



# Doña Ana County Master Gardener Newsletter

College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences

U.S. Department of Agriculture • Doña Ana and Luna Counties • NMSU  
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*Chaenomeles speciosa* "Flowering Quince"  
Photo: C Jeff Anderson, Left and Right

Doña Ana Cooperative Extension Service,  
1170 N. Solano, Suite M,  
Las Cruces, NM 88001

Phone: (575) 525-6649  
Fax: (575) 525-6702

MG Program Admin: Jeff Anderson,  
Questions: [donaana@nmsu.edu](mailto:donaana@nmsu.edu)

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By: Marisa Thompson
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Photo: Jeff Anderson



## ***Flowering Quince for Your Spring Garden,*** **by Jeff Anderson**

***Chaenomeles speciosa*, Get ready for spring with one of the showiest shrubs found at this time of year, "Flowering Quince". For many people who came to the Chihuahuan Desert from more northern, or eastern climates where azaleas flourish, flowering quince may be just what you are looking for to fill your senses with the lush spring flowers you grew up with.**

***Chaenomeles speciosa***, “flowering quince” is native to Japan, Korea, China, Bhutan and Burma. These plants are related to the larger fruiting quince, *Cydonia oblonga*. Flowering quince, however, is primarily grown for its spectacular spring floral show, more than for its fruits. Flowering Quince is a member of the Rosaceae Family, (no wonder it has such beautiful flowers being related to roses). Flower colors range from white through pink to red and even orange. Most varieties and cultivars in the past have generally consisted of single five petaled flowers. However, through more recent breeding efforts many new cultivars are being released with larger double and even triple petaled flowers. For many years I have grown the single petaled varieties and found their spring show unsurpassed...until the “Storm Series” came along in its three colors: Scarlet Storm is a deep ruby red; Orange Storm is a bright orange; and Pink Storm is more of a reddish pink than pink. So of course I had to have at least one each of these in my garden.

What I have found out about growing the storm series in my garden, is that these new varieties are just as easy to grow, as the single varieties and just as drought tolerant. The one problem here in the desert southwest however, has been a slight problem with iron chlorosis. Obviously, *Chaenomeles* would prefer a slightly more acidic soil than the typical pH encountered here of 7.5 – 8.2. This problem can easily be overcome however, by the use of sulfur added to the soil according to directions and EDDHA Chelated Iron. A small amount amended to the soil quickly corrects this deficiency and insures years of floral bliss. My favorite flowering quince at present is ‘Orange Storm’, I never really appreciated how great orange could look until my bush burst into flowering with 2” fully double orange blossoms. I paired the ‘Orange Storm’ Quince with ‘Beatrice Favreau’ Forsythia for a play of bright orange against golden yellow. I have also incorporated ‘Oklahoma Redbud’ with its brilliant purple flowers and flowering pear, with its white flowers to further enhance the spring display.



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To finish our my flowering Quince spring display, I added 'Lady Jane' tulips and *Iris danfordiea*. I now have a beautiful early spring display of flowers that will last through the month of March and brighten up the end of winter and the beginnings of spring. So I urge each and everyone to seek out the beauties of spring, begin with that flowering quince and select the color that best suits you, be it ruby red, or in my case...an Orange Storm!



## Desert Gardening: How to Grow *Roses* in the Southwest

You may believe the term “desert roses” is an oxymoron. But although indigenous roses don’t sprawl out on the desert floor among cacti, some roses are easy to grow in the Southwest. When grown in full sun, black spot and powdery mildew rarely are problems. Below are some tips to success:

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## Choose Tough Roses

Standard hybrid tea roses have the largest flowers, but other varieties are more vigorous and require less attention. The toughest rose of all is the Lady Banks', also known as the Tombstone rose (*Rosa banksiae*). This big, sprawling climber is great for training over an entry, pergola, or ramada. Although it blooms only once in spring, it is oblivious to heat and requires very little water after establishing. Chose from the scentless double yellow 'Lutea' or 'Alba Plena', with scented, white double flowers. In general climbing roses, miniature roses, and carpet roses tend to be the toughest.

## Select Proven Hybrid Tea Roses

If you still pine for big, single-stemmed roses, some of the best blooming and most reliable hybrid teas for the Southwest also are old standards. For big red roses 'Mister Lincoln', 'Oklahoma', and 'Don Juan' are longtime favorites that are hard to beat. For white roses try 'Iceberg', and for yellow, 'Gold Medal' or Midas Touch. If you are looking for fragrance, Double Delight is strongly scented and a sturdy grower.

