

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

University of Arizona and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.



the Cochise County Master Gardener

NEWSLETTER

VOL. 4, NO. 11

NOVEMBER 1992

QUERCUS virginiana Heritage Live Oak

Barbara Kishbaugh
Staff Writer

Five or six years ago we planted an 8' oak in our yard and it is now 15' tall with a 19' wide span. This oak is not slow growing. Ours has grown more than a foot each year and growth rate is related to the amount of water the tree receives. Oaks can tolerate dry conditions, but have a glossier appearance when watered regularly. Leaf drop does not seem to be a problem although the acorns may attract a squirrel.

These oaks are a natural selection since they are evergreen and provide year round shelter for birds and a hiding place for rabbits. The lower limbs curve downward seeming to protect the trunk. The boiled bark of the oak contains tannin and has been used as an antiseptic treatment for burns, as a rinse for sore throats, and intestinal disorder soother.

Oaks add a certain air of stability and strength to a yard and they adapt easily. We rescued several small containerized oaks from an end of season plant sale and they all survived, although some of them had barely a leaf or two clinging to a twig of a branch. So consider the mighty oak when contemplating your tree purchase—you will live long enough to see the results of your planting efforts!



Quercus virginiana

Robert E. Call

Robert E. Call
Extension Agent,
Horticulture

450 Haskell • Willcox, AZ • 384-3594
2500 Fry Blvd • Sierra Vista, AZ • 458-1104

U
N
I
V
E
R
S
I
T
Y
OF
A
R
I
Z
O
N
A

FALL IS A GREAT TIME FOR PLANTING MOST TREES!

Barbara Kishbaugh
Staff Writer

BEFORE YOU PLANT A TREE:

When you are preparing for the planting of a tree, please give consideration to your planting method to assure successful growth of your selection.

Prepare the hole before you bring a tree home. Dig deep enough and wide enough so the roots can be spread out on top of the mound you create at the bottom of the hole. You may have to pre-soak your soil to make digging easier.

Soak your roots in a bucket of water for a few hours, if trees are bare rooted, before you plant so the roots will be more pliable and can be laid naturally around the mound of dirt.

If you have a stunted tree in your yard, it was probably improperly set in the soil. If caliche is a problem in your yard, dig through it to make a "chimney" down to good soil beneath the caliche layer. Roots can then grow down into the good soil. A little preparation prior to planting really makes a big difference in growth patterns.

Trees recommended for our desert/mountain area include:

Mesquite
Arizona Cypress
Oak
Eucalyptus
Acacia
Sumac
Palo Verde
Pines—Aleppo and Elderica

Please read your reference materials to determine the cold hardiness and other factors of a specific species.

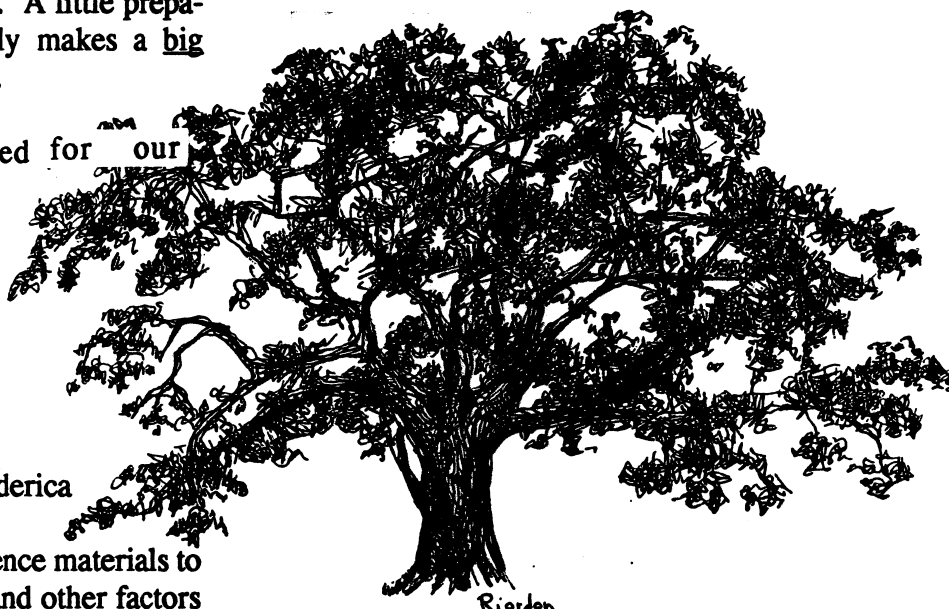
FROSTED TOMATOES?

If an early frost finds you and your tomato plants unprepared, don't despair. Pull up the tomato plant and hang it stem up—roots down—in a place where the temperature will stay between 55 and 72 degrees F. The tomatoes will continue to ripen on the vine even after the plant has wilted.

