Columbia Garden Club Newsletter May 2020
1919-2019 A Century Club

"Columbia Underground"

Member: National Garden Club, Federated Garden Clubs of Missouri, and Central District Editor; Marie Pasley

Upcoming Events CANCELLED

May 11 CGC meeting

May 11-16 NGC Convention

May 14- Central District Spring Meeting,

May 22-24 Flower Show School Course 3

June 13 Columbia GC Flower Show

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June CGC Meeting Notice

We hope to have the June home garden tour. We will send further info when we have determined how to physically distance and have ten members or less in a group.

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"Rose-breasted Grosbeak"

Description: 8"male-black & white with red patch on breast & underwings. Female-heavily striped brown on white above & below
Habitat. Moist woodland adjacent to open fields
Nesting: 4-5 purplish spotted whitish eggs

Big Garden Mistakes

Some garden mistakes are easy to fix but others are not. I am going to share some common big garden mistakes that we are not able to repair if we do them. These are just a few but there are many more.

Topping Trees: Topping is horrible for tree health. It leaves huge wounds that typically do not heal, allowing entry for decay, insects, and disease. Branches that come out of these topped trees are weak and often break in storms. If a tree has grown too large for the space or it is too near a building, it is better to completely prune off limbs near the building or completely take out the tree and start over with better placement or a tree species that does not get as big at maturity.

.**Adding Sand to Improve Clay Soils**: It does not work that way. If sand is added to clay, it results in a concrete-like mixture, making growing conditions worse than clay. To actually change soil texture, it would take adding over 50% of the total soil volume to significantly change the texture of clay soils. This isn't feasible in a home garden situation nor is mixing in that volume. The key to improving clay soils is adding organic matter and that can take time. Examples of organic matter include manures, composts, leaves, grass clippings, straw, cover crops, etc. Always remember to consider the source to make sure there are not any contaminates from herbicides, especially in manures and composts.

Contaminated Composts and Manures: In the last five years or so, we have seen this problem occur numerous times. Composts and manures can be contaminated with commonly used pasture herbicides. Adding contaminated compost can cause plants to become stunted, grow oddly or even die for years after application. It is always a good idea to do a quick test to determine if there might be herbicide contamination before spreading it on the garden since it can take years for the

contamination to go away. Put some of the compost or manure in a pot and plant bean seeds. The beans will show distorted growth if there is herbicide carryover present.

Removing top soil during construction: We see this happen in new housing developments or new home construction. Many times, the top soil "disappears" and never returned leading to a struggle to grow desirable plants and lawns. Sometimes these soils are referred to as fabricated soils because construction activities lead to soils that are highly mixed and altered. These soils can have various fertilities and unhealthy pH ranges, be heavily compacted, full of trash and debris, and have strange transition zones that can vary from foot to foot in the construction zone. These are things not easily fixed. Air spades and vertical mulching can help relieve compaction, organic matter can be added, and pH can be adjusted but these soils will never be like they were before construction.

A little is good, more is better! We see this happen in fertilizing, pesticides, lime and more. Too much fertilizer can lead to burning plants. It can also lead to runoff and pollution of our water sources. Pesticides, which include insecticides, herbicides, and fungicides, have specific labels rates and application directions. The LABEL is the LAW! Applying too much can lead to burn, pollution, and human and animal risks. Applying too much lime can increase the pH where nutrients become unavailable to plants. pH can be lowered with sulfur but this takes time and puts plants on a roller coaster ride. Wood ashes can also have a liming effect and increase phosphorus and potassium levels.

Please consider carefully how what you do can impact your future gardening! If you have questions, please contact your local Extension specialist and we are happy to help walk you through decision-making processes so you can have a successful garden. Taken from the The Garden Spade April 2020, an MU Extension publication

IMPORTANT OAK TREE NEWS

It's time to stop pruning oak trees! If you love that oak tree in your yard, remember this important rule: Don't prune mid-March through June! Oaks become more vulnerable to oak wilt a couple weeks before bud break occurring in the spring. During this time, fresh wounds on trees can attract insects carrying oak wilt spores. Oak wilt is an aggressive disease that can kill a healthy tree in the red oak group (pin, shingle, black, northern red, etc.) within a few weeks after symptoms are first noticed. Trees in the white oak group can also be infected but may take years to die from the disease. If an oak is damaged or must be pruned in the spring, prevent oak wilt infection by immediately spraying or painting the wound with a tree wound dressing. Do NOT wait to cover wounds as insects carrying oak wilt spores can arrive within minutes of the damage. This is the only situation where we recommend using a tree wound dressing, treating wounds is not necessary during other times of the year. For more information on oak wilt, visit Missouri Botanical Garden Forest Health Program or the Missouri Department of Conservation.

