

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

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the Cochise County Master Gardener

NEWSLETTER

VOL. 5, NO. 8

AUGUST 1994

GRAPES

Barbara Kishbaugh

Staff Writer

My husband's family grew a grape arbor at the old ranch North of Tucson. Its branches and leaves offered protection from the wind, and a shady, cool spot in the summer. Over the years the arbor grew to form an outside room, a place to come and dip a drink of water from the burlap covered Mexican olla. There was no air conditioning in those days, so people created a respite from the sun under the living limbs of the grape. Support for the vine consisted of old pieces of pipe and timber with 2 X 4's used to brace the heavy over-growth. When the grapes were ripe you had only to reach up and pluck a few growing from the ceiling of this ramada.

A few years ago, Charley, my husband, planted some Thompson seedless grapes at the base of the supports of our porch. The vines create a canopy of shade which filters the hot afternoon sun. It is a lovely place to sit and unwind in the evening after the demands of the workday.

The grapes are trimmed back each fall to avoid the messiness of the dry leaves and bark pieces blowing onto the porch. This pruning is necessary to produce new growth for the following season. Grapes are hardy and will form substantial thick knobby bases. The limbs will be strong with shreddy bark.

Birds eat most of our grapes before they are ripe. Neighbors encase their grapes in paper bags until they are ripe to protect them from the birds. So grapes can be used as a food source and as a living arbor. The plants have aggressive growing habits so an arbor can begin the first year of transplant. The vines can be trained on a planned support system constructed to individual specifications.

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The growing vines offer a perfect habitat for birds. Their nests are difficult to see and provide an undisturbed environment for nesting.

One year we noticed bees landing on the plants and the leaves were being chewed, leaving small circular holes. Upon close inspection, you can see the bees carrying off a small portion of the leaf clutched in their tiny "feet." The grape leaves are a favorite material used to construct their nests. The leafcutter bees return each year and gather the leaf material for a short period of time. The leaves look a little untidy in appearance, but this harvesting process by the bees does not seem to injure the plant in any manner. The bees do not notice the human spectators and are really of little bother.

Vites arizonica grape will be found growing along the creek beds in the state. The grape plants prevent soil erosion and some browse for forest critters. This plant is a smaller version of the commercial grapes. Coronado National Monument park headquarters has the *Vites arizonica* growing along the porch in front of the Visitor Center. Wreaths are easily constructed from the vines of the wild grape. A favorite family outing for us is to sit along the stream bed with the children weaving the vines into wreaths to be used as gifts for Thanksgiving or Christmas. The only tools required are snippers to cut the vine, gloves, and an imagination of the forms envisioned.

When trimming and pruning the grapes at the end of the season, save the green vigorous canes you remove for transplanting. Grape seedlings can be started with these 6 to 8 inch pieces. Just place them in a bucket of soil and water occasionally. You will have additional grape vines to plant in the spring. Southern Arizona is becoming a popular location for the growing of commercial grape varieties used in wine making.

A brochure, *Growing Grapes at Home*, is available at the Cooperative Extension offices that lists the varieties and pruning techniques for successful grape growing in our area.

GRAPES

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Staff:

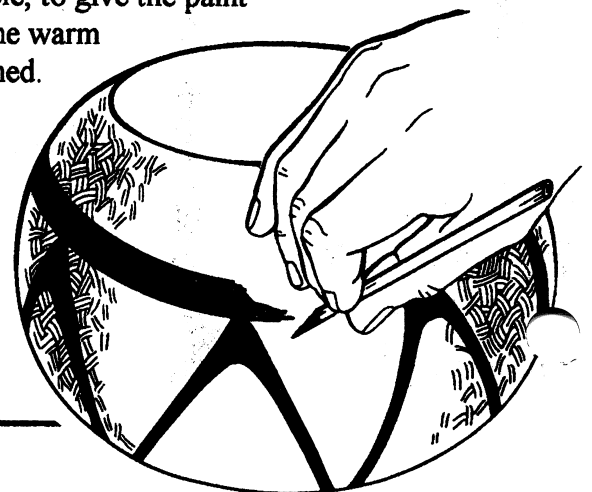
Carolyn Gruenhagen
Barbara Kishbaugh
T.J. Martin
Elizabeth Riordon
Virginia Westphal

How to Make Mesquite-pitch Pottery Paint

Find mesquite trees with shiny black pitch on the bark. Use a dull knife to pry off these pieces and boil them until the water is very black. Strain and continue simmering the black liquid down to a milky consistency. Add some globules of golden mesquite sap, if available, to give the paint body and shine. This is found on the branches of the tree during the warm seasons. Paint designs on pottery that has already been fire-hardened.

The designs will look brown. Heat the pottery over very hot coals or put it in an oven at 500 ° for 15 min.

The design will now be black and permanent.



THE AGENT'S CORNER

Robert E. Call
Horticulture Agent

QUESTION: I have a 'Globe Willow' that has a dark-colored sap running down the bark. It seems to be coming from under the wood near the crotch of the tree. What is the cause of this? I see some insects in this sap. Is there a bore causing the damage? The dark sap is dripping on my patio and discoloring the flagstones. What can I do?

