



## Dangers of an early spring

Outside of the first week in December when the temperatures plunged into the low 20's for 3-4 days our winter, if you can call it that, has been nothing short of spectacular. High's in the 60's and 70's and lows above freezing is the perfect weather especially if you have relatives in other parts of the country that you can brag to. However this becomes very dangerous to our plants who think that spring has come and they start to leaf out or bloom. This new and very sensitive growth can be hit very hard if another hard freeze comes in February. While our weather is really nice now we need to remember that our last day of frost comes in the middle of March and we have had frost and freezing as late as the end of April. Enjoy this dazzling weather but keep a close



and attentive eye on your landscape for new growth signs that might need protection if we get down around freezing during the next 4-6 weeks. Sensitive new growth will need to be covered with frost cloth or if possible brought under cover. If possible try and measure your temperature at your house, and do not rely on the local weather or worse yet Phoenix which is

5-10 degrees warmer. Certain areas around town have what we commonly call micro environments. These are pockets of land that colder air settles into quicker and also do not warm up as rapidly in the morning. If you

live in these areas or along the river you might need to watch your sensitive plants a little more. So to summarize the mild winter weather, enjoy it as much as possible, brag to anyone that will listen because they give us enough grief when its 120 degrees, and just keep an eye out for the late season cold storm that might damage all this new growth that our plants are shooting out.

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## Restoration of memories past

This past year we were fortunate to win a judges award (3rd place) at the Arizona Excellence in Landscaping Awards Program put on by the Arizona Landscape Contractors Association (ALCA). The award was for landscape redesign of a residential yard. This project allowed us to utilize some of the existing mature landscaping while bringing the

entire yard into one concept that flowed seamlessly throughout the property. While the concrete pavers and new areas of grass added that special feel to this yard it really was the flower gardens that brought this project to life. These are the special touches that allow us to take the landscapes at ordinary properties and create a paradise, which helps in turning a simple property into a retreat destination. For more information on this award visit the "About Us" tab, (Awards & Recognitions) on our website [Wickenburglandscape.com](http://Wickenburglandscape.com).

# Springtime citrus fertilizing

A question we commonly get is what and when is spring. Unfortunately our definitions of spring and the plants definition of spring don't line up most of the time. Spring is NOT a date on the calendar. I like to commonly call the start of spring 4-6 weeks after the last freeze. This is not an absolute but a good rule of thumb to go by. If we start to get temperatures in the 70's for a couple of weeks after being at or below freezing our citrus trees think great, it's time to go and off they go with busting out the new blooms for the season. The danger is a late freeze creates the opportunity to knock the sensitive blooms off the trees and remember no blooms no fruit. Here in Wickenburg we have developed a nice strategy of fertilizing that has brought us many good years of citrus. As spring approaches we watch the size of the blooms. As the average size of bloom over the entire tree gets to be about pea



sized we fertilize the first time. In several weeks the fertilizer has started to be absorbed and it "hardens" the bloom and make is more resistant to a freeze. This now starts our "citrus clock" for the year. After this first fertilizing we then fertilize every 8 weeks three additional times. This will help your trees develop not only good fruit this year but nice healthy leaves which will reflect the blooms the following year. If we do get that really hard freeze we are still going to need to cover our citrus with frost cloth and if necessary add some heat lights (discussed previously) to help protect the tree. Enjoy all the new fruit that you will get and remember that if you have extra fruit that you are unable to eat don't leave it all on the tree until late spring and then send it out to the needy. This is when everyone else does that. I would suggest pick some fruit today and take it down to a food bank or shelter. If you have anyone that you would like to ship citrus to come into our office for a free genuine citrus

bag. Remember that if you have extra fruit and you don't have the means to do anything with it Wickenburg Landscape will come and pick it for free and donate to different organizations including my school's garden class which will

use it to make citrus marmalade. Done correctly citrus will be an exciting addition to your yard and a great way to bring some of your landscape onto your dining room table.



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