## Rose Watering

Standard hybrid tea roses are not drought tolerant and require watering two to three times a week during warm periods of fall and spring, and three to four times per week during the real heat of summer. In hot periods hose off leaves, which removes insects and increases humidity. You can reduce watering by using mulches, compost, forest mulch, straw, or wood chip layers 3–4 in deep around each bush.

## Rose Pruning

In midwinter cut out all the dead and crossing canes from your roses, and cut the remaining canes back to about 18 in. During the hot months in the low desert, roses produce smaller and fewer blooms. Remove spent blooms by cutting back to the first five-leaflet set. Leave as much foliage as possible, which helps shade the bush.

## Rose Feeding

Hybrid teas are heavy feeders; for best bloom in fall and spring, you need to fertilize. You can use a slow-release granular or a foliar spray. In general climbing roses (such as the Lady Banks' mentioned above), shrub roses, and miniature roses require less fertilizer.

If you grow roses in the desert, what tricks do you use to keep them happy?

By Scott Calhoun

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## Insect Pests

### *Aphids or Plant Lice*



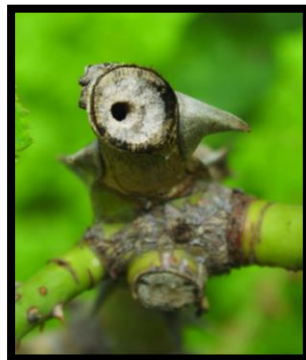
**Two kinds of aphids are common on roses.** One is large, green or pink, and attacks the growing tips and buds. Flower petals of infested buds are puckered, small and off-color, or the entire bud may turn brown without opening. The other aphid is smaller, green, and sucks the juices from the underside of the leaves and produces honeydew. A strong stream of cold water will wash aphids off the plants, or use of a systemic insecticide may be needed.

### *Two-spotted Spider Mite*



**This pest, called the two-spotted spider mite,** may damage rose foliage severely. Spider mites are very small and often cannot be seen without the aid of a magnifying glass. A yellow mottled pattern of the leaves may suggest spider mite injury. Frequent spraying of the plants with a strong stream of water will usually hold spider mites within satisfactory levels. However, chemicals may be needed to control heavy infestations.

### *Rose Cane Borers*



**Rose Cane Borers,** may infest rose bushes that are not vigorous. The bush may start to die back in spite of good soil, fertilizing, and watering. These pests are seldom serious when the bushes have been properly managed.

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## Insect Pests

### Thrips



Damaged Rose

**Thrips** often feed on unfolding buds, resulting in "blasting" of the flower. The outer petals of infested buds turn brown and die, preventing the flowers from expanding. Infestations appear to be heavier on partially shaded plants than those in full sun. Control is difficult, but chemicals can help.

Be sure to use a formulation of any chemical that is labeled for roses and for the insect you are trying to kill. Read the entire label carefully and follow directions as the label is the law.



Zephirine Drouhin Rose

Roses at a street market  
in San Francisco, CA

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## Diseases

**Powdery mildew** is perhaps the most prevalent disease on roses in New Mexico. Most climbing roses are especially susceptible. The disease attacks the young leaves, buds, and shoots of susceptible varieties, usually distorting their growth. The solution is to purchase resistant varieties, plant in full sun and with adequate air circulation. Dusting Sulfur can help, along with Neem Oil and horticultural products specifically recommended for roses. Also, remove any infested leaves or stems, bag and dispose of them to reduce spore inoculum and repeat infections. Remember to treat early as soon as the disease starts, because once it begins it is almost impossible to control if left to spread.



**Black Spot of Roses** is the most serious disease of roses and is caused by a fungus that infects the leaves causing them to turn black and yellow and fall off the plant. The disease is most prevalent during the hot, humid, rainy parts of the year and during hot humid days followed by cool nights. This disease reduces the vigor of the rose and could ultimately cause its death, not to mention, no roses to enjoy. To prevent, use resistant varieties and plant in a sunny well ventilated location. However, chemical applications may be necessary if you cannot provide the opposite conditions of hot, humid and a wet environment. Consult your local County Extension Agent, or local nursery for help in combating this disease.



