The Neighbors are Here

Remember when you were a child, and your parents said, “Let’s tidy up the house. The neighbors are coming over?” That’s exactly how the staff of the Gardens feels each season as we prepare for new exhibits and garden installations. Extra care goes into pruning and planting. Facilities and structures (such as the Sensory Ramada) undergo significant refreshing, and then there’s the prep and planning for Luminaria Nights, and a new garden installation.

This year’s Luminaria Nights will be powered up thanks to Tucson Electric Power. Over 3,000 new luminarias will light up the Gardens, while the Herb Garden and Mrs. Porter’s Garden will glow with traditional paper bags and candles. Last year’s favorites such as the Poinsettia Tree, the Grinch, and the nature and Korean lanterns, will be making a comeback. But we’re planning a few new surprises for you which will be bigger, better, and brighter.

In January, the Exhibition Garden will be completely redesigned in time to open a new Garden-wide exhibit, Beautiful Marvelous! Brazilian Modernism and Roberto Burle Marx. Tucson landscape designer, Jason Isenberg, was commissioned (asked) to create a modernist garden in the spirit of Burle Marx— with a southwest twist. As of this writing, we’re still a couple of months away from groundbreaking, but you’ll find a rendering of the design on the next page. I can’t wait for you to be immersed in the artistry of Jason’s landscape design. Along with a new garden, we hope you’ll take time to enjoy music, lectures, and a special exhibit of tropical paintings by the late botanical artist, Manabu Saito.

At the start of the new year, the Directors of Large Gardens, of the American Public Gardens Association, will be gathering in Phoenix for their annual meeting. We’re looking forwarded to welcoming many of the Directors at TBG for a special tour and lunch. A week later, on February 1st, Blankets, Butterflies & Brazilian Blues—the Grand Opening Gala takes place. February also brings the best food and wine event in the state to the Gardens— SAVOR Food & Wine Festival.

And finally, don’t forget to sign up for a class, bring a friend with you to the Cox Butterfly & Orchid Pavilion (It’s never looked better), and enjoy lunch or dinner at the café.

I can almost hear my mother’s voice, “Honey, the neighbors are here!”

Michelle Conklin
Executive Director
The tropics of Brazil, in Tucson? Tucson landscape designer, Jason Isenberg and his team at REALM will transform over 2,000 square feet of the Exhibition Garden into a modernist garden — with a southwest twist. The temporary display garden will highlight asymmetric forms, color and definition that define the world-famous landscape architect, Roberto Burle Marx (August 4, 1909 – June 4, 1994).

Roberto Burle Marx was a Brazilian landscape architect (as well as a painter, print maker, ecologist, naturalist and musician) whose designs of city spaces and residential gardens made him known throughout the world. He is credited with introducing modernist landscape architecture to Brazil, and influenced a movement from more formal and traditionally designed spaces, to more contemporary spaces.

Roberto Burle Marx was one of the earliest people to call for the conservation of Brazil's rainforest. More than 50 plants bear his name.

IN THE LEGACY GALLERY

BURLE MARX: THE EXPLORER, COLLECTOR AND BOTANIST

Exhibit consultant and curator, David Klanderman, was the first person we called on to help TBG create a cultural exhibit for the 2016 Frida Kahlo Exhibition. When we began exploring the world of Brazil, a call to Mr. Klanderman resulted in a creative session evolving around everything from the paintings of the Amazon by botanical artist, Margaret Mee, to the canoes used around the Amazon basin. Enjoy this exhibit, as we learn about Burle Marx the explorer.

PORTER HALL GALLERY

THE TROPICS: PAINTINGS FROM THE FLAT FILE OF MANABU SAITO

Manabu Saito, and his partner Jack, spent a lifetime traveling the world. Never far from his drawing board, Manabu frequently was seen with an oversized watercolor sketchbook by his side. TBG is pleased to exhibit, The Tropics: Paintings from the Flat Files of Manabu Saito. Selected works will be offered for sale.

To learn more about Roberto Burle Marx and the culture of Brazil, please check out the public classes and programs on the Education Page of this newsletter.
Asparagus Ferns
Dainty, Yet Tough

When trying to garden in our desert climate we are always looking for plants that can thrive in containers or landscapes without much water or attention. At the same time we love the look of daintier plants that remind us of someplace cooler and greener. One group of plants, the Asparagus ferns, fits these descriptions nicely.

