscape](#)," our Ask A Master Gardener volunteers and the knowledgeable staff at our excellent local nurseries. Another resource, the [National Wildlife Federation's Native Plant Finder](#) website, presents the best host plants for our area and is searchable by ZIP code. Using multiple sources and guides, we all can develop a clear, concise, knowledgeable garden plan that is appropriate and appealing.

SFEMG is working to develop a clear branding path. Look for new signs at all of our project sites. Vicky Jacobson and her partner, David Gilliland, have designed signs that include the SFEMG logo, NMSU identification, the project name, cooperating partners and SFEMG contact information. They should be in place by early this month. Similarly, we will be taking the same approach with a planned family of brochures that will describe our projects. The goal for new signs and brochures is to make it easy for community members to recognize our work sites and literature and be assured that there is clear, concise and knowledgeable information available there.

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I'm proud to be the president of such a well-educated, generous and dedicated group of people. Many times I've tapped into our members for information and support. I urge you to do the same. We are an amazing resource in the Santa Fe community. Hurrah for us!

See you in the gardens,  
Wendy



## Project Highlight: The Garden at El Zaguán

By Project Co-leader Ruthbeth Finerman

El Zaguán may be a historic property but its garden certainly isn't stuck in the past. Lush displays of color and bloom shift dramatically with each season, and more changes are on the horizon as upgrades and new features are planned.

Tucked behind a white picket fence at 545 Canyon Road, the property was developed in the early 1800s and is now headquarters of the Historic Santa Fe Foundation. In 2013 the Foundation recruited Master Gardeners to help restore and maintain the garden, celebrating its past while adapting to emerging demands of climate change, water conservation and pollinator sustainability. Historic horse chestnut and salt cedar tamarisk trees anchor two ends of the garden, but many architectural elements and plantings have been added. This year Santa Fe Extension Master Gardeners (SFEMG) project co-leaders and the Foundation's lead horticulturalist Linda Churchill will collaborate on fresh initiatives.



Historic horse chestnut tree viewed from Canyon Road

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The Garden's distinctive diamond-shaped flower beds and the main building

A first step is shoring up existing infrastructure. A berm installed early in the garden's restoration phase deteriorated over the years as critters burrowed into the soil. The collapsing berm, now unoccupied, will be rebuilt to prevent erosion and water runoff. In addition, bricks edging the garden's distinctive diamond-shaped flower beds will be reset so they don't impede foot traffic or catch on hoses.

The Foundation's 2019 master plan has spurred another garden project. Pending funding, the

Foundation hopes to restore the historic irrigation canal once fed by a nearby acequia. Remnants of the original stone waterway remain visible around the garden. Plans are to excavate part of the channel and use a pump to recirculate water through it to educate the public about the history of Santa Fe acequias.

Project leaders also plan to build height in flower beds. As budget permits, tamarisk trellises or large willow balls will be installed and planted with flowering vines to lend the garden greater drama and seasonal interest.

Another attraction may include large planter pots to sit beneath the horse chestnut tree adjacent to Canyon Road. The goals are to disguise irrigation near the tree's base and improve the visual appeal of the corner, which is heavily shaded by the massive tree. Pots could be planted with bright annuals to draw visitors into the garden.

Several more plantings are in the works, including a mountain ninebark (*Physocarpus monogynus*), annuals in the spring and flowering bulbs in the fall. Also proposed are replacements for dying fruit trees in a lower terrace, which may have been the property's original fruit and vegetable garden. In addition, project leaders, the County Extension Office and the Foundation are discussing possible collaboration on an experimental orchard in the lower terrace.

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Most recently, the Foundation asked Master Gardeners to help design a private garden behind residents' quarters at El Zaguán. This will occur in stages, and project leaders hope to videotape the process to support the SFEMG and its public education charter. Other educational events will be announced once scheduled.

Finally, project leaders are working on documents to advance the Master Gardeners' public education mission. A planned brochure will describe the garden's history and signature plants, while a complete plant list will detail characteristics like native species, waterwise plants and wildlife benefits.



West-facing view of the Garden's distinctive diamond-shaped flower beds

In normal years El Zaguán draws thousands of visitors. As pandemic restrictions ease we hope you'll find an opportunity to marvel at the splendor of the garden and watch as changes unfold on grounds that embrace Santa Fe's past, present and future.

Notes Pete Warzel, the Foundation's Executive Director, "The Master Gardeners have been a valued and essential partner to the Historic Santa Fe Foundation since 2013. The Garden at El Zaguán is an oasis in the city, visited by locals and visitors alike, and the care and planning offered by the Master Gardeners have helped the garden thrive."

