

## EDIE'S "LIGHTHOUSE IN THE DESERT"

May 7th - Off of Catalina Highway

I have almost an acre, but only about half of it is tended. I started my garden project growing only native and rescued plants but soon found too many other interesting flora to stop there. Additionally I had issues with throwing green growing things away, so I "rescued" many plants from neighbors' yards, roadsides, trash dumpsters, Craig's List, and of course, TCSS. Duplicates of plants are planted at my Mom's home for redundancy in case of loss. I wanted to have a myriad of plants that grow in our climate, yet resemble some other areas of the country. I also wanted to raise fresh fruits and vegetables that are hard to come by here in AZ.



The front yard is mainly specimen cactus and succulents planted on three mounds of soil (tres lomas means 'three peaks' in Spanish), and other little 'mini' gardens. Most of my citrus bushes are in front. I call them bushes because our temps vary here from the low 'teens (11 degrees in 2011), to the upper 120s in the heat of summer and the foliage tends to dieback/freeze on top.



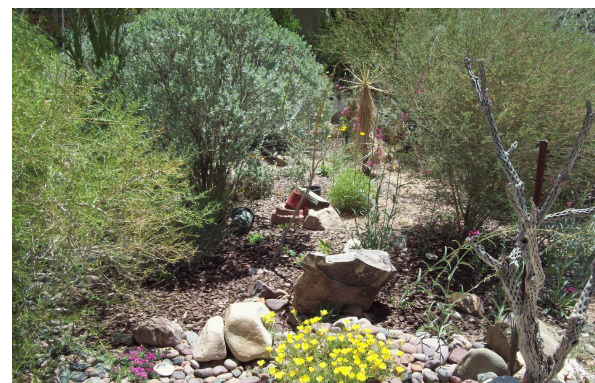
My first activity when I moved to AZ in 2002 was to plant a lot of trees for shade, cover, and winter protection since the day and night temps sometimes differed by over 50 degrees! My yard had historically been the neighborhood horse arena and corral, so not much would grow here.

My back yard houses the largest plants of my collection, as well as my biggest ponds and a growing area. It is accessed from a side gate. There is a gravel/dirt roadway to a huge garage toward the rear of the property. Side walkways come off the main drive and some pass over homemade ditches with wood slatted



bridges. I used to be the President of the Tucson Water Gardeners, so then I dug and incorporated two large ponds with native fish and several smaller ponds with specialty water plants and other fish.

I have sun gardens and shade gardens, as well as moister sections and drier areas to display my plant collection. There are more than 1500 plants to view varying in height from less than an inch high to over 15 feet tall. Some are native and others are very rare. My yard is a certified Wildlife Habitat and a Monarch butterfly way station. You will definitely see hummingbirds and other assorted native bird species. After our damp winter, there are loads of butterflies and lizards.



I am now recording a plant list for all the flora on my property and making garden markers with the Latin and common names for most of my collection. I hope to incorporate highlights of certain plants (like medicinal, herbal, edible, useful) into the landscape. You should be able to find plants from A to Z, inclusive on my plot. Good luck!