

# “Columbia Underground”

Member: National Garden Club, Federated Garden Clubs of Missouri, and Central District

Editor; Marie Pasley

## Up Coming Events – more details below

November 8- FGCM Fall Board Meeting at Jefferson City

November 15- CGC Monthly meeting 1 pm- NOTE date change- Program: Planning for 2022 & making pressed flower decorations

November 30- Books of Evidence due

December 13- CGC monthly meeting- Christmas Luncheon

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### DATE CHANGE: November 15 Monthly Meeting 1pm at Trinity Presbyterian Church

The November meeting is held the third Monday of November because there is always a State board meeting on the second Monday. CGC has several members that need to attend the board meeting so we change our meeting date. For our meeting Barb Rothenberger will discuss pressed flower displays and other methods of drying flowers. If members have pressed flowers, bring them to the meeting to make items from them. Members will also meet with committees to plan for 2022. Committee chairs need to remember to bring committee year end reports or send to Betty.



### *“American Hornbeam” Carpinus caoliniana*

Color- Bark is thin and bluish-gray with appearance of rippling muscles- Fall color orange/yellow

Light Preference- full sun/part shade

Height/Spread-: 20-30' ht. by 20-30' wide

Bloom Period- greenish yellow catkins.

\* This area info for 2021 is taken from “*Tried and True Missouri Native Plants for Your Yard*”

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### 2022 & 2023 Newly Elected Officers

Congratulations to the new CGC 2022-23 club officers.

President	Betty Connelly
1st VP	Diana Cooksey
2nd VP	Linda Antal
Secretary	Mary Nesladek
Treasurer	Carolyn Oates
Parliamentarian	Carolyn Dolye

We greatly appreciate them taking on these jobs. As club members, we will do our part to make this upcoming year a success.



## **Fall Tree Care**

By Bonnie Lee Appleton

Sugar Maple (*Acer saccharum*)



For the past several years the retail nursery industry has promoted the idea that "Fall is for Planting." While I agree that in much of our country fall is an excellent time to plant trees and shrubs, in many cases I think the best use of fall time is "unplanting."

Unplanting? OK, I am being a little tongue in cheek. I don't mean to literally dig a plant out of the ground. What I'm talking about is undoing and correcting mistakes that were made at planting time, whether it was earlier in the year or several years ago. We have planting specifications, but I think we're long overdue for "unplanting specs."

There are four areas where more follow-up care is needed: unstaking and untying, unwrapping, unmulching and unbinding.

While you're out "unplanting," don't limit yourself to trees and shrubs in your own yard. Look around -- there are plenty of trees and shrubs at your local schools, shopping malls, public parks and a variety of other locations where even the "professionals" didn't plant correctly or haven't provided adequate "unplanting" maintenance. You may get a few funny looks from people as they pass by, but you can rescue these plants from future problems and perhaps teach a few needed lessons about tree and shrub planting and care at the same time.

### **Unstake and Untie**

A tree needs staking at planting time only if it is unable to stand upright without one, or if it needs protection from wind or people. Assuming the tree needed staking (many don't), a year should be plenty of time. If its roots can't hold it up after that period, there's another problem involved, such as poor roots or soil conditions, that staking won't solve.

Unstaked, trees will develop trunk girth faster, and will also have the strength to keep their posture when hit by wind. Even when staked, trees should never be held rigidly in place.

Untie trees so that the material used to connect the stake to the tree doesn't "girdle" or damage the bark. Girdling restricts water and food movement in a tree and leads to a decline in growth. It might even create a weak spot above the girdle that could break off sometime later.

While you're untying, remove any labels or tags that are still attached. Plants are good at "eating" such items, again causing girdling or weak areas.

### **Unwrap**

Remove any kind of trunk-protecting wrapping that was installed at planting time. Just as with unnecessary staking, there is unnecessary wrapping. In a few specific situations -- trunk protection at digging or shipping time or heat protection if trees are planted into paved areas during the spring or summer -- a wrap for less than a year may help. In most cases, however, wraps don't encourage trees to become established and may actually cause problems.

