



Library garden

Looking for landscaping inspiration? Check out the Glendale Main Library, located just minutes northwest of downtown Phoenix. The building is surrounded by the Glendale Xeriscape Botanical Garden. Cardon, organpipe, and saguaro cactus, as well as golden brittlebush and scarlet chuparosa, fill the Sonoran Foothills planting pictured here. The garden is open daily during library hours; borrow an audio wand (free) for a self-guided, one-hour tour.

The garden began in 1990 when the Glendale Water Conservation Office removed a Bermuda grass lawn at the library's entrance. Today the garden showcases 400 species of desert-adapted plants (most are labeled).

In the library lobby, pick up a copy of *Tales from the Garden*, a 40-page booklet with descriptions and photos of plants suited for desert landscapes, or visit www.glendaleaz.com/waterconservation to download the booklet. The Glendale Main Library is open daily (5959 W. Brown St.; 623/930-3530). For Xeriscape details, call the Glendale Water Conservation Office (623/930-3596). —CATHY CROMELL



Hazy pink muhly grass and gold lantana play off rosy pink flagstones.

Color solution

When faced with a landscaping problem that's costly to correct,

try thinking of the irritant as an asset instead. That's how landscape architect Chad Robert approached the remodeling challenge he found in Georgia and Benny Barnes's backyard in Paradise Valley, Arizona. In this case, the problem was the prominent but not very attractive wood fence enclosing the property. Rather than removing the fence, Robert painted it light blue.

The soft tone of the fence reflects that of the sky, giving the garden an airy feeling, Georgia says. In fall, sprays of rosy pink muhly grass (*Muhlenbergia capillaris* 'Regal Mist') and gold lantana look especially pretty against the fence. The cool blue backdrop also complements the rosy sandstone terrace. —S.C.

DESIGN: Exteriors by Chad Robert, Phoenix (602/252-6775)



Cilantro

Although cilantro (*Coriandrum sativum*) can stand up to the hottest chiles in salsa, this pungent herb folds in hot weather, shutting down leaf production and going to seed. That's why you grow this annual as a cool-season crop. In mild-winter areas of the Southwest (Sunset climate zones 12 and 13), cilantro can be grown outdoors all winter.

You can set out nursery transplants, but for best results, sow seeds. Try a heat-tolerant variety, such as 'Slow Bolt', in

October in containers or in a garden location that receives partial shade.

In colder areas (zones 10 and 11), you'll need to protect cilantro from frost or grow it indoors on a sunny windowsill.

Once plants reach 6 inches tall, harvest leaves. Dry the seeds and grind them into powder for use in cooking. Too little trimming, temperatures above 80°, or too much direct sun will cause cilantro to bolt (go to seed). Organic seed is sold by *Seeds of Change* (www.seedsofchange.com or 888/762-7333). —LEANNE POTTS

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: NORKA PLATT; THARLINE MOORE; THOMAS J. STORY