

# Dig In!

Canyon County Extension Horticulture News for Master Gardener & Friends

Spring/Summer 2012 Volume V Issue 1 [www.uidaho.edu/extension/canyon](http://www.uidaho.edu/extension/canyon)

## Springing Forward

Weather watchers wonder...

BY ARIEL AGENBROAD



The National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reported that this March was the warmest March on record in the contiguous United States. In addition, the January through March period of

2012 was the warmest first quarter of the year on record. Records date back to 1895 in both cases.

What does this mean for gardeners?

Many shrubs, fruit trees and flowers are blooming or leafing out ahead of schedule. The valley is awash in beautiful color and scent, but if we get a late frost, some young branches, blossoms or newly-formed fruits could be damaged.

Insect growth and reproduction are driven by temperature, so our warmer spring will likely mean earlier encounters with pests. Start scouting for bugs and damage now. Be sure to correctly identify pests before taking appropriate action; beneficial bugs will be out early, too.

In many parts of Canyon County, irrigation is on and we've been using it. But resist the urge to water every day: switch now to a deep soaking only once or twice a week (depending on your soil), less in cool weather. Hold off when rain is predicted. Soggy conditions are deadly to trees and berries. Deep, infrequent watering will actually prepare



Peach trees in full bloom and attracting bees on April 13 at the University of Idaho Parma Research and Extension Center.

plants to better withstand the hot summer temperatures likely to follow this record-breaking spring.

Consider installing a drip irrigation and timer system! Drip produces healthier plants, fewer weeds, and saves water, money and time.

Weeds have also appreciated the warm spring and moisture. Hoe or hand-pull weeds when they are small and cover any bare ground with mulch. Don't give them a chance to grow!

Enjoy the early spring, but like all good gardeners, be prepared for Mother Nature to throw us a few surprises this summer!

*Extension Educator Ariel Agenbroad provides horticulture and small farms education and outreach for Canyon County and the surrounding region. Email her at [ariel@uidaho.edu](mailto:ariel@uidaho.edu)*

# Fruit Pests Bugging You?

Timing is everything when it comes to managing fruit tree pests

STORY BY ARIEL AGENBROAD

No one likes a wormy apple. Or wormy cherries. But almost every home fruit grower has had them.

How to keep them out? There is no one single approach guaranteed to prevent all cases, but observation, timing, and the right products can give you a fighting chance.

**Codling Moth:** this is the “apple worm.” Adults are active in early spring, mating and laying eggs on tiny fruit. Eggs hatch, caterpillars start eating, and there you have it. Wormy apples. The trick is to time your actions to that narrow window between spring moth emergence and egg laying! This occurs roughly three to four weeks after the tree blooms, or 10 days or so after the blossoms fall. Whether you choose to spray (carbaryl, malathion, acetamiprid and spinosad are all approved), bag your fruit (directions at [homeorchard.ucdavis.edu](http://homeorchard.ucdavis.edu)) or remove the first fruits that show damage, this is the time to do it.

Understandably, many gardeners want to avoid sprays. Spraying first, at the right time, can reduce the need for further applications. Just be sure to spray at a time of day when bees are out of the picture.

**Western Cherry Fruit Fly:** the “cherry worm.” There is some evidence that choosing to plant early-maturing varieties can help you escape infestation,



**Codling moth larvae** cause damage to apples, inside and out. Photos: Ken Gray collection at Oregon State University

but if you have an existing tree, that’s not an option! The best thing to do is know when you have the pest in your orchard. Yellow sticky traps hung in the trees can tell when the fly has arrived.

Spray fruit with carbaryl, malathion, acetamiprid, spinosad or kaolin clay at 10-21 day intervals, depending on the product use, until harvest. It is very important to read and follow all label instructions when using any pesticide, organic or conventional.

Home gardeners can also benefit from a pest alert system designed for commercial orchardists. Extension faculty set and monitor traps and send out alerts via email when pests are detected. Sign up for free at [www.TVpestalert.net](http://www.TVpestalert.net).