Asparagus ferns are evergreen perennials that are closely related to the vegetable asparagus. The new shoots actually look like mini asparagus spears. They are not true ferns but have leaf-like structures that resemble them. These structures are actually short flattened stems called cladodes that look and function like leaves. The true leaves are tiny and scale-like near the base of the cladodes. Their fine needle-like "leaves" and arching stems vary in size depending on the species. The soft appearance is deceptive, however, because the stems of all varieties have numerous small, sharp thorns.

Tiny white flowers appear on the ferns mostly in the summer time but they can be sporadic bloomers. The flowers are lightly scented and are very inconspicuous. Small green berries follow, which darken to red, orange, or black with maturity. Birds are very attracted to them.

Most parts of Asparagus ferns are considered to be poisonous. The berries, when eaten, can cause possible digestive problems. Skin irritations may appear if you come in contact with their sap. The berries are also considered to be toxic to dogs and cats.

These plants have very fibrous root systems that contain an abundance of fleshy tubers. The tubers are used by the plant for nutrients and water. Due to this vigorous root system, asparagus
Asparagus Ferns (continued)

Ferns become root bound in a container very quickly, but they can be happy that way for a long time. The roots are strong and can break pots, so sturdy containers are recommended.

Asparagus ferns are members of the Lily (Liliaceae) family and are native to southern Africa. We have many species from that region that grow well in our climate.

Asparagus densiflorus 'Sprengeri', Sprenger asparagus fern, is the most commonly used asparagus fern because of its showy foliage and bright red berries. It is often used as a groundcover or in container plantings.

Sprenger ferns form a mounding, spreading clump with a delicate fluffy appearance. New growth forms feathery branched shoots two feet or more in length. They grow rapidly when given the space to spread out. Their stems emerge directly from the ground and become woody and spiny.

These varieties are the hardiest of the asparagus ferns and can survive temperatures well below freezing. It is also very drought tolerant and will survive in hot dry locations, although will look less attractive under these conditions.

The Myers fern, or more commonly called, foxtail fern, A. densiflorus 'Myers' has long tapering branches of tightly packed needles that are very upright, giving a distinct effect. The foxtail fern is slower growing than most asparagus ferns, rarely exceeding one to two feet in height. It can, however, spread up to three feet in width over a period of years.

The foxtail fern is not as tough in full sun as the Sprenger fern, but does well in full to partial shade and is great as a feature plant or in mass plantings. It is also a little less hardy and does not produce seeds as readily as some of the others.

The lace fern or florist fern, A. setaceus (A. plumosus), has long twining stems that can reach 10-20 feet in length. The stems will wrap around anything in their reach so give them a tall trellis, tree, or fence to climb on. Tiny threadlike "leaves" form flat feathery dark green sprays. Prune unwanted growth to keep the size contained.

The Ming or pom-pom fern, A. retroflectus, can sometimes be difficult to find. This species is more shrub-like and can grow five to six feet tall. Thorny gray stems hold clusters of soft tufts made up of threadlike bright green "leaves". Its semi-cascading habit makes it a great informal bushy plant with a unique appearance. This fern can be pruned sculpturally making it popular with bonsai enthusiasts. It is also loved by florists for its attractive "pom-pom" texture.

Asparagus ferns are very adaptable, easy to grow, and long lived. They are primarily used as a filler plant mixed with flowers or other greens such as ivy and spider plants. They work well in planters of all kinds and some look great trailing over the edge of retaining walls. Add some to your mini oasis areas for an added tropical effect. All of the different species are used widely by florists for garlands, wreaths, and bouquets. Their stems can last for weeks in water.

Asparagus ferns are readily available as small potted plants. Be sure to choose plants that have been grown outside, however. Many varieties are also great as houseplants and, if they are grown as such, they will not be adapted to outside conditions.

TIPS for Growing Asparagus Ferns

• Water moderately in the summer time, and sparingly during the winter. Mature plants seem to thrive on some neglect. Their tuberous roots provide a reserve in times of drought. Overly dry or wet plants will begin to show yellow or brown leaves which should be removed.

