

What to do in the Southwest

August

BY SCOTT CALHOUN

Wild arugula

SUNSET CLIMATE

ZONES 1A-3B: Also known as wall rocket or *Diploaxis muralis*, this salad green has a clean, sharp, peppery taste that's distinctly different from regular arugula. Harvest young for best flavor. Order seeds from Territorial Seed Company (territorialseed.com).



GOLDEN HEAT LOVERS

ZONES 12, 13: The new hybrid bird of paradise *Caesalpinia* x 'Sierra Sun' is a small tree (it grows to 15 feet) that puts out impressive sprays of golden flowers from fall through spring. Or try bougainvillea 'Gold Rush' (above), which sports rich gold flower bracts.

TRY PALMS IN POTS

ZONES 12, 13: In large containers, combine smaller choices such as pindo palm (*Butia capitata*) or Mexican blue palm (*Brahea armata*) with colorful trailing annuals like chartreuse 'Limelight' and ebony 'Blackie' sweet potato vines.

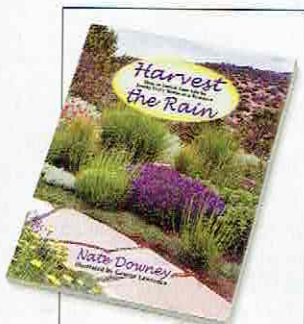
Zap weeds organically with Burn Out II from St. Gabriel Organics.

Trailing succulents

ZONES 12, 13: Grow ghost plant (*Graptopetalum paraguayense*, shown), donkey tail (*Sedum morganianum*), and string of pearls (*Senecio rowleyanus*). All are extra showy planted in hanging baskets or spilling over the lip of containers. Grow in shaded areas.

OLEANDERS To encourage dense growth without reducing height, prune out one-third of the branches at the plant's base. To reduce overall size and improve form, cut the entire plant back to 12 inches tall, then fertilize and water thoroughly.

RAINWATER BARREL Bushman Slimline Tanks are only 1½ or 2 feet wide, so you can store rainwater in a narrow side yard. The tanks come in four colors and sizes and hold up to 620 gallons. Find info at bushmanusa.com, and purchase locally.



SAVE YOUR RAIN

Check out *Harvest the Rain: How to Enrich Your Life by Seeing Every Storm as a Resource* (Sunstone Press, 2010; \$29) by Santa Fe permaculture guru Nate Downey (sfpermaculture.com). It's an approachable primer that teaches you easy ways to collect and save rain.



Colorful crops

Grow pretty purple pak choy (aka bok choy). Enjoy its color in the garden, since it turns green when cooked. Find seeds at The Cook's Garden (cooks-garden.com).

What zone are you?



CHOOSE PLANTS AND LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR ZONE: sunset.com/plantfinder

