

THE STUMP

INFORMATION BY THE BOARD FOOT

APRIL 2015

KNOT THE HOLE NEWS

What Are You Doing For Arbor Day?

Arbor Day is the first Friday in April in Missouri (April 3, 2016) and nationally it is the last Friday of April (April 24, 2016). The actual date you celebrate does not matter. You can celebrate any day you wish. The point is you and your community recognize the many benefits trees provide us.

Traditionally, people make extra efforts to plant trees on Arbor Day. There is no requirement for this, but it is a fun time. It is more important to learn more / teach / appreciate what trees do for us.

This can be done in multiple fun ways. Easy ones are having a painting event, art event, photo contest, tree walk, poetry reading of poems about trees, and of course a tree planting ceremony. Larger events like small festivals can have some / all / or more of the small items mentioned. It is up to your imagination.



So, *What are you doing for Arbor Day?*

Soil Amendments: Medicine or Snake Oil

In the past, soil amendments were recommended for everything. Just like taking all vitamins was thought to be good for us. Knowledge of how to work with soils has changed a lot. Now, it is highly recommended to not blanket amend the soil.

You need to analyze the soil. Soil structure and pH often play a more important role in tree health than believed in the past. Most trees like a soil pH of 6 to 6.5 and uncompacted soil. High pH can lead to issues with mineral elements not being available to plants, even though it is there in the soil. A common example is available iron in the soil. Soil that is red, has iron, lots of it. As the soil pH rises towards 7 or higher, the iron binds to others particles in the soil and is not available to plants. Several trees become chlorotic when this occurs. Other minerals also can become unavailable at different pH levels leading to issues with a tree.

Compacted soil has had the natural structure damaged. A good soil will have identifiable soil particles. Compacted soils can actually look like layers, especially in clay soils. When the soil is compacted, air and water cannot move readily through it or be stored. This results in conditions that are difficult for tree roots to grow due to lack of air and water.



West Virginia University

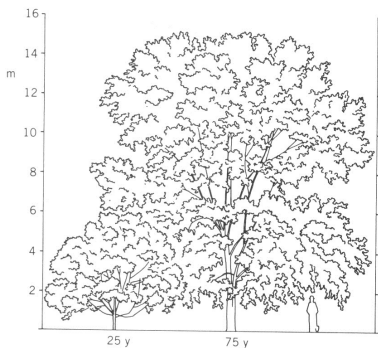
Before adding the miracle mixture, check the soil pH to make sure it is appropriate for the trees you have, not compacted, AND then do a soil test through the MU Extension Soil and Plant Testing Laboratory (<http://soilplantlab.missouri.edu/soil/>) to see what nutrients your soil needs for trees. It is different than grass, flowers, and vegetables. Then apply with care.

Improve Your Trees Health: Keep Grass Away

Trees, in general, were not made to perform their best in a lawn. Trees do better in soil without competition from grass. Many tree plantings are severely slowed and/or killed by the competition of grass.

Grass is a strong competitor. I first learned fescue was referred to “Green Death” over 25 years ago. This was in reference to seedlings planted for woodlands. Without control of the grass, the seedlings became stunted and starved for water. How did this happen? Healthy grass growing in full sun, forms a thick root system near the surface of the soil. This allows the grass roots to absorb water quickly, often before other roots even have a chance at it. In addition to having first crack at the water, fescue (the most common yard grass) releases a chemical to suppress other plants. This is called allelopathy. The combination of chemical inhibitors and water competition slow tree growth, making them more susceptible to other attacks by insects and diseases.

How can you reduce the impact of grass on your trees? Mulch! Woodland trees grow with leaf litter all the time, assorted small shrubs, some native grasses and forbs. These plants do compete with each other, but mostly for sunlight. They are adapted to grow together. Mulching a large area around your tree creates, over time, a soil environment similar to a woodland. The soil is cooler, and moister in the growing season than grass covered ground. This benefits the trees roots system by making the soil better for growth with more available water allowing the tree to be healthier. Maintaining a wide mulch ring, 2 to 4 inches deep is an investment that will improve your trees health. Which in turn will benefit you for years.