• These ferns are tolerant of cold weather but should be protected from a hard frost. They can die to the ground around 24°F. The plants should recover gradually in the spring time.

• Trim back old, brown and/or damaged stems any time of the year to keep a nice, clean appearance. Stems should be cut out at the base. Ends of the stems can be trimmed back to keep the plant shaped nicely.

• Rich, well drained soils are preferred, but they will be tolerant of poorer soils.

• In general they are not bothered by insects or diseases.

• These plants look best in filtered or partially shaded areas. Full sun makes the plants look yellowed out and less attractive. Too low light and the growth will be slowed.

• Plants can be propagated by seeds or by divisions. Cut-up and divide root balls in spring or summer time. Use a clean sharp knife to separate large groups of tubers.

• They do not rely on being regularly fed. The tuberous roots store and release nutrients as needed.
For families and children of all ages. Once a year, let’s give the gift of art to the children, families, and grown-ups who are going to be with us this spring! Celebrate the return of sunshine, fresh blooms, and a special performance by Lindo Maravillosos! This event will feature a special performance by Lido Maravillosos, a unique Brazilian dance troupe. The performance will be a visual and auditory experience, with live music and a special Brazilian dance performance. The event will be held outdoors, with a special menu featuring Brazilian cuisine. Admission is free, and all ages are welcome. The performance will be a unique and memorable experience for all attendees.

Spring Fair

FREE with admission to the Gardens
Friday, March 20, 9am-12pm

Carnival

FREE with admission to the Gardens
Friday, February 21, 9am-12pm

Lindo Maravillosos

January

February

Special Events

At the Gardens
Community Classes & Programs

**ART**

**HOLIDAY MOSAIC ORNAMENTS**
Wednesday, December 18, 10am-2pm, $94 General/20% Member Discount

**WATERCOLOR PAINTING DESERT PLANTS**
Friday, January 3, 9am-12pm, $38 General/20% Member Discount

**PAINTING THE WINTER DESERT**
Sunday, January 5, 1-4pm, $75 General/20% Member Discount

**ARTISTIC EXPRESSION UNDER GLASS: SONORAN CACTUS**
Tuesday, January 7, 10am-12pm, $94 General/20% Member Discount

**FUSED DICHROIC GLASS PENDANTS**
Wednesday, January 8, 1-4pm, $81 General/20% Member Discount

**EMBOSSED CARDS**
Friday, January 10, 10-11:30am, $42 General/20% Member Discount

**COLORFUL CACTUS PORTRAITS**
Sunday, January 12, 9am-12pm, $75 General/20% Member Discount

**THE “NATURE” OF IPHONE PHOTOGRAPHY**
Saturday, January 18, 9am-12pm, $75 General/20% Member Discount

**GLASS CANDLE VOTIVES**
Saturday, January 18, 1-3pm, $80 General/20% Member Discount

**SKETCHING ANIMALS**
Sunday, January 19, 1-4pm, $75 General/20% Member Discount

**LET’S MAKE A SCENE: MACRO GARDEN**
Monday, January 20, 10am-4pm, $123 General/20% Member Discount

**GARDENING**

**GROWING SPRING TRANSPLANTS**
Wednesday, January 8, 9:30am-12pm, $50 General/20% Member Discount

**PREPARING YOUR ROSES FOR THE SPRING BLOOM**
Thursday, January 9, 10-11am, $20 General/20% Member Discount

**TIPS & TOOLS FOR SEASONAL TREE PRUNING**
Wednesday, January 22, 10am-12pm, $20 General/20% Member Discount

**SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPE DESIGN**
Thursday, January 30, 9am-4pm, $90 General/20% Member Discount

**ORGANIC GARDENING IN THE SOUTHWEST SERIES**
Part 1 - Designing Your Organic Garden: A Blueprint for Bounty
Wednesday, February 5, 10am-12pm, $20 General/20% Member Discount

Part 2 - Organic Garden Soils: The Science of Success
Wednesday, February 12, 10am-12pm, $20 General/20% Member Discount

Part 3 - Growing Your Organic Garden: A Fruitful Formula
Wednesday, February 19, 10am-12pm, $20 General/20% Member Discount