ANSWER: Your tree is suffering from a disorder called slime flux or wet wood. These two diseases are thought to be bacterial infections, however these diseases are poorly understood. The water soaked, discolored appearance with constant bleeding of the sap at or below the branch crotches and trunk are the visual symptoms of this disease. Liquid may seep out of cracks or wounds and run down the bark. The liquid contains microorganisms that will cause the liquid to ferment and become dark in color, sticky and smelly and some insects may feed on it. Pressure can build up under the bark from fermentation and cause splitting and cracking. Normally the disease is not observed in young trees probably because of rapid growth which makes invasion of bacteria and fungi rare. Generally trees at least 5 years old and have developed heartwood become infected. Wilting and die back of branches may occur. Younger trees may have leaves that yellow, wilt or curl, turn colors and then drop early. Susceptible trees grown in Arizona include: ash, (*Fraxinus species*), elms (*Ulmus species*), poplars (*Populus species*), willows (*Salix species*), mulberry (*Morus species*), and mesquite; common, honey and Chilean (*Prosopis species*). **Control:** Slime flux infection can aggravate wounds and cause death of bark cambium. This disease may need to be controlled in large specimen trees. Holes may be drilled to relieve pressure under the bark. Drill a 1/4 or 1/2 inch hole at an upward angle below the bleeding and insert a plastic tube snugly and permanently into the first inch or two of the hole. This reduces the internal pressure and facilitates drainage of the fermented toxic material. Remove any dead or weak branches. Fertilize and water to keep the

tree in a vigorous state. For the stains on your flagstone place a piece of cardboard or plastic to catch the dark liquid. If the stone is stained perhaps bleaching would help.

QUESTION: Are there any garden vegetables that I can plant for a fall harvest?

ANSWER: Many of the cool-season crops, those that can withstand freezing, do very well in Cochise County during the fall. In fact the fall in Cochise County is better generally than the spring to raise cool-season crops. These vegetables include the cabbage family, *i.e.* broccoli, cauliflower, kale and cabbage among others. Also, spinach, small beets, peas—both snap and edible pod, turnips, radishes, lettuce, mustard greens and other greens. The onion family does best when planted in the fall and then overwintered and harvested in early summer. Members include garlic, onions and chives. Prepare and plant during the last week in August or first two weeks in September. I have had broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and onions growing the whole winter long during mild winters, pulling the plants out in May to make way for warm-season crops.



"Growing Together" 1994 Regional Master Gardener Conference

October 16-19, 1994
Portland, Oregon

The Oregon Master Gardener Association and the Oregon State University Extension Service invites you to spend four or more fun and learning days at the conference. Registration forms are available at the Cooperative Extension offices in Sierra Vista and Willcox. Call for more information.

SUMMER SAFETY

Heat Stress

Excess heat can place an abnormal stress on your body. When your body temperature rises even a few degrees above normal (which is about 98.6° F), you can experience muscle cramps, become weak, disoriented, and dangerously ill unless you can help your body to cool down. If your body temperature rises above 105° F, your condition can be fatal. Persons who work in hot environments must take special care against heat stress. The following guidelines can help you keep your cool in the heat and avoid the dangerous consequences of heat stress.

Avoiding Heat Stress

It takes about 4-7 days to get used to unusual heat. If you know you'll be exposed to hot temperatures, spend more time each day in the heat for about a week before beginning your task. Always drink plenty of cool water when you're in the heat. You may not be thirsty, but your body can still be losing as much as three gallons of water a day in hot weather. Wear hats, sunglasses, and loose cotton fabrics to help you stay cool. Take frequent breaks in a cool place.

Drink Water Frequently

Sweating is one of the ways your body cools itself down. Sweating results in water loss, and the only way to replace the loss (and help your body continue to cool itself) is to drink water frequently. Ideally, you should drink at least eight ounces of water every 20-30 minutes while working in hot environments.

Wear Personal Protective Equipment

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for hot environments can range from ordinary work clothes made from "breathable" fabrics to specially designed suits that are cooled by air, ice, and even portable air-conditioners.

Use Engineering Controls

Your employer may also provide engineering controls such as fans, ventilators, exhaust systems, and air-coolant or conditioning systems. These controls can help reduce worksite temperatures to

more adaptable levels. Other controls such as using heat shields and insulating heat-producing machinery can also help lower the environmental temperature.

First Aid for Heat Cramps

If you're working or playing hard in the heat, you can get cramps, pains, or spasms. Often they are in your arms, legs, or abdomen. You will probably be perspiring heavily. You can also get heat cramps from drinking too many cold liquids, or by drinking them too quickly.

Massage or use firm pressure on the muscle that is cramping. Drink small sips of water with a little salt added (if you have a heart or blood pressure problem, drink plain water) to help cool your body. Move into the shade or a cooler (not cold) place.