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## Southwest Yard and Garden

### New Mexicans are the First Line of Defense in Preparing for Emerald Ash Borer Attack

#### Question:

I'm concerned about the threat of the Emerald Ash Borer in New Mexico. Should residents and cities be planting ash trees?

- *Concerned Citizen of Otero County via County Agriculture Agent, Sid Gordon*

#### Answer:

The first step in dealing with what looks to be an eminent invasion of emerald ash borer (EAB) in New Mexico is educating ourselves on how this pest works, what to look for, and how to report anything suspicious.

Since 2002, when EAB was first identified in Michigan, it has killed or harmed millions of ash trees in 27 states, including Colorado, Texas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma. Many experts believe New Mexico could be next on the list. Scarier still, it could already be here and just not have been identified yet.

The EAB is a pretty, metallic green, exotic beetle (Fig. 1) that may cause minor foliage damage while in its adult stage, but the larvae feed on inner bark of ash trees and are so aggressive that even healthy ash trees can die within two years. Another possibility is that the EAB larvae kill an ash tree slowly, taking for up to four years before symptoms are even noticeable. That information is from the Colorado State Forest Service, and they should know, the EAB was confirmed in Boulder, Colorado in 2013.

What can and should we do about the EAB risks in New Mexico?

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I checked with city parks experts from Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and Las Cruces about their EAB concerns and what we can do to help. I also interviewed NMSU Extension Agents from Bernalillo and Doña Ana Counties, six nursery owners and managers from all over the state, and several NMDA and NM State Forestry experts. Here's what they all agreed on:

- 1) Now is a good time to cut back on new ash plantings and consider removing ash trees that are not performing well because those are likely the most susceptible to hosting EAB. Take good care of existing ash trees with adequate irrigation and careful attention to possible EAB symptoms.
- 2) Ash trees have become too popular in our municipal as well as residential landscapes in New Mexico (and across the country), increasing vulnerability to EAB attack .
- 3) In order to diversify our tree populations, select native or adapted species that do well in your area .
- 4) Do not move firewood to or from another state – always buy local and burn it where you buy it. This rule is not just true because of EAB threats, other borers and pests can be hitchhikers too. As Tom Zegler, NM State Forestry Special Projects Forester says, “the emerald ash borer infestation in New Mexico is only one load of firewood away.”



*Figure 1. Adult emerald ash borers are shorter than a penny (photo public domain).*



*Figure 2. D-shaped holes where adult emerald ash borers exited the trunk (photo public domain).*



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[NMSU](#) Extension Entomologist and NMDA State Entomologist, Dr. Carol Sutherland, offers encouraging advice that can make an EAB scout out of all of us. “Keep looking,” she says, “and take samples and photos of anything different or unusual occurring on your ash trees. When EAB arrives, it will most likely be YOUR problem in YOUR ash trees, not someone else’s. [What](#) EAB confirmation takes is for an interested, involved citizen somewhere in New Mexico to pay close attention to his or her ash trees, starting again this spring when they should produce a full canopy of leaves. Photograph D-shaped emergence holes (Fig 2) in the ash tree’s bark, increasing die-back in the canopy, and any peeling bark. Photograph loose bark from above and especially on the underside if you see any broad, flattened, winding tunnels. Promptly submit these photos plus your contact information to one of our many professionals who are trained and ready to help with the next steps. Chances are, we’ll contact you for a field visit to collect more specimens for verification.”

These trained professionals can be found at NMSU County Extension Offices (find your county’s Extension Office at <http://aces.nmsu.edu/county/>), the NMSU Plant Diagnostic Clinic (<http://aces.nmsu.edu/ces/plantclinic/>), any of the six NM State Forestry District Offices, or other NM State Forestry Programs, including the Forest Health Program Office in Santa Fe. We are all taking the EAB threat seriously.

Dr. Sutherland adds, “Don’t expect to see actual Emerald Ash Borer beetles first and damage second. These beetles and evidence of their initial attacks are easily overlooked.”

Find info on how to identify an ash tree, lists of recommended trees for improved species diversification, and links to more EAB resources at <https://nmsudesertblooms.blogspot.com/>.

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Send gardening questions to Southwest Yard and Garden - Attn: Dr. Marisa Thompson at [desertblooms@nmsu.edu](mailto:desertblooms@nmsu.edu), or at the [Desert Blooms Facebook page](#) (@NMDesertBlooms)

Please copy your [County Extension Agent](#) and indicate your county of residence when you submit your question!

