The Arizona Native Plant Society
Phoenix Chapter

Our Mission is to promote knowledge, appreciation, conservation, and restoration of Arizona native plants and their habitats.

Visit Our Website

Visit Our Events Page

Meetings held the first Monday of each month from 6:00 to 7:00 with presentation by an invited speaker followed by an optional business meeting from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Both members and non members are welcome.



AZNPS September 2026 Newsletter

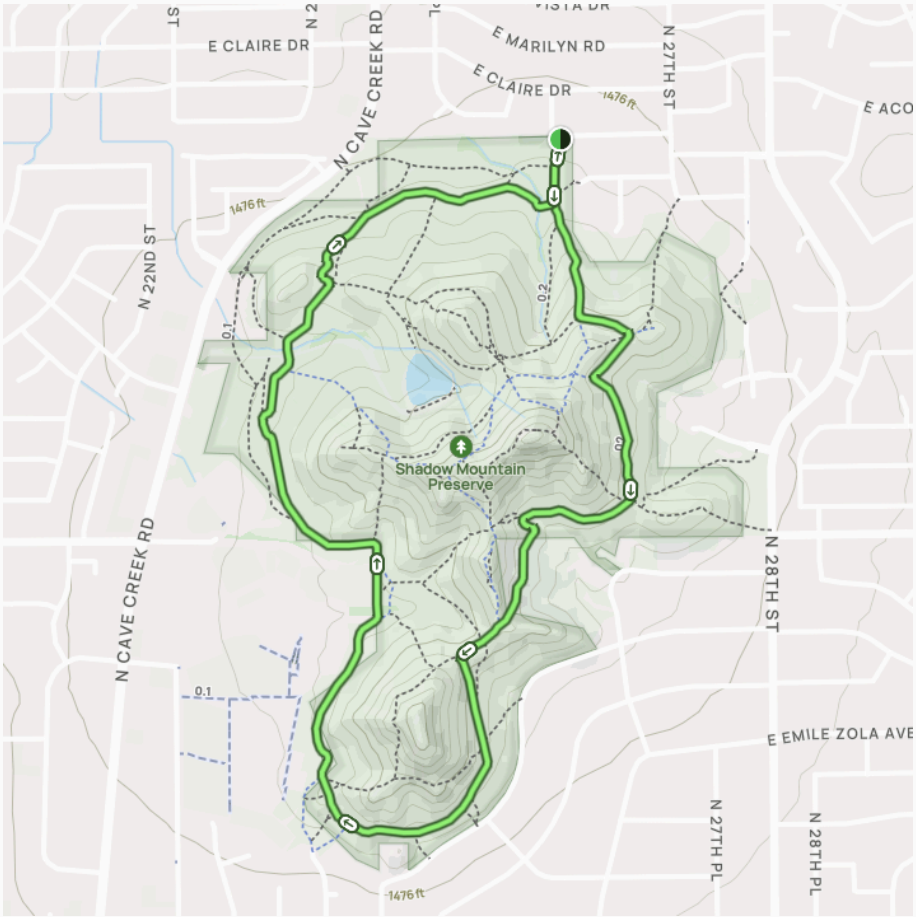
Happenings: Current and ongoing activities

Wednesdays from 12:00PM to 2:00PM - Join us to restock the inventory for the South Mountain Community Library branch of the Maricopa Native Seed Library. Feel free to drop by, no need to stay for the whole time and all are welcome. We take stock of which seeds we have, sort seeds and package for free distribution. Learn more about the seed library here: https://libguides.maricopa.edu/seed.

September 27th from 7:00AM to 9:00AM - Join us for a **nature hike** around Shadow Mountain. All are welcome including well-mannered pets and children. We will begin with a short instructional event about how to manage the iNaturalist application, so if you have a phone we can teach you how to use this program to identify plants. If possible, please install iNaturalist or we can help you on site. Be ready to make some observations! The hike is approximately 2.6 miles so please bring plenty of water. If you have mobility issues, we can stay at the trail head and find a lot of plants. Trail information can be seen here.

We will meet September 27 @ 7:00 am - 9:00 am MST.

Address: Shadow Mountain 2603 E Acoma Drive, Phoenix, Arizona, United States. Just show up and bring a friend, too.



