



The Green Connection

Summer edition 2010

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Greetings Master Gardeners,

The Plant Clinic is humming right along. As expected many of the problems revolve around winter damage to many of our landscape plants. If you recall there was no 'cooling off' period or hardening off time last fall before we got the deep freeze in October. Plants did not have time to acclimate for winter, and then we received the second 'deep freeze' in October. In addition to that we had a fairly open winter with an unusually prolonged warm spell towards the end of February when most plants broke dormancy and began to bud out. Then we were hit with another deep freeze in March. This has resulted in a lot of winter kill and winter damage to the trees and shrubs in our area.

Also as expected, due to the extremely wet weather and cool temperatures earlier this spring there are a lot of fungal diseases going on. Severe leaf spot on most of the Paul's Scarlet hawthorn trees in the county caused major leaf drop to the trees and was of great concern to many home owners. As stated the conditions were set up earlier in the spring, but the symptoms really began to manifest as the weather warmed. Luckily, if given enough water, the trees are now beginning to re-leaf. As with most fungicides they are mostly preventative and not curative, so most applications begin at bud break. Other than

keeping the trees vigorous and raking up the leaves, there is nothing to do at this time.

Red-thread was a major problem on perennial rye, and some of the fescues in lawns, but as with most fungal problems in grass between the 'growin' and the 'mowin' and the advent of warmer, drier weather no chemical treatment was necessary. The lawn eventually out-grew the condition. There was also a high incidence of shot-hole fungus (corynium blight) on prunus, and peach leaf curl, again due to the earlier weather conditions. Preventive sprays in the spring and fall as per the PNW Disease Handbook is recommended.

Many of the vegetable gardens had to be planted several times due to late frosts. As a result it was well into June before many got their gardens in. However, now that the weather has warmed, gardens are catching up and if we have a nice, long Indian summer, most short season crops should ripen nicely.

Grasshoppers have not been the problem we predicted based on last year's infestation, but we are seeing some pretty large crickets. I'm collecting a few samples to mail to Ed Bechinski and Frank Merickle, U of I Entomologists, to determine if they are Mormon crickets or one of the several 'look-alikes'.

The fair will be here before we know it. Be sure to call or stop by the office and sign up for a shift or two, (or more.☺). Indicate how many passes you will need. You will need one for each day worked. I'm sorry I was unable to obtain parking passes.

Sincerely,

Dorothy

Welcome Linda 'Lindy' Harwood, our new secretary/receptionist. Please stop by to welcome her and introduce yourself. ☺

Several of you still need to stop by the office and pick up your Master Gardener shirts. Make checks payable to Kootenai County Extension Program Fund. A second order went out today and hopefully will be here in time for the fair.

Upcoming events

Fabulous Field Trip- Jerry Mitchell, Master Gardener Trainee, and grounds keeper at the Magnuson property across the lake has arranged a terrific field trip for the Master Gardeners and Friends on Saturday, August 14. We will meet in Coeur d'Alene at 12:30 pm to arrive at the property by 1:00 pm. We will meet either at the dock at the main parking lot, or at the dock to the right of Hagadone's office depending on the number of people attending. I will let you know when the head count is in. The property can only be reached by boat. Please bring your own

beverages and snacks as Mrs. Magnuson is elderly and will not be serving refreshments. Being a very private person she has asked that no one take pictures of any of the buildings on the property. I'm sure it will be okay to photograph the gardens. The field trip will last approximately 2 hours. **Please RSVP to Lindy by Friday, August 6th.**

Fair booth set-up in building #10- Saturday morning, August 21st, at 9 am. If you have committed to preparing something for the booth, please have it ready, or you may bring it prior to that date. The building will be unlocked.

North Idaho Fair, August 25th -29th – The building will be open from 10 am- 10 pm. If someone from another booth will be there until ten o'clock, Master Gardeners need only be there until 6:00 pm. Please call Lindy, or stop by and sign up for as many shifts as you like. Please indicate how many passes you will need. You will need a pass for each day you plan to work at the fair. I'm sorry I am unable to obtain parking permits for you.

Other volunteer opportunities

Speaker needed- Instructor needed to teach a two hour session on 'Insects in the Home Garden' for a Wednesday evening horticulture class at the Bonner County Extension Office. Please call Dorothy if you can help, and she will put you in touch with the contact person. She will also help you with the preparation if needed.