**When using any pesticide, read the label carefully.**



**Adult Western Cherry Fruit Fly** will be attracted to yellow sticky traps hung in your tree mid-May.

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# Most Unwanted

## Noxious weeds to know and loathe

STORY BY CATHY FORD, U-IDAHO MASTER GARDENER

Idaho has 64 different species of weeds which are designated noxious by state law. Here are a few to know and control:

### Hoary Cress (White top): *Cardaria draba*



- Native to western Asia and eastern Europe and was introduced by contaminated seeds in the early 1900s.
- A perennial that flowers from early to late spring and grows up to 2 feet tall.
- Plant produces flat dense, 4-petaled white flower clusters. Lower leaves are lanceolate and have a blue to green color; upper leaves clasp the stem with 2 lobes.
- Plants usually die back to the roots and resprout the following spring.

#### Cultural and Mechanical Controls

- Small infestations can be controlled by digging and completely removing the plant, including the roots, within a few days after emergence. This must be continued until no new seedlings emerge, at least 4 to 6 years or more.
- Do not till or mow an established plant stand. This stimulates the rhizomes to grow new plant.
- Moderate grazing by sheep or goats in the rosette stage provides some control by lowering hoary cress density and preventing flowering early in season.
- Planting competitive legumes such as alfalfa or clover or legume species can reduce an infestation.

#### Chemical Control

- Chemical treatments can be effective but prevention

and containment are very important..

- 2,4-D, dicamba, triclopyr and several other broadleaf herbicides are listed for this weed. Use repeated applications coupled with efforts to grow competitive vegetation. A long-term effort over many years is required to have any effect on an infestation. Missing even 1 year of control severely reduces the effectiveness of years of control efforts.

### Puncturevine (Goathead): *Tribulus terrestris*



- Native to warm temperate and tropical regions in southern Europe, southern Asia, Africa, and Australia, this weed thrives in desert climates and poor soil.
- Grows as a summer annual in colder climates.
- The stems radiate from the crown to a diameter over 3 feet; often branching.

#### Cultural and Mechanical Controls

In smaller areas puncturevine is best controlled with manual removal using a hoe to cut the plant off at its taproot. This requires monitoring the area and removing the weed throughout spring and early summer in many temperate areas. Provide competition from favorable plants. Aerate compacted sites and plant competitive desirable plants including grasses.

#### Chemical Controls

Chemical control is generally recommended for home control of puncture vine. There are few pre-emergent herbicides that are effective. Products containing oryzalin, benfluralin, or trifluralin will provide partial control of germinating seeds. These must be applied prior to germination (late winter to mid-spring).

After plants have emerged from the soil (products containing 2,4-D, glyphosate and dicamba are effective on puncture vine. Glyphosate will kill or injure most plants so it should be used carefully.

**When using any pesticide, read the label carefully and follow directions exactly as they are stated.**

## CALENDAR

### May

**7 Master Gardener Volunteer Plant Clinics** begin at the Extension office in Caldwell. Stop by or call Mondays and Wednesdays from 1 pm—4 pm or Fridays from 9 am—12.

**10 Work Smarter, Not Harder in Your Garden and Landscape:** Nampa Recreation Center, 6-8 pm. Call Nampa Rec. to register. \$10.

**17 Parma Family Gardening Night** presented by Canyon County Master Gardeners. Old Ft. Boise Park, 6-8 pm. Free.

### June

**14-15 Our 4-H Junior Master Gardener Kids Summer Day Camp,** Nampa. Call our office to enroll.

### July

**12 Lawn, Landscape and Garden "CSI"**. Nampa Recreation Center, 6-8 pm. Call Nampa Rec. to register. \$10.

**14-15** Come visit the Master Gardener booth at the **Lakeside Lavender Festival** in Nampa!

**19 Lawn, Landscape and Garden "CSI"**. Caldwell Extension Office, 6-8 pm. Call Caldwell Parks and Rec. to register.

**23-24 Idaho Farm to School Conference**, Boise. Teachers, leaders, and child-care workers welcome. Call us for more info.