Tour available at Center for Nature and Urban Wildlife (CNUW). CNUW has invited us to tour their facility with the possibility of becoming a volunteer. CNUW maintains a small capacity native plant nursery and native seed collection which is the backbones of many of their restoration and student-driven projects. CNUW connects people of all ages to the wonders and intricacies of the Sonoran Desert through conservation, habitat restoration, urban ecology, and hands-on education. CNUW has offered to provide AZNPS-Phoenix chapter tours on the

second Thursdays of the month at 1:00PM. Contact Daniela Howe (phoenixaznps@gmail.com) for additional information.

Plant Sales

October, a great month to buy a plant. “Tis the season!”

Boyce Thompson Arboretum (BTA) will be offering a plant sale including trees, shrubs, perennials, and cactus. BTA has an assortment of plants from around the world, focusing on native desert plants. Native plants are adapted to a climate like that found in the Sonoran Desert. The Fall Plant Sale will be open to the public from October 17 to November 1 with the member preview on Oct 16. See their website for more information.

The Desert Botanical Garden is having their 50th plant sale in October with native and non-native plants available. This plant sale is longer than usual but the garden is not having a spring plant sale in 2027, so stop by while you can. See more on their website.

The Center for Native and Urban Wildlife will be selling native plants in October as well. Sign up for plant sale updates from their website.





Step Up: Engage with Others

Protect Our National Forests by Supporting the Roadless Rule. This conservation policy limits road construction and development, notably logging, along roads in National Forests and Grasslands. Currently there is a motion to repeal the law and leave millions of acres of land

unprotected. For more than two decades, the Roadless Rule has protected much of our last remaining wild national forests—but now the U.S. Forest Service under the current administration is planning to repeal the policy.

The Roadless Rule is one of the most significant conservation measures adopted to protect the National Forests of the United States. The rule prohibits industrial logging and most roadbuilding within intact areas of our public forests while allowing for active management to mitigate fire risk, ensure community safety, and maintain healthy habitat. We cannot afford to lose these protections for some of our last remaining intact public lands. Join us to urge the Forest Service to uphold protections for roadless areas.

You can visit the **Special Areas: Roadless Area Conservation** page on regulations.gov to **leave a comment until October 6th**. Spread the word for others to leave comments!

Leave A Comment

Inform friends, neighbors and others that Registration for SRPs free tree program is currently open. SRP gives each household 2 free trees and has native trees as options. For additional information register on their website.

Horizons: Hands-on Educational Opportunities

Workshop Offering – Introduction to the Grasses: The “Grass Class” is a two-day workshop jointly sponsored by the Arizona Native Plant Society and the University of Arizona Herbarium. This year’s workshop will take place on October 9 and October 16, 2026, from 8:30AM to 3:00PM at the University of Arizona Herbarium. Go to https://aznps.com for more information or contact jdougripley@gmail.com to register

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Yavapai Horticulture Symposium: at Yavapi College Verde Valley Campus in Clarkdale.

October 7th, 2026 | 9-3:00 pm Expert speakers, hands-on live demonstrations, and more, whether you’re an experienced gardener or simply excited to learn and grow, enjoy a full day of inspiration, practical learning, connection, and discovery, with lunch included!