Fair Judge needed- Jack Knox, Fair Superintendent and Master Gardener needs someone to help judge fruits, nuts, berries, etc. in building #7 at the fair. Please call him at 773-5452 if you can help. This can be for pay or volunteer. Judging is fun and the rules are clearly outlined in the fair book available on line.

Just for fun

You know you're addicted to gardening if

- You appreciate your Master Gardener badge more than your jewelry
- You like the smell of horse manure better than Estee Lauder
- You sneak home a 7 foot maple and wonder if your spouse will notice
- You carry a shovel, bottled water and a plastic bag in your trunk as emergency tools
- You know that sevin is not a number
- You look at your child's sandbox and see a raised bed
- You know exactly how many bags of fertilizer/potting soil/mulch your car will hold
- You know the four seasons are: planning the garden, preparing the garden, gardening, and preparing and planning for the next garden.

Transplanting and dividing perennials-

Plants are ready for division and transplanting when all growth appears on the outer edges and they don't bloom as well or the blooms are smaller. This could be symptom that the roots are over-crowded. Transplant time is based on bloom time. Plants that bloom in late summer and

fall should be moved in the spring and early summer. Spring and early summer blooming plants can be moved in the fall. Plan to divide 6 weeks before first hard frost to allow plant to get settled before winter.

Plants that can be divided in the fall: Astilbe, Asiatic lily, Oriental lily, Lily of the valley, Bleeding heart, Siberian iris, Japanese iris, Veronica, Peony.

Tips

Submitted by Debbie Stilkey, Veteran Master Gardener- Save time cleaning your birdbath by doing it less often! Drop in a few pennies, they slow algae build-up- From Birds and Bloom, June/July 2010

Roses often bloom only in fits and starts in the late summer. But if you train a clematis on your rose, the vine will bloom when the rose looks sparse. And if they both bloom at the same time – bonus!!! – Tip from Better Homes and Gardens

A local gardener foils mosquito breeding in water-filled containers in his garden by adding a few drops of mineral oil. It is food grade and the same stuff used on cutting boards. The oil forms a thin film that smothers mosquito eggs. The same technique should work in plant containers that collect water, puddles of standing water and similar applications. A commercial product labeled for control of mosquitos before they hatch and fly away is *Bacillus thuringiensis var. israeliensis*. This is a time release ring that floats in standing water and will last up to 30 days. Each ring treats up to 100 sq. ft. of water surface and is host specific to mosquitoes.

Herb trivia

White flowering oregano (Greek oregano), is the only culinary oregano. If open pollinated there's a chance of getting pink or purple flowering varieties. Pinch and see if it smells like pizza.

Rosemary is for remembrance. Students wear rosemary in their hair to remember more for tests. Rosemary is grown as an annual in our area.

French tarragon should be propagated by cuttings and root divisions only. Seed will revert back to Russian tarragon, which has no aroma or flavor.

Monks needing a lesson in humility were sometimes made to weed the thyme.

New super fruit- The nutritional value of pomegranates is well known. Containing almost three times as much antioxidants as red wine and green tea, they are known as one of the super-fruits. Unfortunately for those of us living in the north, they can only be grown in warmer climates, zones 8-11. There is, however, a much hardier fruit shrub being call the newest super-fruit, and that is the elderberry. Hardy from zone 4-8, its fruits are rich in antioxidants and also contain an antiviral flavonoid effective against flu viruses. Avant Gardener, February 2010.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

August 6th, (Friday) - deadline to register for field trip to Magnuson Gardens across the lake.

August 14th, (Saturday) - Field trip to Magnuson Gardens. Meet at the appointed dock (to be announced) by 12:30 p.m. See details in newsletter.

August 21st, (Saturday) - Master Gardener fair booth set-up at 9:00 a.m., in building #10. Have your projects completed and ready for installation.

August 25th-29th- North Idaho Fair. Plant Clinic will be closed during this time. (We will be open on Monday, August 23). Please sign up to help out in our booth. There are still lots of openings.

September 6th, (Monday) - Office will be closed for Labor Day. Shelly Johnson will be presenting a 'Canning and Preserving the Harvest' class on the second or third Monday evening in September. Exact date to be announced.

October, (a Saturday, exact date to be announced)- Master Gardener Potluck and Certification. If any of you vets need a new badge, please call Dorothy and let her know. Thanks.

October 11th-14th, 2011 - International Master Gardener Conference in Charleston, West Virginia. More information to follow in upcoming newsletters and memos.