

PAUL & JORDAN
“Starting Anew in Blenman-Elm”
April 13, 2024 from 8am to 12pm



We moved into this 1948 home in 2020. The landscape was mostly non-native plants including a large oleander hedge. The backyard was completely paved with layers of bricks and concrete which we removed with the help of machines and dump trucks. Yards and yards of old irrigation pipes also had to be removed.



We decided early on to only plant Sonoran Desert plants because we wanted to create a habitat that would be welcoming to the local fauna. It's great that Tucson has such excellent resources such as Desert Survivors Native Plant Nursery, Tucson Audubon Society, the Watershed Management Group and the inspiring and valuable book “Rainwater Harvesting for Drylands and Beyond”. Together with the TCSS rescue sales, we've found all the support we have needed to create our Sonoran Desert habitat.

This May the garden will be starting its third year. Most of the plants planted early on have become established. We are continually adding more plants and sowing seed. Most of the plantings are watered by hand or an oscillating sprinkler. It takes a while, but we expect to be able to water less this year as plants grow deeper roots and become established. The garden may need occasional supplemental watering if I notice things having a hard time during extended dry periods, but we're hopeful that what we've planted can survive on annual rainfall.



Almost all of the TCSS rescued plants have done well. We now have 6 fairly young saguaros. Hopefully future owners will appreciate them and they will grow arms and live to an old age. We had little success with wildflower seeds the first two springs, possibly due to the use of germination inhibiting herbicides by previous owners, but this year more seeds are germinating and will hopefully continue to multiply.

We still have lots of work to do. The garden is a work in progress. The area around the pool is still as we found it in 2020, but we will be redoing that next. We are thinking maybe less pool and more desert plants, of course. Stay tuned.



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