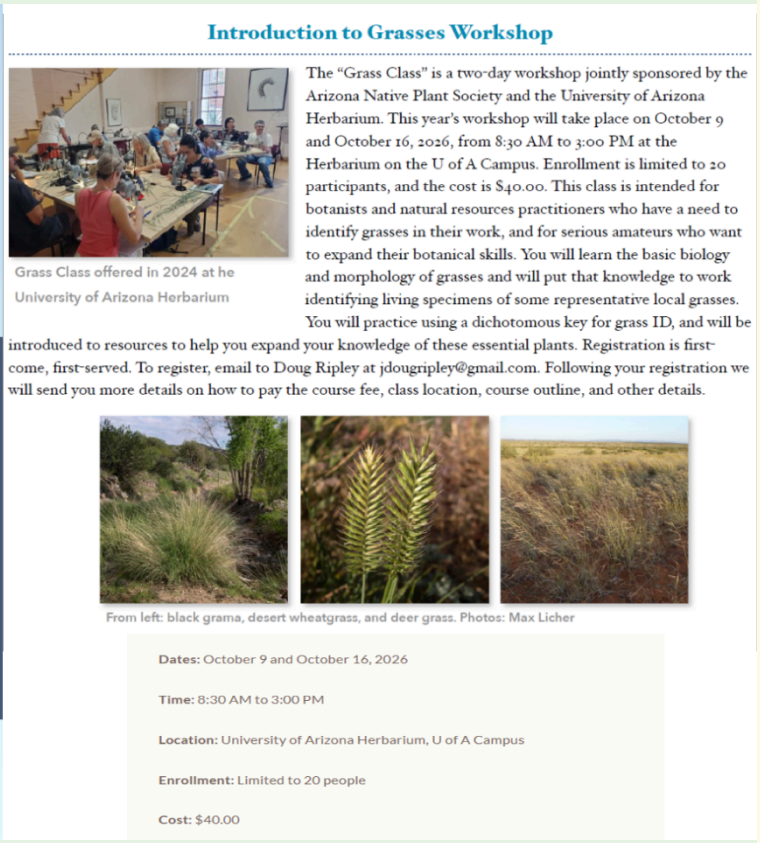
GET TICKETS @ YC.EDU/GROW

GardenPHX Program Outdoor System: A vegetable gardening initiative is extended by the city of Phoenix. Selected participants will receive a free garden system, hands-on training, and maintenance and support to grow fresh produce at home. All necessary materials, including seeds, plants, and other supplies, will be available to you at no cost. Although not strictly native plants, but a great gardening initiative.

Applications close October 9, 2026 for the fall season. Eligible parties can register here.

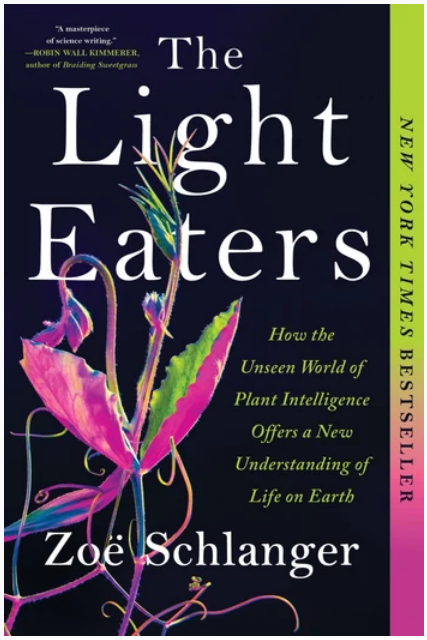
SRP Free Tree Program: Registration for SRPs free tree program is currently open. In partnership with Trees Matter, SRP gives each household 2 free trees and has native trees as options. The program includes free courses for how to plant and care for the trees. For additional information register on their website.





Readings at a Glance: Synopsis of books, articles, YouTube videos, and other relevant published material.

Recommended: The Light Eaters by Zoe Schlanger. Be prepared to learn about plant characteristics mirrored in humans. Did you know that some plants protect their babies or other plants shape-shift? Intrigued? Get ready for a mind-altering read…oh, yes, plants can create an alternate reality for you, too. This nonfiction book is fascinating, controversial, and unforgettable.



Cartoons, art and videos are welcome! If you have favorite sources of knowledge about plants, the ultimate light eaters, drop a line to Kathleen McCoy at Kathleen.mccoy@asu.edu.

Spotlight on Native Plants



Desert Globemallow: A most remarkable native plant.

By Kathleen M. McCoy

What plant with stunning apricot petals could you see growing in an alley, a xeriscape garden and the Sonoran Desert? Most likely the correct guess is the *Sphaeralcea ambiguate*, more commonly known as desert globemallow or apricot mallow. This perennial native sub shrub can be found in parts of California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico in the United States and Sonora and Baja California in northwest Mexico. Desert globemallow grows in desert scrub below 3500 ft. on dry, rocky slopes, edges of sandy washes, roadsides, and disturbed areas.