Staff:

Jackie Dillon-Fast
Carolyn Gruenhagen
Barbara Kishbaugh
T.J. Martin
Elizabeth Riordon
Virginia Westphal

Articles to be published in next month's newsletter must be received at the Sierra Vista Cooperative Extension Office by November 25.



Quercus virginiana

BUDDY BUG - NEMATODE

Elizabeth Riordon
Staff Writer

Biological control is becoming the most sensible as well as most economical way to prevent insect crop damage. In many cases, one insect is used to control another. Nematodes are utilized this way by commercial growers and to a lesser extent by home gardeners.

Nematodes are tiny, thread-like organisms. They are so slender that they are usually unseen. Sometimes, if you have a clean glass dish garden or terrarium, they can be seen between the glass and the potting soil acting like very thin, very fast earthworms. (They looked so unpleasant to me that I threw out our entire nematode infested terrarium.)

The parasitic nematodes live within the body of certain aphids, borers, carpenter worms, weevils, various larvae, maggots, grubs, earwigs, cutworms, *etc.* They bring with them into the insect host's body a deadly bacteria which multiplies and is the food for the nematodes.

Dehydrated nematodes are purchased as a powder or in a dry sponge. After water is added they may be distributed in several ways. The nematode solution can be sprayed or sprinkled on the crops. They may also be dispersed through a trickle irrigation system, injected into plant stems with a syringe, squirted into borer holes, or soaked into absorbent tree bands.

Some nematodes, though, are pests themselves. These cause damage to plant root systems (as did those that were in my glass terrarium). These "root-knot nematodes" can be controlled by drenching the soil with a poison extract from the chinaberry tree or the Indian neem tree. They can be "solarized" or "cooked" by heating the soil with a plastic cover. Marigolds discourage nematodes from feeding (give them indigestion?) and stop them

from reproducing. Nematode destroying fungi can be encouraged in the garden by incorporation organic matter into the garden soil. Also, a three year crop rotation with plants that are not susceptible to nematode damage may reduce a destructive nematode population.

FROST PROTECTION

Jackie Dillon-Fast
Staff Writer

As the nights have been getting progressively colder, our plants have been moving gradually into dormancy. A drop in temperatures followed by a rise will often slow this move to dormancy, and increase the chance of frost damage. Watch for unusually warm periods followed by sharp drops in temperature. During the early winter and early spring when temperatures fluctuate is when most frost damage occurs. Warning signs of potential frost in Cochise County are the same as in other parts of the country: still air, no cloud cover, very bright stars, low humidity, and low temperatures early in the evening (45 degrees or lower by 10:00 pm).

The best frost protection strategy for Cochise County is to plant only those varieties that are hardy to frost. If you've already planted frost-tender ornamentals outside, you should probably move them to containers for the winter or replant them in warmer microclimates in your yard. Other frost protection strategies similar to the tunnel are cardboard boxes inverted over plants at night (removed during the day), vertical water tunnels made of plastic and set upright around plants (sold in catalogs), and old quilts, blankets, or sheets laid over planting beds at night and removed each morning. An unusual cold spell or long, hard frost can kill or seriously injure mature trees that are only marginally cold-hardy.

THE AGENT'S CORNER

Rob E. Call

Extension Agent, Horticulture

SOME TREE CONCERNS FOR FALL

QUESTION: An oak tree that is growing in the middle of my patio has dead branches under the living canopy and some leaves are falling. The tree is quite large with a trunk diameter of over two feet. Natural rainfall is the only water it receives. The patio was built two years ago. Why is this happening? Don't oaks stay green year around?

ANSWER: The oak tree is a very large and old specimen. An oak that has a diameter of over two feet must be at least 100 to 150 years old. The dead branches are those that are under the living ones. When new growth occurs older branches can be shaded out and not produce leaves; they have served their function and die. Prune out the dead branches to make the tree more sightly. Leaves of evergreens do not live forever but don't fall all at once. During certain times of the year it is natural for some evergreen leaves to die and fall. By placing a patio around the tree perhaps some of the roots do not have the access they once did to rainfall. However, it must be remembered that mature trees normally have actively feeding roots only 40 to 60% of the distance in from the drip line towards the trunk.

QUESTION: I have Chinese elm trees that are infested with elm leaf beetles larvae and mulberry trees that have the mulberry tussock moth larva on them. What can I do to get rid of them?

ANSWER: The leaves of these deciduous trees will be falling soon and these insects have or will begin over-wintering. There is no reason to try and control them now because they are already "hibernating". These insects will reappear next spring and that is the time to control them. Let the leaves fall and put them in your compost pile for use in the spring.