Part 4 - The Harvest: Gathering with Gusto
Wednesday, February 26, 10am-12pm, $20 General/20% Member Discount

**DIY DESERT DESIGN**
Friday, February 7, 14, 21, and 28 and March 6 & 13, 9am–12pm, Series: $125 General/20% Member Discount

**COMPOSTING MADE EASY**
Sunday, February 9, 10am-12pm, $20 General/20% Member Discount

**PREPARING FOR SPRING GARDENING**
Monday, February 17, 10am-12pm, $20 General/20% Member Discount

**HOW TO BE AN ALL-STAR GARDENER**
Wednesday, March 4, 10am-12pm, $20 General/20% Member Discount
BROKEN CHINA MOSAIC FRAMES
Saturday & Sunday, January 25 & 26, 11am-12:30pm, $65 General/20% Member Discount

PEWTER HUMMINGBIRD & FLOWER
Friday, February 7, 1-4pm, $60 General/20% Member Discount

ARTISTIC EXPRESSION UNDER GLASS: LOVERS' HEARTS
Tuesday, February 11, 10am-12pm, $94 General/20% Member Discount

PAINT THE MUSIC
Saturday, February 15, 12-1:30pm, $94 General/20% Member Discount

FLORAL ORIGAMI
Saturday, February 22, 10-11:30am, $42 General/20% Member Discount

GLASS GARDEN STAKES
Saturday, February 22, 1-3pm, $70 General/20% Member Discount

MI AMORE: HEART MOSAIC
Tuesday, February 25, 10am-4pm, $123 General/20% Member Discount

WATERCOLOR PAINTING BUTTERFLIES
Friday, February 28, 1-4pm, $38 General/20% Member Discount

PLANTS, UP-CLOSE & PERSONAL
Saturday, February 29, 10am-1pm, $75 General/20% Member Discount

ARTISTIC EXPRESSION UNDER GLASS: BOTANICAL GARDEN
Tuesday, March 3, 10am-12pm, $94 General/20% Member Discount

DRAWING ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF YOUR BRAIN
Wednesday, March 11, 1-4pm, $55 General/20% Member Discount

GLASS CACTUS GARDEN
Saturday, March 14, 1-3pm, $105 General/20% Member Discount

INTRODUCTION TO MODERN CALLIGRAPHY
Friday, March 20, 9am-12pm, $50 General/20% Member Discount

NATURE & ECOLOGY
SONGBIRDS PART ONE: FLYCATCHERS TO KINGLETS
Friday, January 24, 10am-12pm, $20 General/20% Member Discount

TREES OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA
Thursday, February 20, 6-8pm, $20 General/20% Member Discount

SONGBIRDS PART TWO: THRASHERS TO TANAGERS
Tuesday, February 28, 10am-12pm, $20 General/20% Member Discount

BOTANICAL ARTS
THE GENTLE ART OF JAPANESE FLOWER ARRANGING
Thursdays, January 2, 16, 23 & February 6, 9:30-11:30am, Series: $163 General/20% Member Discount

COOKING
SONORAN BEEF TAMALES FOR THE HOLIDAYS
Tuesday, December 17, 10am-1pm, $75 General/20% Member Discount

SWEET & SAVORY EMPANADAS
Tuesday, January 14, 10am-12pm, $75 General/20% Member Discount

WORKING WITH DRIED CHILES
Tuesday, February 4, 10am-12pm, $63 General/20% Member Discount

ATOLE AND POLVORONES
Tuesday, February 18, 10am-12pm, $40 General/20% Member Discount

All materials are included unless otherwise indicated.
Call (520) 326-9666 ext. 39.
For additional questions about classes and programs, please email education@intercon.com or visit www.intercon.com/edp.

