

“Orphan Plant Paradise” Pop-Up Garden Tour

Saturday, April 4, 2026

8am to 12pm

(address will be emailed to members on the Monday before the tour)



Edie purchased this property in 1997 and has turned it into a paradise for an extensive plant collection. The previous owners had allowed a “neigh”borhood horse arena with only seven old mesquite trees in residence. Plot is located at the lowest point in the neighborhood and situated in the Catalina Mtn cold air wash basin where winter temps are in the teens and summer highs are in the 120s. Since there was no stabilization, the land was mostly eroded and topsoil had been washed into the drainage ways over the years. Something had to be done to mitigate the extremes. First, small ditches were carved to funnel colder air and handle monsoon rains. A northern border fence was erected to block cold winds and slow cooling. The ground was landscaped/terraced to hold runoff in tiered areas. Loads of topsoil were recovered from the washes to the rear and side of the property.

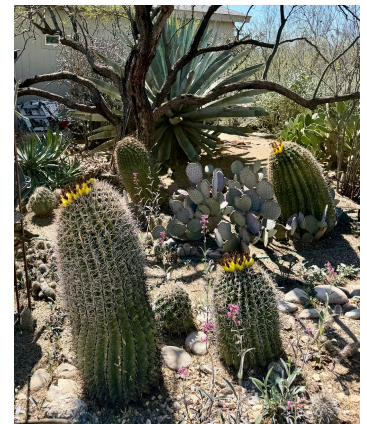
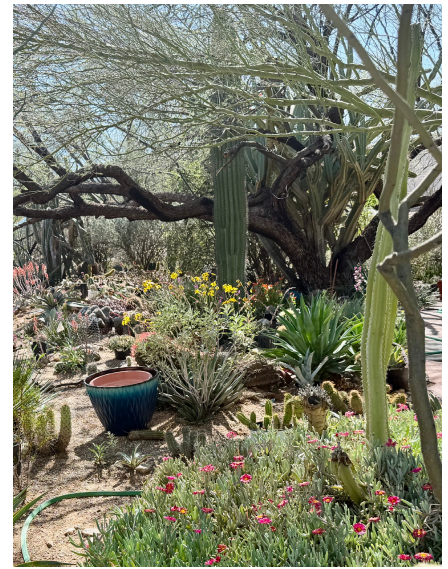


Ponds were constructed to capture water shed from the main dwelling rooftop and hold it for later use. Each level drained to the next when full. The ditches could be blocked off to flood the grounds. Appropriate drains have been converted to gray water. Trees were planted from seeds and pots to start shading the yard for future understory development. Frequent participation on the then new TCSS Rescue crew was the perfect opportunity to obtain native plants and begin the ‘nursery’ and ‘orphanage’.

I retired from the military (Navy—no water here) in 2002 to begin a landscaping business that would be supplied with plants from my own nursery here and at my parents’ house. I closed the business in 2023 so that I could deal with the loss of my parents and other concerns.

I now concentrate on saving any ‘desirable’ salvageable plants including TCSS Foster plants. Many plants grown here provide materials for local educational institutions/schools and public gardens upon request. We have National Wildlife Federation Habitat, Hummingbird Haven, Monarch Waystation Registry and participate in CoCoRaHS (weather monitoring/reporting—with two weather stations).

Our property is supplied with solar from a 4.5kW and 6kW systems, each allowing enough power to provide almost total off-grid capability. Solar heat pump mini splits provide summer and winter cooling/heating. We added battery storage this past winter to save electricity for future use. We have a wind turbine for supplemental battery ‘top off’ for the less than sunny days.



Our little oasis provides habitat for multitudes of wildlife, so come early and sit quietly, watch, listen and enjoy our corner of paradise. Thank you for attending.

-Tour is Handicap Accessible-