First Aid for Heat Exhaustion

People with heat exhaustion have some or all of the following symptoms: sweating, clammy, flushed, or pale skin, dizziness, weakness, nausea, rapid and shallow breathing, headache, vomiting, or fainting.

Those with heat exhaustion should lie down in a cooler (not cold) place, with feet raised and tight clothing loosened. Give them sips of cool water, adding one teaspoon of salt per quart of water. (If they have heart or blood pressure problems, give plain water.) Call a doctor, especially if there is vomiting or fainting.

Know About Heat Stress

Too much heat can make people lose their concentration, get tired, or grouchy. Understanding how to deal with heat stress can help you avoid accidents and misunderstandings.

Keep Cool

Persons who work in hot environments should become familiar with first aid techniques for heat stress. If you or someone you know suffers from heat exhaustion, cramps, or other signs of heat stress, get medical attention immediately. Keep your cool—heat stress is dangerous, but it is also preventable.

—SOUTHWEST HORTICULTURE July/August 1994

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GARDEN TIP NUMBER 2937

Gary A. Gruenhagen

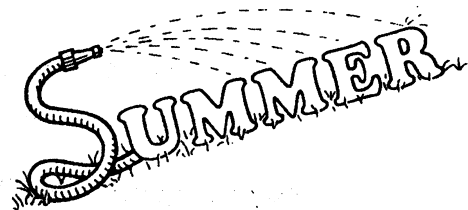
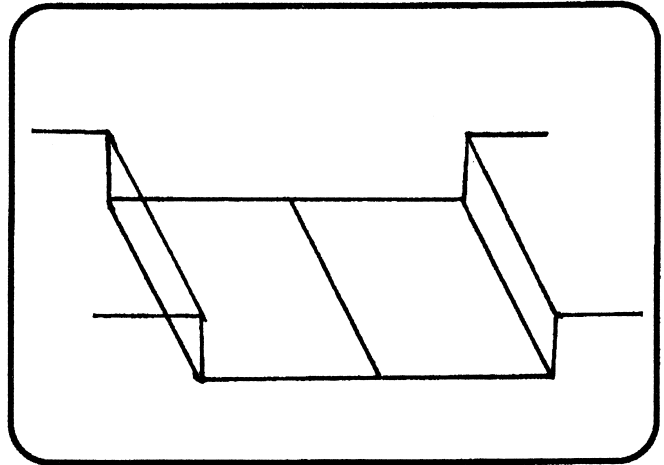
How come rocks are never where you want them? They're always on the wrong side of the fence. Those who have them don't want them and, those who don't have them would die to get their hands on them. And even in the rare case where the landscaper both has the rocks and wants them, they're never quite *where* their needed. In terms of things most home landscapers would rather not be doing, moving rocks ranks right up there with digging holes in caliche.

Frank Christ, a Master Gardener who is busy with the Sisyphean task of landscaping around his new home, has done more than just complain about this situation. He actually did something about it. When he needed to get some big rocks for accent pieces—the kind that are just too large for one person to handle alone—he designed a two man rock lifter so that he and a partner could load those big rocks in his Land Cruiser and transport them home.

Frank had a local welder fabricate the lifter out of half-inch square stainless steel tubing. Although I don't know what the theoretical capacity of the device is, it is considerably more than two ordinary men can comfortably lift. I calculated the weight of one of the larger rocks we lifted at about 215 pounds, and I believe Frank has collected some that are even larger. One serendipitous feature of the design is how well it fits in a standard contractor's wheel barrow. My son and I discovered this while using the lifter to move some rocks around the yard.

The lifter is basically a box with handles. The bottom of the box can be any size, although an 18 to 24 inch square base with a bar across the middle is probably large enough (the 215 pound boulder I mentioned above was only about 19 inches long by 15 inches across). The bar across the middle of the bottom keeps smaller rocks from falling through. The handles need only be large enough to fit your hand, but making them long enough to straddle a wheel barrow facilitates moving rocks locally around the yard.

The technique for using the lifter is simple. Place the device on the ground next to the rock to be lifted. Roll or slide the rock into the lifter and hoist away. After the rock is carried to its site, the lifter can be lowered to the ground and the rock rolled off. An alternative method is to flip the rock off the lifter from carrying height. The latter method should only be attempted by highly conditioned, athletic types like Frank and myself. Two hundred pound rocks can do a bit of damage to the toes.



AUGUST REMINDERS

- Fertilize
- Plan your spring wildflower garden
- Watch for nutrient deficiencies, sunburn, salt burn, overwatering, Texas root rot, cicadas, and other insects
- Prolong annuals
- Keep pulling weeds
- Plant cool season flowers and veggies

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Address correction requested

Garden Tour Planned!

The Master Gardeners have planned a great tour
September 24, 1994

to

a homeowner's beautiful garden of several acres in Elfrida,
Fiesta Canning in McNeal, and optional stops to purchase fresh produce
from Southeastern Arizona producers in the Sulphur Springs Valley!

For information

call Joyce at the Sierra Vista Cooperative Extension office
458-1104, Ext. 141.

Leave your name and telephone number.

More details will follow in next month's newsletter!

