



# Herb Gardening in the Sonoran Desert

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- Owner of Southwest Victory Gardens
- Pima County Certified Master Gardener
- SmartScape Certified
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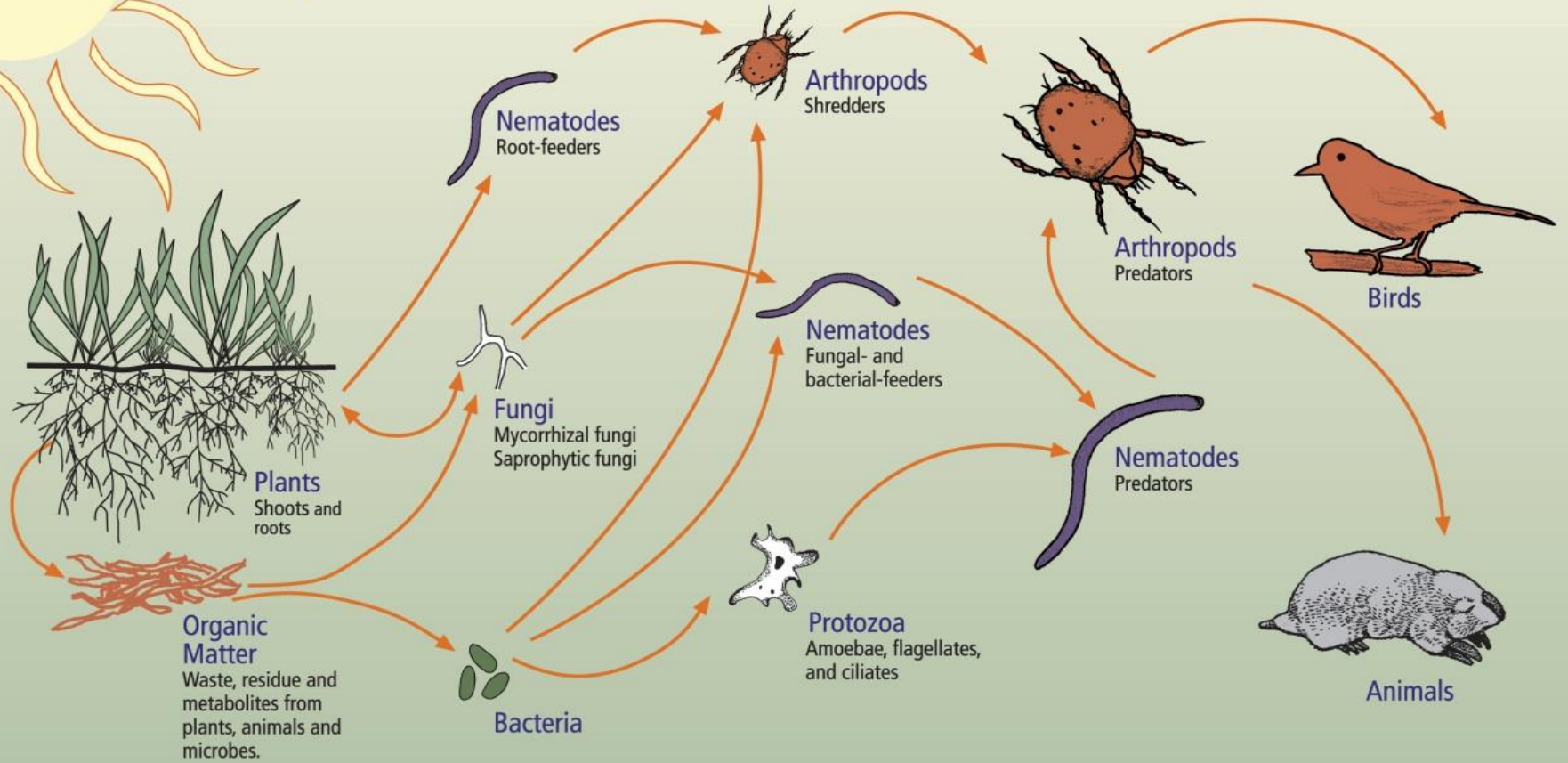


# Our Philosophy

- Healthy soil encourages healthy plants
- Healthy plants require fewer pesticides and fertilizers (inputs)
- Limit external inputs
- Reduce water usage
- Garden with our climate not against it
- Encourage a natural ecosystem



# The Soil Food Web



**First trophic level:**  
Photosynthesizers

**Second trophic level:**  
Decomposers  
Mutualists  
Pathogens, Parasites  
Root-feeders

**Third trophic level:**  
Shredders  
Predators  
Grazers

**Fourth trophic level:**  
Higher level predators

**Fifth and higher trophic levels:**  
Higher level predators

# What is an Herb?

- Any Plant used for Flavoring, Food, Medicine, or Perfume.
- Herbs: Leaves & Flowers
- Spices: Seed, Bark, Root