For more gardening information, visit the NMSU Extension Horticulture page at [Desert Blooms](#) and the NMSU Horticulture Publications page at <http://aces.nmsu.edu/pubs/h/>

*Marisa Y. Thompson, PhD, is the Extension Horticulture Specialist, in the Department of Extension Plant Sciences at the New Mexico State University Los Lunas Agricultural Science Center, office: 505- 865-7340, ext. 113.*



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## Master Gardener Meeting Notes/Upcoming Events

By: Rachel Gioannini

### Dona Ana County Extension Master Gardener Program

Jan. 10, 2018 Agenda

**Introduction and Welcome:** Called to order at 9:25am by Dot Wyckoff. Jeff is at an in-service for the University.

#### Committee/Project Reports

- a. **MG Hotline—Gail and David Ross.** David reminded us of the online site to record hours. Dot let us know that an idea is being considered of adding a requirement of 12 hours at the hotline for certified members, which can be accomplished by doing hotline once a quarter. Interns are still required to do 25 hours on the hotline in their first year.
- b. Luna County MG News—no reps.
- c. Community Gardens—Dixie reported on the Munson Garden, which has some winter crops growing. Getting busy soon for the spring planting.
- d. Other—nothing today.

#### Continuing/Old/News Business

- a. Graduation & Awards—Sat., Jan. 13, 2018 at MG offices. Set up at 10am on Saturday. Graduation 11am-1pm, clean up immediately following.
- b. Pistachio Conference—Fri., Feb. 2, Alamogordo. Flyer available. Registration is \$20, RSVP by 1/26. Otero County Extension Office.

**Next Meeting—February 14, 2018 at the Roadrunner Room, Branigan Library, 9:15-11:15 am.**

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- c. Chili Conference—Feb. 5 & 6, 2018. Asked to have a table to answer questions at the Welcome Reception. Signup sheet available.
- d. Las Cruces Home & Garden Show—Feb. 23-25, 2018 at the NM Farm and Ranch Heritage Museum. Tracy says they will help advertise our speakers this year. Will have 3 talks per day. Set up will be Friday, Feb. 23, 11am til done. Shifts available Sat. & Sun., Feb. 24 and 25, 9am-1pm and 1pm-5pm, close at 4pm Sun, then we must tear down. Don't yet know if our booth will be inside or outside.
- e. Pecan Conference—March 4-6, 2018. Pecan Fantasy on March 4. MG's only doing the Food Fantasy.
- f. High on the Desert Conference—March 15-17, 2018. Sierra Vista, AZ. Dot says it's fun and there is lots of hands-on workshops.
- g. 2018 NM MG Conference, Aug. 31-Sept. 2, 2018. Albuquerque Marriott Pyramid.
- h. New Book Club—January to June 2018. "Second Nature" by Michael Pollan.
- i. MG newsletter—Dot has them and will be sending them out via email.
- j. Other—Water Festival, April 19, 2018. Young Park.
  - i. Native Plant Society moving meetings to 4<sup>th</sup> Wed of every month at Good Sam in the multi-purpose room at 7pm. Attendance counts towards MG hours, according to Joan
  - ii. March 10<sup>th</sup>, 10am, Veterans Park. Women's Veteran's Monument dedication. 6 statues, 6 different branches of the service, 6 different eras in time. Deb says it's lovely and amazing.

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- iii. March 23-25, Bataan Death March. Half marathon, full marathon and full pack full marathon. Also looking for volunteers at signup, registration, and first aid tents. Check White Sands website. Had 7000 entries last year.
- iv. Garden news
- v. Wetlands Roundtable. City Hall, Tue., Jan. 23, 9am -4pm. Talk to Dael if interested.
- vi. Dael reports that the Utilities Garden is looking nice in it's winter state.

### Program—

Tomilee Turner, Video Producer from NMSU Media Productions. Joanne talked about having them video produce a video focusing some of our projects, such as the Water Festival in April, work at Munson Community Center, school Hydroponics systems, 4H contests and Kids, Kows and More, also in April. Discussion of other usages for the video. Need to schedule a meeting of the committee, then a representative meet with Tomilee and start forming the video. She suggests within the next two weeks or so, then ongoing meetings through the summer.

Also, Carrie Hamblen, CO and President of Las Cruces Green Chamber of Commerce. (Note to Program Coordinator: possible speaker, Diane Flanagan from the Girl Scouts.)

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