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Wellness
Healthy Soil, Healthy Garden

By Adam Farrell-Wortman, Horticulture Manager
Tucson Botanical Gardens

A large portion of my time, energy and horticulture budget line go towards soil remediation and development. Garden soil requires as much, if not more, attention than garden plants. I find this to be true no matter the type of garden or plant life you are supporting. Obviously, plant nutrient needs are soil related, but plant problems, from insects to disease, start at the soil, too.
Soil science is fascinating, incredibly diverse and complex. Good soil isn’t just all the nutrients plants need. Most handfuls of dirt have the nutrients, but they are locked up in unusable forms. A vast web of life is necessary to unlock those nutrients to feed the plants. However, you do not need to be a Ph.D. in the field to improve your garden or grow that crazy plant that has no non-human reason for living in Tucson. If you approach soil care with the understanding that it is a vital organ of your garden’s life and a living entity of itself, you will get positive results.

You may be asking, “How do I know if my soil is alive and healthy if the life is microscopic?” Soil supporting a healthy micro-life community will, in turn, also be supporting a healthy macro-life community. If you take your trowel and dig out a scoop you should find all manner of creepy and crawly. You should see fungal hyphae, which looks like spider webs in the soil or it may be chunks of soil that are stuck together like they are glued. It will smell fresh and earthy, not sour or fowl. All healthy soil is teeming with life. In the wilds of nature, soil health is supported by the ecosystem. In the built-up human world it is necessary for the gardener to support its health.

One key factor for soil health is shade. Almost all of the microbial life in soil is UV sensitive. Shade your soil with mulch. Mulch can be inorganic, like gravel, or organic, like straw or woodchips. What mulch you use depends on the plants and/or personal aesthetics. Whatever the mulch, it should be at least 2" thick, which, from experience, is thicker than most people add. The benefits of mulch cannot be overemphasized (I need to write an article with mulch as the only topic). Proper mulching will improve the health of your soil within a season. If your soil has been cooking in the sun for years, mulch alone will not be enough. It will need compost or some other inoculant to reintroduce the microbes, but mulch is still key.

Another necessary ingredient to all healthy soil is organic matter or humus. How much, again depends on what is growing in it, but all soils need it, otherwise it is not soil, it is dirt. Forking in compost is a great method for preparing a new space. For more mature landscapes, adding liquefied organic material like fish emulsion or humic acid over time is the way to go. These liquids can seep between soil particles, getting humus down deep without disturbing established roots.

Oxygen is also an important component to healthy soil. Every step we take in our gardens pushes soil particles together and pushes air out. Soil compaction is extremely common in our landscapes. When I chase visitors out of garden beds, it isn’t because I’m afraid of them stepping on foliage, it’s because I don’t want them walking on roots and compacting the soil. The best way to deal with compaction is limiting it by always using the same paths, using pavers or boards to distribute weight and avoiding walking on soil when it’s wet. If compaction has already occurred aeration with a garden fork or broad-fork is recommended. Pushing it straight down and wiggling it works best, no need to upturn the soil.

It is almost impossible to write about the importance of soil without making puns. So to avoid them I’ll end with this real life exchange. A friend of mine took over his family’s land and cattle herd. I told him a story about a cattleman that I knew who referred to himself as a grass farmer who cares for cows. My friend said he saw himself as a soil steward who supported grass and cows. I encourage everyone who cares for plants to think and care for their soil first. The plants will thrive, if the soil is healthy.
Ways of Giving

CASH – Gifts by check or credit card are the most popular giving methods.

GIFTS OF STOCK – Gifts of appreciated securities may provide the donor significant tax benefits. For information on how to transfer stock to the Tucson Botanical Gardens, please contact the Development office at development@tucsonbotanical.org.

RETIREMENT ASSETS – the IRA Charitable Rollover allows taxpayers age 70 ½ or older to transfer up to $100,000 annually from their IRA accounts directly to charities, like the Tucson Botanical Gardens, without first having to recognize the distribution as income. Please consult with your attorney or other financial advisor to evaluate the applicability to your unique tax and financial circumstances.

ESTATE PLANNING – Charitable bequests and other estate gifts offer you a way to shape your legacy and continue your philanthropy beyond your lifetime. Once you notify the Gardens of your intent, you will be recognized as an esteemed member of the Penstemon Society.

MORE WAYS TO GIVE THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

A TRIBUTE GIFT THAT GIVES TWICE
Please consider honoring or celebrating your loved ones this holiday with a donation to the Gardens. They will receive a festive handwritten note card on your behalf, and you will be recognized in the Garden’s newsletter for your thoughtfulness and generosity for gifts of $25 or more.