The foliage is a characteristic silvery color with tiny star-shaped wooly hairs leaves, two adaptations that conserve moisture and reflect sunlight. Of all the mallows, a genus that contains about 50 plants mostly in North America, most of them have a flower in the orange to red range. The most drought tolerant member is the hardy apricot mallow which blooms most heavily in the spring but continues to flower from February through November. Desert globemallows require full sun and well-drained soil.

Cultivated for home and public gardens, the desert globemallow is the largest-flowered mallow. Each bowl-shaped flower has 5 petals that are up to 1.5” long. In fact, the shape of the blossoms refers to the genus name "*Sphaeralcea*" Latin for “globe” and mallow for the plant family. With slightly woody stems restricted primarily to the crown, each desert globemallow grows in a large, rounded clump to a height of 20-40 inches, and may have over a hundred stems growing from the same root. Once the flowers have faded, small green cups sometimes

containing over many hundreds of seeds will form. This low maintenance plant will re-seed itself and can provide surprises in color production. The seed you plant one year may produce plants with a different color the next. Seed is also readily available from commercial sources as well as the Native Seed Network. Transplanting wild globemallows may be difficult and disappointing. The plant above ground may have lateral roots that extend about three feet below the ground. If the root is not completely intact when digging up or putting the plant back into the earth, the plant may be mortally wounded.

Although globemallows are edible, they unfortunately do not have a taste to match the brilliance of their flowers. Desert globemallow provides browsing for bighorn sheep and livestock and is a food source for the desert tortoise. In addition, the large number of flowers produced provides a steady source of pollen and nectar to many pollinators, e.g., hummingbirds, native bees, honeybees, butterflies, caterpillars and moths.

This drought- loving species can be used with range revegetation. The apricot mallow is an early colonizing species and can suppress invasive exotic species in areas affected by fires. Seeds can be used on construction sites for erosion control and where plant community restoration is wanted. Desert globemallow seedlings also have been used to revegetate abandoned mines sites.

The hardy desert globemallow has a prominent history in the southwest. Our ancestors discovered that globemallows relieved and/or affected many disorders positively. The leaves and roots of desert globemallow have been used by Native Americans for many years to make medicine. Due to its high mucilage content, the plant has been used orally for coughs, colds, diarrhea and the flu. As a poultice globemallow has been applied to cuts, swellings like rheumatism, burns and snake bites. Native Americans even used globemallow as an eyewash. The desert globemallow stems were used by the Yavapai to create trays for drying saguaro fruit or slabs of pounded mescal.

This lovely native plant is neither threatened nor endangered. The only” problem” is that once established, they and their abundant progeny may aggressively take residence reserved for other plants in the garden. Most desert globemallows spread by rhizomes, so If you plant apricot mallows be prepared to either pull up suckers or stand back and give the plant space to spread. In the desert let them grow. Let them grow. Let them grow!

Article previously published in 2021 in AZNPS blog. A Spanish version is available upon request to Kathleen.mccoy@asu.edu.

Author' note: Please leave entire wild plants in their desert home. Most will die if moved. Seeds and cuttings, too, are on the “Do not take list” and depending where found can be illegal.

Photo Credit: Sue Carnahan

Volunteer

Volunteer: Whether you volunteer in the depths of the desert, an herbarium, or during a chat with a neighbor, volunteer to share with others your love of plants, and in particular native plants. Check out out chapter website for ongoing projects and reach out if you are interested in participating.

Share photos: If you have native plants or local habitat photos to share, we would love to receive them from you, our members, and feature them on our website and in our newsletter. Be sure to let us know how you would like to be credited! Contact Daniela Howe at phoenixaznps@gmail.com for additional information.

Send ideas: Let us know if you would like to submit information to our newsletter, e.g., a story, a book or video review. How about becoming a Facebook coordinator or engaging in social media?

All ideas related to native plants of the Sonoran Desert are welcome. Many thanks for caring about our native plants!



American Threefold (*Trixis californica*) Photo Credit: Sue Carnahan

Want to become a member?

The Arizona Native Plant Society is a statewide nonprofit organization devoted to Arizona's native plants. Many of our events are open to non-members, but if you are interested in becoming a member, click bellow to see more details.

Become a Member

About

Our Chapter Website
About AZNPS
Email: phoenixaznps@gmail.com

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