

## Healing in Gratitude - By Stan Southwick



This Thanksgiving season with a worldwide pandemic, civil unrest, political bickering, economic stress, and whatever personal challenges you are experiencing you may be wondering if there is anything to be thankful for. We can sometimes be dragged down by the headlines and circumstances going on around us. The more we dwell on the negative, the worse our situation appears to be. Like a chameleon adapts its skin color to its surroundings, we start to feel as bad as we perceive our surroundings to be.

It is my experience that we can always find something good in every situation. Look on the bright side, be positive, chin-up, are phrases that if dwelt on, help us feel better. This Thanksgiving I made a special effort to ponder on the many things that I am thankful for. I got off to a bit of a slow start, but as I really thought about my blessings, I started adding to my list rapidly. I reached out to many people around me and expressed my gratitude to them. I felt healing to my body and soul as I expressed gratitude.

Take some time this holiday season to count your blessings and express gratitude. A smile will come to your face, peace will come to your mind and life will be much better.

“Thankfulness is the beginning of gratitude. Gratitude is the completion of thankfulness. Thankfulness may consist merely of words. Gratitude is shown in acts.”

Henri Frederic Amiel

## Favorite Flora:

### Cotoneaster lacteus - By Jon Marenfeld



This month's favorite flora is a good all-around evergreen shrub that needs little maintenance and adds visual interest in late fall and into the winter. Cotoneaster lacteus also known as Cotoneaster parneyi is native to China and northern India. Commonly known as Red Clusterberry this shrub is ideal for hedging due to its rounded and arching form. Its evergreen leaves are dark green on top and tan or whitish-green underneath and left unpruned it can reach 6-8 feet tall and 6-12 feet wide. In mid to late summer it has small white flowers that are followed by red berries that persist all winter. The flowers and berries will attract birds and butterflies. In winter the leaves

will turn a deep purple color that offers a nice contrast to the red berries.

Cotoneaster lacteus is easy to grow. Plant it in full sun or shade. It can handle heat, wind, smog, and poor soils but will perform best when planted in rich, well drained soils. It is commonly severely over-pruned which will affect its ability to bloom and bear fruits but if the goal is a formal hedge just don't expect the flowers and berries. Over pruning also ruins its natural form. Once established it has medium to low water needs and like all non-native plants here in the Mojave it could use some extra deep watering during the hottest parts of summer. Plant with other woodland-feel plants such as pine and oaks and other leafy evergreen shrubs.



Aspen tree fall colors  
Arizona Snowbowl  
Jon Marenfeld