THE GARDENS’ GIFT SHOP & GALLERY
Please make our Gift Shop your first stop when looking for beautiful and distinctive presents. Members receive a 10% discount every day as another way to thank you for your support. Please take advantage of this triple benefit – pleasant, discounted shopping for you, a very special gift for your friend or loved one, and a little revenue to care for the Gardens.
A win, win, win!!

A LASTING TRIBUTE
For those who hold a very special place in your life, consider celebrating them with a long lasting gift – a commemorative Garden pathway brick. Donors may reserve an individual brick with a gift of $500 and have a short tribute inscription placed on it.

A FEW MORE WAYS TO SUPPORT THE GARDENS
• Subscribe to Amazon Smile
• Join Fry’s Community Rewards program

Sponsor a garden bed or floral pot to show how much you care

Honor the special people in your life for a full year with a dedicated bed of beautiful plants, or a potted arrangement of living flowers. Your donation of $350 or more will be recognized on a special marker celebrating both you and your honoree for 12 months. You can display your appreciation, gratitude, love or respect to friends and family while supporting the Tucson Botanical Gardens.

Living Tribute Gift Forms are available in the Tucson Botanical Gardens Gift Shop, at www.tucsonbotanical.org/donate /tribute-or-memorial, or call (520) 326-9686 ext. *25

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Thank You... to all of our Annual Fund Donors and Supporters

The Board and Staff are very grateful for the support of the following Annual Fund donors, whose gifts have enabled the Gardens to flourish. It is our privilege to recognize these families, individuals, organizations and businesses for the contributions that were received between July 1 and September 30, 2019...

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Legacies & Tributes

Tucson Botanical Gardens has been nurtured by the encouragement and support of our members, their families, and friends. The following donors, who made contributions between July 1 and September 30, 2019, wished their friends and loved ones to be remembered amid the Gardens’ natural beauty. We are inspired by their generosity.

GIFTS IN MEMORY OF
Arlene Stevenson-Booth ........................................ James D.V. Stevenson
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In Memory of John H Gerdes ........................................ Marjorie Gerdes

Donors & Supporters to Special Programs

The following donors and supporters designated their generous contributions and support to the Gardens’ signature programs. We are grateful for their investments which were received between July 1 and September 30, 2019.

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MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM UPDATE

THE 2150 CLUB

2150 is much more than our address on Alvernon Way; it’s the name of our newest membership group!

The Gardens is launching an exclusive initiative comprised of professionals with an interest in environmental sustainability, gardening, community stewardship, and supporting the mission of the Tucson Botanical Gardens. Designed for adults in the first half of their lives (ages 21 to 50), the club membership comes with family-level benefits, special amenities and opportunities to mix with colleagues and industry leaders in a variety of community projects and social events. The membership fee is $150 in one payment; $40 in Quarterly payments ($160 total); or $15 in Monthly payments ($180 total).

GIFT MEMBERSHIPS

The perfect holiday gift!

Gardens memberships are the perfect gift for the holidays. Convenient for you to purchase—just call us, stop by, or go online—they are available in a variety of levels to fit everyone on your gift list. We will then wrap the membership packet with a festive card and mail it on your behalf. You can even include a special message! Don’t let the delight of opening this unique present, recipients will think of you as they enjoy the beauty of the Gardens all year long. Please call Markleigh Swanson in the membership office at (520) 326-9686 ext. (star) *13 or buy online at tucsonbotanical.org/gift-membership by December 16th.
VISIT & SHOP
The Gardens and Gift Shop are open daily except for holidays. Check website for details.

HOLIDAYS

CONTACT
(520) 326-9686, ext. *10
TTY/ASCI: (800) 367-8939
www.tucsonbotanical.org
info@tucsonbotanical.org

ACCESSIBILITY
Portable looping system & wheelchairs available.

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LUMINARIA NIGHTS
TUSSON BOTANICAL GARDENS

POWERED BY TUCSON ELECTRIC POWER

Where the Holidays Begin

DECEMBER 6, 7, 8, 13, 14, 15
5:30PM - 8:30PM

GET YOUR TICKETS TODAY AT TucsonBOTANICAL.ORG