QUESTION: When should I prune my fruit trees and roses?

ANSWER: Pruning of fruit trees should be done when trees are dormant, after rest is completed in the winter. Rest is a physiological stage where tree buds cannot be forced to grow even under ideal growing conditions. Generally rest is completed after Christmas. Pruning can begin in January and continue through bloom in the spring. However, dead or diseased limbs and root sucker growth can be removed at anytime.

Roses that bloom several times during the year should be dormant pruned during late winter or early spring before new growth begins. Roses that bloom only once during the year are pruned after flowering, normally late spring or summer.



NOVEMBER REMINDERS

- GOOD TIME TO INSTALL A DRIP SYSTEM
- REPLACE SUMMER MULCH WITH FRESH
- START A WINTER HERB GARDEN

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture, James A. Christenson, Director, Cooperative Extension, College of Agriculture, The University of Arizona and Arizona Counties cooperating. The University of Arizona College of Agriculture is an equal opportunity employer authorized to provide research, educational information and other services only to individuals and institutions that function without regard to sex, race, religion, color, national origin, age, Vietnam Era Veteran's status, or handicapping condition.

The information given herein is supplied with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by Cooperative Extension is implied.

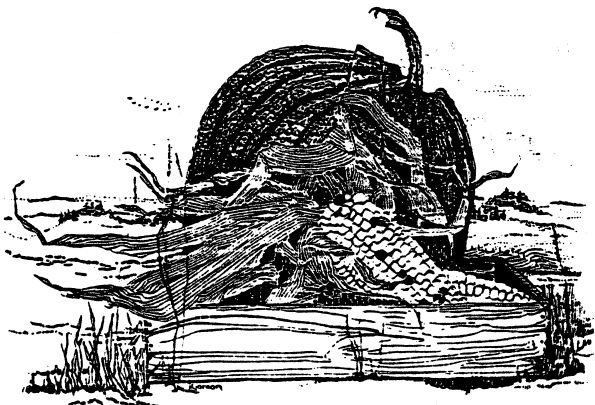
Any products, services, or organizations that are mentioned, shown, or indirectly implied in this publication do not imply endorsement by the University of Arizona.

1992 PHONE BOOK RECYCLING CAMPAIGN

The City of Sierra Vista Community Recycling Committee, Horizon Moving Systems, and U.S. West Direct have again joined forces to sponsor and support a special recycling project. From October 30 to mid-December, phone books will be collected at several collection points around the city. For every 1300 phone books recycled, we save:

- 17 trees
- 3 cubic yards of landfill space
- 7000 gallons of water
- 4100 kwh of electricity
- 683 gallons of crude oil

Need more information? Call the Department of Public Works at 458-3315. Remember, if you are not recycling, you are throwing it all away. Please help preserve, protect, and restore our environment.



Happy Thanksgiving!

MICRO-CLIMATES

Barbara Kishbaugh
Staff Writer

A friend in Naco recently developed a micro-climate around his place. He began by building a wall which enclosed the yard—then came patio pavers which separated the small planting areas. Trellises were constructed with slatted tops to allow vines to climb which created mottled shaded areas that give a feeling of soft protection.

In our county these micro-climates are practical since you choose plants which grow well, offer shade, and actually require little water once established. Rain water from the eaves of buildings is an added bonus to these inclusive areas.

This graceful patio was established in less than two years. Plants growing successfully there include: African sumac, olive tree, cat's claw, trumpet, and jasmine vines—almost any vine grows well here—succulents and cacti in containers, and in the shaded areas, violets and begonias. roses, lirioppe, day lilies, and mums add color.

You, too, can create such a micro-environment. And if constructing a privacy wall seems too large a project to consider, then just stack some block or brick or stone or use some of the strong shade screen material you can now purchase in any store that carries gardening supplies. You could also use metal posts with wire mesh fencing or almost any material to make a barrier to give you the desired effect. Now is the planning and constructing season.

***The Cooperative Extension has many bulletins available
to you at no cost, including several on trees.
Stop by or call for information!***

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
TUCSON, ARIZONA 85721

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
PENALTY FOR PRIVATE USE \$300

BULK RATE
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
USDA
PERMIT No. G268

Address correction requested



URBAN TREE CARE WORKSHOP

November 5, 1992 — 9:00 am to 4:00 pm
Oscar Yrun Community Center
Sierra Vista

Subjects to be covered include:

tree selection	pruning
tree care	pest control
cultural practices	drip irrigation
tree planting (hands—on demo in the afternoon)	

Sponsored by:

Cooperative Extension	Cochise Global ReLeaf
State Land Department	City of Sierra Vista

For information or to register (a small fee will be charged to cover lunch) call Joanne McIntire at 458-3315 Ext. 65.