



# Rose Lore



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Mary Van Vlack, Editor

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## MESA EAST VALLY ROSE SOCIETY JUNE 2019 MEETING!

Our next gathering will be June 13 beginning at 7 pm in Room 300 in the MCC Library.

Our presentation for the June meeting will be by Jim



**Heathcliff, a David Austin rose**

Anderson, who will be giving a talk about the David Austin garden in Abrington, as well as the Graham Thomas rose collection at Monttfont Abby. If you are a fan of David Austin or Old World roses, don't miss out!

## DUES ARE DUE TODAY

Annual membership dues for MEVRS are due now. An annual individual or family membership is \$25. Payments in cash or check can be made at our next meeting or mail your check to MEVRS/Membership, P.O.Box 40394, Mesa, AZ 85274-0394.

On your check or an included piece of paper please update your mailing address and email address for our records.



## JUNE IN THE ROSE GARDEN

By Mary Van Vlack,  
CR

What a glorious spring El Nino has brought us! We've enjoyed generous rains in the winter and early spring and even some later on in spring, while the cooler temperatures have remained with us much longer than usual. With our shade cloth in place, we have continued to see beautiful roses in our garden throughout May into early June. Veteran's Honor has especially been looking wonderful. But summer weather has arrived. We can only hope that maybe it won't get quite so hot or the summer last as long this year. Just remember, it is weather, not climate.

**Pay attention.** Most years, the afternoons of June and early July post the highest temperatures found in our valley throughout the summer and, for that matter, some of the lowest relative humidity levels. June is not necessarily the most miserable month for people, but it certainly can be for our gardens. Walk through your garden regularly. Go out early in the morning, even before breakfast, when temperatures are at their coolest. Watch for signs of water problems, too little or too much. Watch for spider mites and for beneficial insects. If you see any pretty (though small) flowers opening up, cut and bring them into the house where they will last a bit longer.

**Water, water, water.** Continue to be generous with the water. Roses growing in containers may need water daily, so if you plan to be away from home for long trips you should consider installing drip tubing, emitters and a timer clock. They are at least as reliable as people we may hire or impose upon to do the job, and if something goes amiss, there is nobody to blame. Roses in the ground need only be watered three to four times a week, but water deeply when you do water, allowing penetration to at least

Unidentified pink rose found under the palm canopy in Tozeur,



Tunisia – photo by Mary Van Vlack

10 - 12 inches. It may be necessary to water twice on the days you do water to get that penetration without run-off. From now until the summer monsoon, we will receive very little, if any, rain so the roses are counting on you to provide what they need.

**Apply mulch.** If you have not already, apply a fresh layer of mulch in the spring now. Quit putting it off and just do it. Do not use rocks or those rubber crumbs. Apply a 3-4 inch layer of organic mulch – forest bark, weed-free horse manure, alfalfa pellets, and compost are all excellent choices. Mulch will discourage weeds, shade the roots of the roses, and conserve moisture in your soil. This is an excellent gardening practice for the heat characteristic of our climate. Remove any weeds growing amongst your roses – they compete for water and nutrients while adding nothing beneficial to your garden.

**Deadhead your roses.** Summer deadheading is a bit different from the deadheading we do the rest of the year. Your goals are 1) to preserve as much foliage as possible, 2) to keep your garden clean and tidy, and 3) to discourage your roses from blooming heavily in the heat, which is a waste of plant energy only to produce poor-quality flowers. In our heat the summer flowers are very small, sometimes off-color, and very short-lived, but still cost the plant considerable energy to produce. Some folks feel it's too hot to work outdoors much anyway, so they just quit deadheading. This

does accomplish the first and third goals but not the second. In addition, some varieties, though not all, will then work hard to produce hips with seeds inside them, and this also requires a great deal of plant energy. Another strategy is to cut off the spent flowers only, leaving all the foliage. Either way, the roses will still produce some flowers, but not as many as if you had continued to cut back to the outward-facing five-part leaf.



*Iceberg* (foreground), Scottsdale Public Rose Garden  
- photo by Carole Holkenbrink

**Fertilize.** Some rosarians do not fertilize at all in the summer, arguing that the nitrogen is not available above 90° and fertilizing only pushes non-productive growth. Heavy summer watering will leach away nutrients, so some fertilization is necessary, just not very much at a time. For my roses in the ground I will feed an inorganic “complete” solid fertilizer that releases slowly, such as Arizona Best Rose Food or Organo Rose Food, but I will apply it at half strength about every 6 weeks. Roses in containers lose their nutrients even more rapidly as we water them daily, so I will give them a tablespoon of the granules every 3-4 weeks. Other people prefer an organic-based fertilizer, and some like Osmocote slow-release product. Be sure that you are applying the micro-nutrients such as iron and sulfur, as well as nitrogen, potassium, and potash. Water your roses well the day before you fertilize, and then water your product in thoroughly. This is extremely important – the salts in fertilizer can easily burn your plants.

**Control pests and disease.** The primary pest on roses in the summer months is spider mites, and these tiny guys can be a serious summer problem for roses, killing the leaves they colonize and defoliating the plant. When the leaf surfaces appear dull or pale, the undersides of the leaves feel sandy or rough, and fine webbing appears on the leaves, the likely cause is spider mites. Spider mites are more closely related to spiders and scorpions than insects and will not respond to insecticides such as Orthene or Merit. The first treatment and prevention is to spray the underside of each plant with a very strong stream of water every morning or at least every two days. If the infestation becomes severe, it must be treated with a miticide such as Avid or Floramite according to the product directions. Usually, more than one application is needed to control the problem. Mites can become resistant to Avid, another reason why pesticides should not be used casually, but only as a last resort.

Cutter bees are also very active in our gardens in the summer, but no attempt should be made to control them. These small gray bees (no, not those big black ones) scissor out little circles of leaf, preferring the matte surface, thinner leaves to the glossy, heavy ones; they also have a fondness for bougainvillea bracts. They lay an egg in the center of each circle and then roll it up like a tiny green (or pink) cigar. These are tucked into tiny, protected crevices around our homes. I’m not sure whether the new hatchling eats the rolled leaf, but the adult bees do not. Bees are beneficial in our gardens, and while we don’t like being stung by honey bees or having our rose bushes cut up, it would be irresponsible to spray for them.

**Planting.** If you can avoid it, do not plant or transplant roses now.

*The author may be reached with questions or comments at [marywvv@gmail.com](mailto:marywvv@gmail.com)*

## CALENDAR

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION	CONTACTS
June 1	Deadline for entries in the ARS 2020 Wall Calendar Competition	ARS	<a href="https://www.rose.org/contest">https://www.rose.org/contest</a>
June 30	Deadline for ARS High School Photography	ARS	<a href="https://www.rose.org/contest">https://www.rose.org/contest</a>
Oct 4-6	Mini-Miniflora Conference and Show	Nashville, TN	Richard Anthony <a href="mailto:RJA4CPR@aol.com">mailto:RJA4CPR@aol.com</a>
Nov 5	Deadline for ARS American Rose Digital Photography Competition	ARS	<a href="https://www.rose.org/contest">https://www.rose.org/contest</a>
June 2020	ARS 2020 National Convention and Rose Show	Hotel Elegante, Colorado Springs, CO	Diana Kilmer 1-951-834-2330 <a href="mailto:Originalsbydiana42@verizon.net">mailto:Originalsbydiana42@verizon.net</a>