Photo credit: SFEMG

***"We have a marketing issue with our native plants. We call them weeds and then wonder why people don't plant them."***

— Noted entomologist and author Doug Tallamy, suggesting that a better common name for Butterfly Weed (*Aclepias tuberosa*) might be "Monarch's Delight." (Deep Roots KC's 'Plan It Native' Landscapes Conference, Sept. 18, 2020)

# Backyard Bugs

by Pam Wolfe

*Largus* spp. (Order: Hemiptera) are mating in gardens near you. The plant bug you're probably most familiar with is *Boisea trivittata*, the box elder bug (Family: Rhopalidae), now appearing along the Santa Fe River on West Alameda Street. *Largus* spp. belong to a different family, the Bordered Plant Bugs (Largidae). However, their behaviors are similar and they are often mistaken for the more familiar box elder bug. Even though bordered plant bugs are generalist feeders (weeds, seeds, and shoots of hardwood trees) and occasional scavengers, they are not considered pests (that is, it is not [economically important](#)). [Bug Eric](#) writes that the number of species of *Largus* in North America is hotly argued among taxonomists.



Adult *Largus* sp., mating pair in Eldorado

During mating season the animals can be found in abundance on the ground and under trees and shrubs. Adults overwinter in leaf litter and mate in spring. Eggs will hatch about 14 days after they are deposited in clusters on the ground or on a host plant. Nymphs will undergo several stages of maturation (instars) over a period of up to three months.

This adult pair was disturbed by the gardener and made its way up the adobe wall, an irresistible photo opportunity.

Photo credit: Lesley Mansfield

**We are here  
to help!**

If you have a gardening question, Santa Fe Master Gardeners are available to help. Go to [sfemg.org](http://sfemg.org) and pose your question. Someone will do research and get back to you.







## Scarlet Globemallow (*Sphaeralcea coccinea*)

by Diane Pratt

Spring is in the air, and I'm looking forward to my backyard bursting with color as the Globemallow starts to bloom.

Scarlet Globemallow is a perennial member of the Malvaceae family that thrives in poor soil. Often seen along roadsides and washes and on rocky slopes, it requires minimal or no supplemental water and loves full sun. It is native to southwestern states, including New Mexico. Another similar species, Narrowleaf Globemallow (*Sphaeralcea angustifolia*) is also native to New Mexico. Scarlet Globemallow reportedly was the last plant collected by Meriweather Lewis on his historic expedition; the original specimen is on display in the Smithsonian Institution.



Photo credit: Paul Rothrock via SEINet

The orange-red flower blooms from May to October. The flowers each have five petals and are arranged in clusters on dense, short racemes. The plants grow in large, rounded clumps to a height of 4-16 inches. An individual plant may have over 100 stems growing from the same root. The leaves and thick stems are covered with tiny star-shaped hairs that reflect the sun making them appear silvery gray and protecting them against drying. The three- to five-lobed palmate leaves are alternately arranged on the stem. The fruit is a brown schizocarp (multi-celled seed pod) with one-seeded carpels (seed pods).

The flowers are great nectar sources for hummingbirds, butterflies, honey bees and native bees. Several species of Globe Mallow Bees (*Diadasia spp.*) exclusively collect pollen and nectar from Globemallow plants. The plants provide forage for deer, domestic sheep, bighorn sheep and other livestock and the seeds are loved by birds. It also serves as the larval host to many Skipper butterflies. The Globemallows were used by Native Americans for medicinal purposes such as treating diarrhea, sore throats and eye diseases, as well as skin disorders. The roots were used for stomach ailments and poultices were made for treating swollen joints and broken bones.

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**Landscape Use:** Other species and cultivars have red, pink, purple or white flowers and some are well-behaved in a formal garden. Scarlet globemallow, however, can spread by rhizomes as well as seeds, so it naturalizes to large areas easily and quickly. It persists in the seed bank, so will colonize “waste places” or appear as a pioneer plant after a disturbance. This creates an amazing array of flowers year after year. Just a word of caution: these plants are considered by some to be “weedy” and can “take over” if left undisturbed.



*Diadasia* sp foraging on *Sphaeralcea angustifolia*  
Photo by: Pam Wolfe

**Propagation:** Most globemallows can be grown from seed. Some require cold stratification. Scarlet Globemallow seed coats are very hard and require scarification. The plant can also be propagated by transplanting.

In summary, the Scarlet Globemallow so commonly seen along New Mexico’s road-sides is a beautiful plant with a long bloom season that lasts late into the year. It’s a pollinator “superstar” and a rich food source for many wildlife species. It’s easy to grow in poor soil with only minimal to no supplemental water needed. Everyone wins with this plant.

**Plant type:** herbaceous perennial

**Bloom time:** May-October

**Size:** 4-16 inches tall x 12-16 inches wide

**Sun:** full sun, part shade

**Soil:** most soil types, including clay; pH 5-8

**Water:** very low

**Elevation:** 5,000-8,000 ft.

#### References:

Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center: [Sphaeralcea coccinea](#)

Santa Fe Botanical Garden’s Garden Explorer: [Sphaeralcea coccinea](#)

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Plant Guide: [Scarlet Globemallow](#)

Fire Effects Information System: [Sphaeralcea coccinea](#)

## New & Noteworthy

Have you recently read a gardening-related article or book, visited a horticultural website or blog, listened to a podcast, or seen a nature show or documentary you think other gardeners would enjoy or find useful? Send a link to the newsletter (news.sfemg@gmail.com) and we'll include the information in the next issue. **Note that some of these sources may have paywalls.**