**26-29 Canyon County Fair & Festival**, Caldwell

### August

**14 Herbal How-to.** Nampa Recreation Center, 9-11 am. Call Nampa Rec. to register. \$15.

## Local Plant Sales: great plants and good causes

This time of year, Master Gardeners and friends sell plants to fund education and charity work



**The Boy Scout Troop 255 Plant Sale** will be held on May 12 from 8-4 in front of the Middleton United Methodist Church, right on Highway 44 in Middleton. Master Gardener Mary will have a huge variety of vegetables, and lots of annual and perennial flowers and herbs. Contact Mary Van De Bogart, 585-2741 for more information.

**The Nampa FFA Greenhouse** will be open weekdays from 1 to 5 and Saturdays 10 to 1 through the month of May. It is located in the back of Columbia High School, next to the Pro Tech Building. Plant lists are available at [www.nsd131.org/protech](http://www.nsd131.org/protech).

**Owyhee Garden Club:** May 11-12, 9 am to 2 pm. Marsing High School Greenhouse, Marsing.

**Ada County Master Gardeners**, May 12, 10 am to 1 pm. University of Idaho Extension in Ada County, Glenwood Ave., Boise.

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**Fruit News:** Our own Dr. Essie Fallahi, University of Idaho Pomologist at the Parma Research and Extension Center, just received the 2012 American Society for Horticultural Science Outstanding [International Horticulturist Award](#) for his work improving fruit production around the globe. Congratulations, Essie! Stay tuned for details about this year's **Fruit Field Day** in Parma...slated for late August!



# Canyon County MASTER GARDENERS

**The Idaho Master Gardener Program** gives gardeners an opportunity not only to improve their horticultural knowledge and skills but also serve their communities. Congratulations to our 26 new MGs this year!

## Project Highlights

### PLANT CLINICS

Master Gardener Volunteers will be staffing free Plant Clinics at the Canyon County Extension Office now through September:

**Mondays: 1 pm—4 pm**

**Wednesdays: 1 pm—4 pm**

**Fridays: 9 am—12 pm**

### COMMUNITY GARDENS

Master Gardener Volunteers are active in promoting, creating, and supporting community gardens in the area. Call us to find out more.

### DEMONSTRATION GARDENS AND CIVIC BEAUTIFICATION

In Nampa, we are rehabilitating our raised boxes at West Park: look forward to more herbs, bulbs, and native plants. Our Caldwell garden, created by volunteers behind our office is filled with beautiful blooming xeric plants.

This spring, Master Gardener Volunteers have helped clean up the Rose Garden at Luby Park in Caldwell and prune roses at our University of Idaho Research and Extension Center in Parma (see photo below).

### JUNIOR MASTER GARDENER

We're reaching hundreds of kids and introducing them to bugs, botany and more! Trainings for new leaders are held two times per year. Interested? Call us!



## “Whooo” Has Gophers?

Canyon County Weed & Pest Control is offering to help residents manage pocket gophers and other rodents by installing Barn Owl houses on their property. Barn Owls offer an effective form of natural pest control that often provides better results than conventional trapping or poisons. The use of Barn Owls for pest control is also eco-friendly, and requires little to no maintenance. The Army Corps of Engineers estimates that it takes 3,000 gophers a year, plus mice and voles, to sustain a pair of owls and their young.

The Barn Owl houses installed by Canyon County Weed & Pest Control are mounted on a 2 3/8 inch steel pole, approximately 12 feet above the ground, and provide a nesting area for a pair of Barn Owls and their young during nesting season.

The price for installation is \$150 for Canyon County residents and \$300 for out-of-county residents. For more information or to have one installed, **please contact Canyon County Weed & Pest Control at (208) 459-0510.**



# Landscaping with Native Plants

## 5 Steps to consider when planning and planting

TIPS WRITTEN BY DR. STEVE LOVE, U-IDAHO HORTICULTURE SPECIALIST IN ABERDEEN

Native landscapes can be beautiful and effective if designed and completed properly.

Here are some guidelines that will help you successfully design and establish a native landscape.

