

PEBBLECREEK POST ARTICLE – MAY 2026



It's that time of year when our part-time residents are migrating to cooler places, and our full-time residents are settling into their summer schedules. As you rush past your garden in the early morning on your way to your daily activities, stop and take a look. Do you wish you had more color in your space? It's not too late.

Here are two heat-loving annuals that can be planted almost any time of year in our climate:

- **Sunflowers** – LOVE the heat and they can be planted from seed year-round. If you get a multi-branching variety, they can shade surrounding plants and help them survive the summer. If you can plant them on the west side of heat sensitive plants, that is ideal. But no matter what, you will provide other plants relief from the scorching sun. In the fall, chop them down and leave the roots in the ground to compost. Everybody wins. Cheerful color for you, shade for other plants, pollen for the bees, and healthy amendments for your soil.

Sunflowers come in many colors and sizes. A few common, multi-branching sunflowers are Lemon Queen, Autumn Beauty, Rouge Royal (Moulin Rouge), Gold Rush, Ring of Fire, and Apricot Daisy. Though not a true sunflower, Mexican Sunflower are extremely easy to grow and grow FAST and BIG; a popular variety is Red Torch Mexican Sunflower.

- **Zinnias** – plant starts are commonly available in garden centers, but growing from seed may give you more variety and possibly healthier plants. As things heat up, it can be difficult for garden centers to keep their plants watered and healthy. Zinnia come in every imaginable color, size, and shape. They will bloom through summer, fall, and possibly into the winter.

To get you started with some easy summer color:

Seeds: the internet and local garden centers are good places for ideas. If you prefer to shop online, the following seed company websites have a good variety: EdenBrothers.com; FloretFlowers.com; SelectSeeds.com; ParkSeed.com.

Plant stakes and string: Not always needed, but Sunflowers and taller Zinnia might appreciate a little support as they grow tall. The internet and garden centers will have plenty of options.

TIP- your seeds will stand a better chance of survival if you give them a little help:

- Put a small piece of garden burlap over the soil to help retain moisture and germination.
- Use a mesh garbage can to protect seedlings from birds, until you see at least three inches of growth.



Pebble Creek Garden Club

Our mission is to expand interest in gardening for all skill levels, increase knowledge of growing in the desert to improve our environment, participate in social activities and give back to our community.

Please visit our website at pcgardenclub.org