[“Indoor-Grown Weed is Spewing Carbon into the Atmosphere”](#) by John Timmer, *Ars Technica* (March 13, 2021)

[“Is this the end of forests as we’ve known them?”](#) by Alastair Gee, *The Guardian* (March 10, 2021)

[“Touch and Grow Seed Starters: Getting a Jump Start on This Growing Season”](#) by Marisa Thompson, *edible New Mexico* (March 8, 2021)

[“The Master Gardeners: Seek out ‘Plant Select’ varieties”](#) by Laurie McGrath, *Santa Fe New Mexican Home Magazine* (March 7, 2021)

[“Southwest’s prolonged drought stressing New Mexico trees”](#) by Scott Wyland, *Santa Fe New Mexican* (March 7, 2021)

[“Santa Fe to begin planting more drought-resistant trees”](#) by Sean P. Thomas, *Santa Fe New Mexican* (March 7, 2021)

[“Our View: Dive into creating a more pollinator-friendly city,”](#) *Santa Fe New Mexican* (March 7, 2021)

[“We’re living on a planet of ants: A new book looks at the amazing behaviors of ants and the people who study them”](#) by Diana Gitig, *Ars Technica* (March 6, 2021)

[“2020 marks increase for hot pepper production in New Mexico”](#) by Susan Montoya Bryan, AP News (March 4, 2021)

[“Santa Fe City Hall is abuzz over bees”](#) by Sean P. Thomas, *Santa Fe New Mexican* (March 3, 2021)

[“Tree of heaven is a hellish invasive species. Could a fungus save the day?”](#) by Troy Farah, *National Geographic* (March 3, 2021)

[“Forgotten Superfood of the Americas: The Amaranth Seed is a Grain of Hope”](#) by Ungelbah Dávila-Shivers, *edible New Mexico* (March 2, 2021)

[“Opinion: Will the ‘New Bauhaus’ of Green Architecture Look Like This?”](#) by Andreas Kluth, Bloomberg (Feb. 26, 2021)

# The Garden Journal Radio Show

**Every Saturday  
10-10:30 a.m.**



Tune in to KSFR 101.1 FM on Saturday mornings from 10 to 10:30 to listen to a lively entertaining, and informative gardening show. Show host: Christine Salem

**April 3: Slow Food Santa Fe edition**

Environmentalist Gary Nabhan, author of “Food From the Radical Center: Healing our Land and Communities” joins hosts Lissa Johnson and Nina Rosenberg.

**April 10: SFEMG edition**

Christine Salem speaks with author Ellen Zachos about her new book, “The Forager’s Pantry: Cooking with Wild Edibles.”

**April 17: Food, Farms & Friends edition**

“Soil Stories” with host Carrie Core

**April 24: Home Grown New Mexico edition**

Jannine Cabossel, “The Tomato Lady,” discusses May in your vegetable garden.

More info at [Giant Veggie Gardener](#)

Schedule subject to change. To listen to previous broadcasts, click [here](#).



# April Calendar of Events

We do not know when face-to-face events will be viable again, but please continue to check the SFEMG website and the websites of other organizations to see what's being offered. Note that "phc" stands for "per hour of class time."

April 1	<a href="#">Soil Invertebrates – Getting to Know the Life in Soil</a> (Xerces Society)	1.5 CE
April 1-7	<a href="#">Ready, Set, GROW!</a> (NMSU)	1 CE phc
April 7	<a href="#">Amazing Vegetables A to Z: Pests, Problems &amp; Harvesting</a> (DBC)	1 CE phc
April 8	<a href="#">Getting to Know the 'Good Bugs' – Scouting for Pollinators and Other Beneficial Insects</a> (XS)	1.5 CE
April 14	<a href="#">Tree Planting</a> (CSU)	1 CE phc
April 19	<a href="#">Protecting Pollinators in Santa Fe: Introducing the Santa Fe Pollinator Trail</a> (XS)	1 CE
April 21	<a href="#">Creating Community with Our Insect Neighbors</a> (ELA)	1 CE
April 22	<a href="#">Insect Apocalypse? What Is Really Happening, Why It Matters and How We Can All Be a Vital Part of the Solution</a> (XS)	1.5 CE

See next month's SFEMG Newsletter for more Continuing Education options.

<b>DBG:</b>	<a href="#">Denver Botanic Gardens</a>
<b>CSU:</b>	<a href="#">Colorado State University Extension</a>
<b>ELA:</b>	<a href="#">Ecological Landscape Alliance</a>
<b>NMSU:</b>	<a href="#">New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service</a>
<b>XS:</b>	<a href="#">Xerces Society</a>

**Members Only:** For a complete list of Master Gardener projects and to sign up, please visit SignUpGenius, a link to which is in the Members Only section of the SFEMG website. To log hours worked and to see year-to-date totals, visit Track It Forward in the same location.



**Mission Statement:**

*Santa Fe Extension Master Gardeners is a nonprofit volunteer organization whose mission is to learn, teach and promote locally sustainable gardening through reliable, current research-based practices.*

*New Mexico State University is an affirmative action/equal opportunity employer and educator.*