# Growing Habits of Herbs



- Annual Herbs: Live Only One Season
- Biennial: Live Two Seasons
- Perennial: Live Longer than Two Seasons

# The Mint Family

- Typically Perennial
- Grow well from Seedling Transplants
- From Dry, Rocky Mediterranean Scrubland
- Like well Draining Soil
- Readily Hybridize in the Wild



# Basil



- Summer Annual
- Loves the Heat
- Grow from Seed or Transplant
- Italian, Lemon, Thai, Tulsi



# Lavender

- Used in Soaps and Candles
- Difficult to Grow
- Likes Infrequent Watering
- Goodwin Creek



# Lemon Balm or Bee Balm



- Nice Citrus Notes
- Goes Well with Fruit.

# Marjoram

- Related to Oregano
- Mild Floral Flavor
- Works Well with Traditional Herbs



# Mint



- Native to Damp Areas
- Plant Separately
- Propagates Easily
- Spearmint, Peppermint most Common
- Many Flavors

# Oregano

- Spreading Herb
- Plant Separately
- Greek and Italian
- Many Flavors
- Divide Occasionally
- “Mexican” Oregano is actually a Verbena



# Rosemary



- Upright and Trailing Types
- Drought Tolerant
- Easiest to Grow

# Sage

- Latin word for “health”
- Largest Genus in Mint Family (Salvia)
- Grows from seed or transplant
- Purple and Variegated Varieties Available



# Thyme



- Slow Grower
- Many Types
- Common or “English”  
Thyme is Standard.
- Divide Occasionally
-



# Other Mint Family Herbs

- Bergamot
- Horehound
- Hyssop
- Perilla (Shiso)
- Savory



# Carrot Family Herbs



- From Milder Climates
- Tend to be Cool Season Biennial or Annual
- Grow well From Seed
- Can be Used as Herb, Spice, or Vegetable
- Excellent Companion Plants

# Celery

- Grown for Leaves and Ribs or Stalks
- More Leafy in our Climate
- Mirepoix Staple



# Cilantro



- World's Most Consumed Herb
- Grow "Slow Bolting" Types
- Harvest Seed as Corriander

# Dill

- Great Butterfly Attractor
- “Mammoth” Type does Well
- Taste of Pickles
- Goes Well with Fish



# Fennel



- Leaves used as Herb
- Stalk Used as a Vegetable
- Can Live Several Years
- Delicious Seed

# Parsley

- Flat Leaf (Italian) Grows Well
- Curly Leaf (Hungarian) also good.
- Used Extensively in European Cooking
- Harvest Flat Leaf when Young and Curly when Mature.