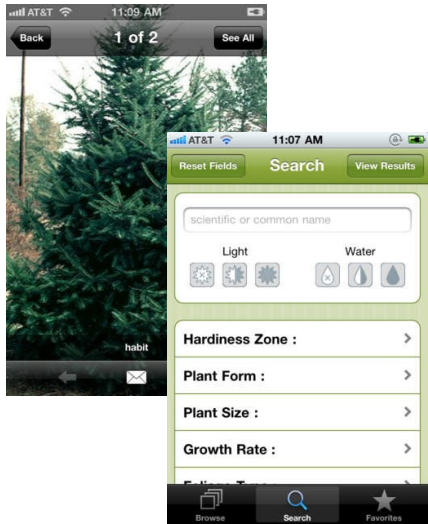
Chinese Pistache
Pistacia chinensis

Native to central and western China, Taiwan, and Philippines, Chinese pistache is under used in our landscapes. Useful as a street, park or yard tree. It ranges from 30 to 50 feet tall and 25 to 40 feet wide. Develops an oval-rounded crown with age. Young trees may not develop straight trunks and have multiple leaders. Pruning to maintain a straight trunk and develop a crown early in life is needed. This tree is reported easy to transplant and tolerates a wide range of soil conditions. After establishment, it is quite drought tolerant. Leaves are about 10 inches long, alternate, pinnately compound with 10 to 12 leaflets. Male and female flowers are not showy. Fruit, 1/4 inch purple to red drupe, can be interesting and eaten by birds. Few known serious disease or insect pests affect this tree. Known for being tolerant of urban conditions. Cultivars ‘Keith Davey’, ‘Pearl Street’, and Sarah’s Radiance’ are listed in literature.

Plant illustration by Jenny M. Lyverse, from Landscape Plants for Eastern North America, 2nd Edition, Harrison L. Flint Author

App Review - Durr's Tree and Shrub Finder

This app is the electronic version of Durr's book *The Manual of Woody Landscape Plants*. It has all of the same plants, but is enhanced by 7600 color images. Searchable by 72 criteria, including hardiness zones, water and light requirements, growth characteristics, flowers, fruits, and fall colors, you can determine the plants best for your site while right there. No need to return to the office to research options. Available for iPhone, iPad, and iPod Touch on the iTunes store for \$14.99. This is a real bargain compared to cost of the paper book. Unfortunately, it is not available for other operating systems.



Pest Highlight - vein pocket gall of pin oak

The larval stage of the small flies called midges (gnats) *Macrodiplosis quercusoruca* cause vein pocket gall. In early spring, as the pin oak leaves are unfurling to flat, the female midge lays her eggs on the leaf. The larva that hatch move to leaf veins and begin to feed. The leaf in response to this forms the gall which covers the maggot. Usually, this takes only a few days. Heavy infestations can cause individual leaves to curl up. By mid-spring, mature larva emerge and drop to the ground. They remain there until the next spring, pupate, and complete the life cycle. While visually an infested tree can look dramatically damaged, it is not a major issue for the trees. No treatment is recommended.



April 3

Missouri Arbor Day

April 23

Joplin MCFC meeting, 7 AM - 9 AM, Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center, Joplin, MO

April 24

National Arbor Day

May 6

ISA Certified Arborist, Utility Specialist, and Municipal Specialist Exam, Jefferson City, MO, Registration deadline April 20, 2015, Register at www.isa-arbor.com/certification/becomeCertified/

May 28

Joplin MCFC meeting, 7 AM - 9 AM, Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center, Joplin, MO

June 9

ISA Certified Arborist, Utility Specialist, and Municipal Specialist Exam, Springfield, MO, Registration deadline May 21, 2015, Register at www.isa-arbor.com/certification/becomeCertified/

June 12 - 13

SRT Climber 2-Day Workshop, Kansas City, MO, Information and registration at <http://tcia.org/training/srt-climber-specialist/20150612-srt-climber-2-day-workshop>

June 25

Joplin MCFC meeting, 7 AM - 9 AM, Wildcat Glades Conservation & Audubon Center, Joplin, MO

July 11 - 14

Cultivate'15 by AmericanHort, Columbus, OH, Information at <http://cultivate15.org/>

July 15

Greener Solutions to Municipal Landscape Design, St. Louis, MO, Information at <http://www.missouribotanicalgarden.org/visit/family-of-attractions/shaw-nature-reserve/gardens-gardening-at-shaw-nature-reserve/native-landscaping-for-professionals/the-shaw-professional-landscaping-series-at-alberi.aspx>

August 8 - 12

2015 International Society of Arboriculture Conference, Orlando, FL, Information at <http://www.isa-arbor.com/events/reg/event.aspx?EventID=167>

If I knew I should die tomorrow,
I would plant a tree today.

~Stephen Girard

WHAT'S HAPPENING

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