1. Complete a yard survey and map the existing landscape. Note problem areas that are difficult to manage and may be appropriate for native landscapes.
2. Determine the areas to be planted using native or water conservation materials. It is not necessary or desirable to make an entire landscape native. Some areas should be more traditional with good shade, turf for recreation, leisure areas, and flower beds for consistent color. However, the location of native plantings will determine much of the design. Areas removed from public scrutiny, such as property corners and large back yards, can remain informal and will have less demand for maintenance. Native plantings in public areas, such as around the house entrance, can be as pleasing as traditional landscapes, but will require a more elaborate design.
3. Design the native planting areas in such a way that they provide continuity and flow with the rest of the landscape. Zone the irrigation system to meet the needs of the native plants. Some areas may need less water if xeriscape principles are followed, while other areas (such as water features and lowland plantings) may actually need more water. Recognize that if a native planting is designed for low water use, it may be necessary to add landscape features other than plants, such as rocks or wood objects to maintain season-long interest, color, and texture.
4. Once the design is complete, install the new landscape using procedures outlined in the section above. In the case of a water-conserving landscape, remember that newly established plants are not especially drought tolerant for the first season and may need some supplemental water for several months.

Choose plant materials that will provide balance, color, line, and movement and complement the rest of the landscape while at the same time meeting the goals of the design. Carefully consider transition zones between traditional and native components of the landscape and avoid sudden shifts in plant type. Carefully consider the mature size of all plant materials and arrange plantings accordingly. Do not mix plants with vastly different water or maintenance needs.

You can download Dr. Love's recommended plant list at [www.extension.uidaho.edu/idahogardens/pyl/native.htm](http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/idahogardens/pyl/native.htm).



**Native Penstemons**, like these on display at the Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge in Nampa, add Idaho character to landscapes.

# Summer Pruning

## Don't put away the shears quite yet

STORY BY U-IDAHO HORTICULTURE FACULTY

When we consider pruning, we naturally think of early spring. This is appropriate for the most part, because removal of branches on a plant is best done after winter cold has abated and before the plants leaf out. This helps prevent excessive weeping (sap flow from the wound) and allows time for wounds to heal during the summer months. However, there are practical reasons for completing some minor pruning during the summer.

Pruning may be needed to remove damaged or diseased branches that were not apparent during the

spring. There may also be a need to remove branches with winter injury, something that does not become visible until warm weather arrives. For some shrubs, pruning may also be needed to remove spent flowers to encourage the growth of new blossoms. Fruit trees can be pruned to remove some fruit in years that fruit set is excessively high. This will result in larger fruit and help prevent alternate bearing, the tendency for fruit trees to only grow fruit every other year.

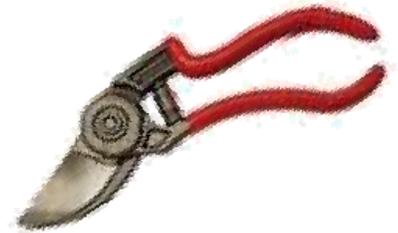
One of the main reasons to prune shrubs and trees in the summer is to control size. When pruning is done only in the spring, trees and shrubs tend to sucker where old branches are removed. These new branches grow rapidly and if left in place result in overall increased size. Removal of these new branches during the summer helps a tree or shrub to remain small in stature and more compact in shape. It will also decrease the amount of pruning needed during the next spring.

Even conifer trees can be pruned to control size. This is done by clipping off most of the "candle", the new sprout of soft growth that emerges in the spring. This will help keep a potentially large tree small, while at the same time helping to thicken the new growth. When pruning evergreens, it is important not to remove all of the new growth (except occasionally). This will leave only older wood that will eventually lose its needles and become unattractive.

Pruning for size control with shrubs may take the form of shearing, something we do to manage the size and shape of hedges and specimen plants in the yard. Shearing not only removes lanky, tall growth, but causes the plant to branch out and become thicker.

So, don't be afraid to break out the pruning tools in July.

Selective summer pruning will improve the look of your yard.



Formal gardens, in particular, benefit from summer maintenance, including pruning. View from the Idaho Botanical Garden.



# Dig In!

## University of Idaho Extension

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**New ways to grow with you!**



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<http://www.plantingidaho.org/>

This informative new consumer website is being produced by the Idaho Nursery and Landscape Association.

The INLA members listed on this site are all specialists in their area of horticulture, and you can depend on them to be professional and do an outstanding job if you hire them for your yards and landscapes.

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