# Other Carrot Family Plants



- Angelica
- Chervil
- Culantro
- Lovage
- Mitusba



# Laurel Family

- Avocado Leaf
- Bay Laurel
- California Bay
- Sassafras or File



# Other Common Herbs



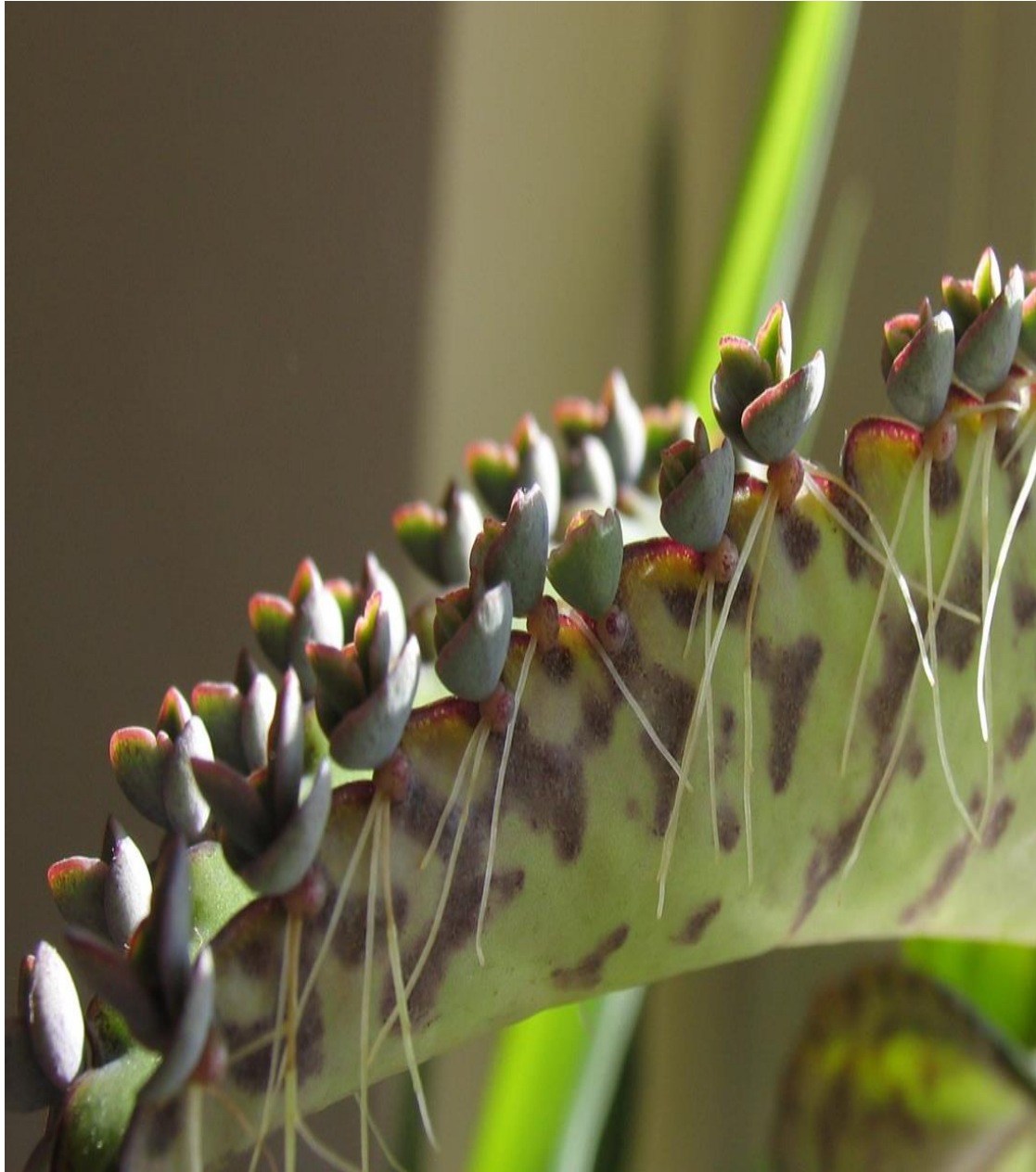
- Borage
- Epazote
- Lemongrass
- Lemon Verbena
- Nasturtium
- Tarragon

# How to Plants Reproduce

- Sexual Propagation
- Asexual Propagation



# Vegetative Propagation



- Layering
- Division
- Bulbs and Corms
- Rhizomes & Stolons
- Grafting
- Cuttings

# Advantages

- Cloning
- Head Start
- Bigger, Stronger, Faster



# Division



- Perennial Plants
- Divide Every Few Years
- Mint, Oregano, Thyme,

# Cuttings

- Stem of Mother Plant that Forms Roots When Cut
  - Versatile
  - Low Success Rate
  - Easy!



# What are Cuttings



- Section of Stem, Leaf, or Root
- Forms New Roots
- Eventually new Shoots



# Why Cuttings Work

- Adventitious Roots
- Latent Roots
- “De Novo” Roots



# Cuttings from Herbs



- Most herbs can be propagated from cuttings
- Rosemary, Sage, Lavender, Geranium, Marjoram, Lemon Verbena, and More!

# Some Cutting Tips



- Prep Materials Beforehand
- Be Clean
- Select Appropriate Varieties
- Take Hardwood Cuttings in Winter

# More Cutting Tips

- Use Rooting Hormone
- Keep Humid
- Maintain Moisture
- Trim Leaves
- Keep Constant



# Preparing a Stem Cutting

- Take Hardwood Cuttings when Dormant
- Remove Leaves from Evergreen Cuttings
- Thickness of a Pencil
- Pay Attention to Direction of Stem



# Growing Medium

- Must Support Root Growth
- Not Hold too Much Moisture
- Nutrients not Important
- 50% Coco Chips and Fiber
- 50% Perlite



# Maintaining Cuttings



- Oxygen Exchange Important
- Low Light Ok
- Keep Warm
- Maintain Humidity

# Moisture

- Use Cover or Create Humidity Chamber
- Mist Daily
- Gas Exchange Important





# Hardening Off



- Gradually Decrease Misting
- Transfer to Potting Soil
- Move Outdoors

# Resources

- Tanks Green Stuff
- EcoGro
- Reading List
- Gardening Clubs
- Local Businesses
- Friends and Family





Thank you!

[www.southwestvictorygardens.com/Documents](http://www.southwestvictorygardens.com/Documents)

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