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Rose Rosette Disease (RRD)

This lethal disease of roses is caused by Rose Rosette Virus (RRV). Symptoms of the virus are

variable and include mosaics, strapped leaves (usually thin), a profusion of shoots with short internodes on one cane (witch's broom or rosette), hyper-thorniness (profusion of thorns), thickening of stems, reddening of foliage and stems, distorted buds and flowers, stem (cane) death, and plant death. Some large shrub roses can survive with the disease for many years. However, most plants symptomatic for RRD will decline and die in 3-5 years. Young plants may die in the first year of symptoms.

The virus is transmitted by the eriophyid mite, Phyllocoptes fructiphilus. These mites are the size of dust particles and only visible with a microscope (>40X). The mite is wingless, has four legs and no eyes. When temperatures reach the mid 80's, mites will release themselves from their host plant and float in air currents (called ballooning). Mites can survive up to 5 days off a host and be blown a considerable distance from the source plant. When P. fructiphilus females hatch, they lay eggs that yield only males as long as they are unfertilized. Once fertilized, females lay eggs that yield only females. During summer months, large populations of mites can develop on rose plants and plants symptomatic for RRD may have as many as forty fold more mites than healthy roses.

Symptoms of rose rosette disease can include strapped leaves, thickened stems, increased thorniness (hyperthorniness) and distorted flower buds. Plants infected with Rose Rosette Virus may die in 3-5 years after becoming symptomatic.

Rose rosette disease can also be spread from one location to another by movement of diseased plants. Infected plants may remain without symptoms (asymptomatic) for up to one year and these plants are very difficult to detect until they are planted and display symptoms of RRD. When plants with symptoms are detected, the safest thing is to bag the top of the bush to prevent movement of mites and cut the bagged bush off at the soil line. The root ball can be dug and discarded. Root systems do not have to be bagged as the mites do not live in soil.

Pruning symptomatic foliage from an infected plant will not save a plant. When a symptomatic plant is removed, a new plant can be placed in the same location one week later. Adjacent plants should be watched for several months to make sure they were not infected as well. If symptoms are detected in a neighboring plant, it should be removed as well. Quick removal of infected plants will aid in keeping mite populations low and reduce movement within the garden. If the plant cannot be removed quickly, pruning of rosette(s) will reduce vector populations temporarily since mite populations are forty fold or greater on rosettes than on asymptomatic tissues. However, removal of rosettes will not 'cure' the plant and the plant will still need to be removed.

Multiflora rose is an exotic, invasive plant that is also a host of the virus and mite. This rose is often found along fence lines and forest edges in rural areas and can serve as a source of both the mite and virus. In urban areas, the greatest source of the mite and virus are large plantings of shrub roses that are infected with RRV and infested with P. fructiphilus.

Some miticides have been proven to be effective in reducing the impact of RRD in roses. However, when to begin spraying and the interval between sprays is still unknown. Therefore, miticides cannot be recommended at this time. If a rose garden is free of symptomatic plants but a population of symptomatic plants is upwind from the location, a barrier such as a privacy fence or tall vegetation will impede mite dissemination and aid in reducing the threat to the garden. Employees of state and federal laboratories and private rose companies are working together to develop resistant roses. There are no rose cultivars known to be resistant to RRV at this time.

. In the rose garden the following steps can reduce the threat of RRD greatly. The first steps are:

1. Know the symptoms associated with RRD.
2. Remove any bush at first symptoms to prevent mite populations from building on the bush to levels where mites are ballooning to other bushes
3. Wait one week and transplant another bush into the hole left from the plant removal in step 2.
4. Carefully monitor bushes around the location of the removed plant to ensure you stopped the disease in its tracks. Many gardeners have followed these steps and have successfully managed this disease.

** (Taken from the American Rose Society web page) This web site is an excellent source for rose growers.