Bark rotting, enlargement of trunk breathing pores or "lenticels," insect and disease problems and girdling from the wrapping's method of attachment are just a few such problems revealed by my research.

If a tree's trunk has been protected with a metal, plastic or other type of guard to prevent damage caused by machinery, animal feeding or vandalism, be sure it is loose. Otherwise, once again, tree-damaging girdling may occur at the guard site.

### **Unmulch**

My third "unplanting" recommendation is to unmulch. Don't remove all of the mulch, but if you or someone else has gotten overzealous, meaning there is a layer of mulch more than four inches thick against the trunk of any tree or shrub, pull some of it away.

A three- to four-inch mulch layer is usually fine, but mulch against the trunk encourages bark decay or disease or insect problems. Excessive mulch can also create a welcoming habitat for animals such as voles that might feed on the base of your plants.

While you're pulling the mulch at the base of your plants back, check to be sure that your trees and shrubs weren't planted too deeply. The trunk flare or root-stem transition area should be at the soil surface. If the tree is too deeply set and has been in place for just a short time -- three to six months -- dig it up and plant it less deeply. If that's not possible, remove soil from around the trunk base, gradually tapering back to grade.

## Unbind

Be especially sure that any root packaging or balling materials were removed at planting time. These include natural jute or synthetic burlaps, natural hemp or synthetic ropes, the tops of wire baskets, plastic sleeves, even plastic pots. It's amazing how many of these materials are left intact at transplant time, and how quickly they can limit root growth and plant establishment or cause stem girdling. Even the tops of "plantable" peat-paper-fiber pots should be broken away. Their slow rate of biodegradation often limits root development, and the fibers wick moisture away from the roots.

*Dr. Bonnie Lee Appleton is a professor of horticulture at Virginia Tech University in Blacksburg.*

*Photography by Suzanne DeJohn/National Gardening Association*

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### Columbia Garden Club October Meeting Minutes

The Columbia Garden Club met on October 11, 2021. Members starting arriving at 11 a.m. to work on making natural Christmas decorations for the Troxell house for the December homes tour sponsored by the Symphony League. Many decorations were made from seed pods, leaves, wood circles, berries, pressed flowers, dried flowers, nuts, okra pods, pine cones and other materials.

The business meeting was called to order by Betty Connelly at 1 p.m. with 21 members in attendance. We welcomed two new members: Brenda McGavock and Diane Linneman. The inspiration was given by Mary Nesladek: "The more one gardens, the more one learns, and the more one learns, the more one realizes how little one knows. I suppose the whole of life is like that" by V. Sackville-West. Minutes from the previous meeting were accepted as distributed. Evette Nissen, Treasurer, reported the balance in the treasury is \$11,042.63. We paid the University of Missouri \$500 for our scholarship. Betty had sign-up sheets for committees. A chairman is needed for the Clean-up-Columbia event that will be held in the Spring. Children in grades 1-5 can participate in the Woodsy Owl and

Smokey Bear poster contest; this needs to be done soon. We have had an Environmental and Conservation committee, and Betty would like to get this going again. This would be to promote club projects. Barb Rothenberger reported that The Bluffs would like us to resume activities with their residents. In December we will decorate Christmas mugs with the residents. We need fresh greenery, ornaments and perhaps fresh flowers. Date will be announced later. Betty is needing reports from committee chairmen. These reports can be short describing the year's events. At the November meeting, we will be discussing the budget. If anyone needs to pay their dues, mail \$25 to Evette by October 25. Barb Rothenberger is needing more workers at the Troxell house for the homes tour; contact her to sign up for a shift.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:15 p.m. and members continued to work on decorations until 2 p.m.

Respectfully submitted

Mary Nesladek

