

WILLIAMSON COUNTY MASTER GARDENER ASSOCIATION

THE PERENNIAL

WILLIAMSON COUNTY
UTEXENSION
INSTITUTE OF AGRICULTURE
THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE



Volume 6 | November 2018

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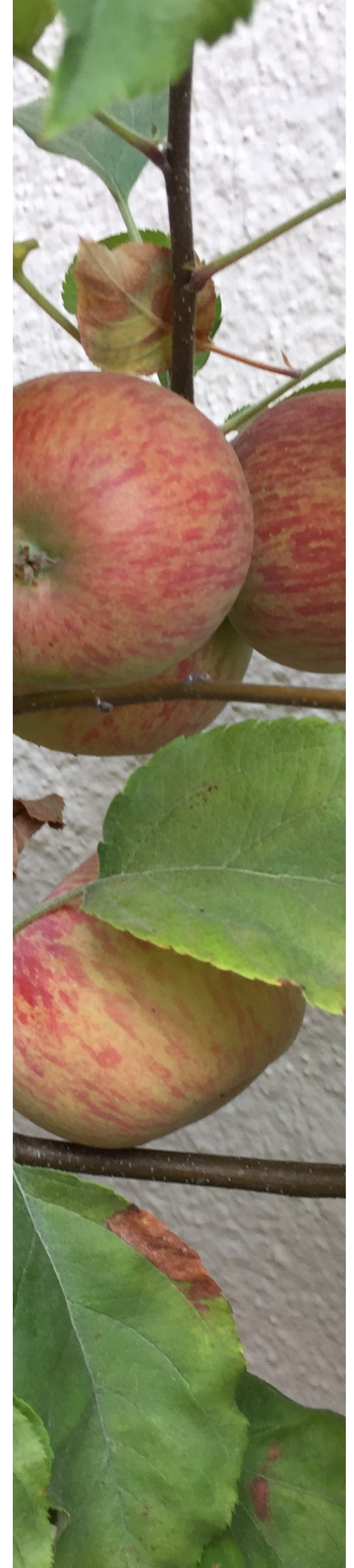
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VOL_ NTEE_ Means nothing unless U R in it



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OUR ROOTS

Fellow Master Gardeners,

As the fall winds down, work has been completed to prepare gardens for the winter. Time to sharpen, clean up and store tools while thinking about next year's plans. In the meantime, it is the time of year to enjoy the holidays; first, Halloween, then Thanksgiving and Christmas. As Master Gardeners, this is our time to kick back and reflect on the garden accomplishments of this past season and enjoy the holidays with our families. It will not be long before the garden catalogs come in the mail.

This gardening season was completed with the 3rd annual picnic, which was a fun time socializing with Master Gardener friends and sharing good food. Many folks expressed their delight in the gathering and with the location in Jim Warren City Park. With some of the ideas I heard, next year promises to be even better.

Our last get-together for this year will be the Awards Dinner on November 12 at the Ag Center. Please make every effort to join us for a great evening, as there is plenty of turkey and ham ordered, and we do not want to store it. We need volunteers to eat it up. After that, the next meeting will be in January 2019.

While having had the honor to serve as your President the last two years, it has been enjoyable, rewarding and fulfilling getting to know folks better. I will always cherish the memories and fun during these past two years. Being privileged to work with the Board and membership, I am grateful for the experience and opportunity.

WCMGA President

Jack Melnick



Sterile Sugar Maple photo by Amy Dismukes

HOW TO KNOW WHEN IT MIGHT BE TIME TO LET GO

... recognizing tree risk.

By Amy Dismukes

Since the beginning of time, trees have provided humans with two of the basic needs for survival, food and oxygen. As we have evolved, so did the trees, expanding into the additional provisions of shelter, medicine and tools. Today, trees play a much larger role in our community, social, ecological and environmental, property and economical values.

Some trees live for hundreds of years, whereas others may only live for twenty-five. The healthier and happier the tree, the longer the expected life. As caretakers of these magnificent creatures, our first responsibility is to be observant and notate issues.

Integrated pest management (IPM), a system that utilizes all suitable controls (cultural, chemical, mechanical and chemical) and information to reduce or manipulate pests (both insect and plant disease) to tolerable levels. The idea is to be proactive versus reactive, so the first step is just plain ole paying attention ... so break out those notebooks and iPad tablets and start documenting your observations, as you 'scout' the landscape. Scouting is an implemental step in IPM. When utilized, issues can often be stopped before they become a real problem.

Because trees are such an important part of landscapes, and lives, it can be very difficult to know what to look for or when it might be time to let go.



Ash with exit holes/galleries and tip dieback

photo by Amy Dismukes



Maple trunk with major trunk damage and borer exit holes/galleries *photo by Amy Dismukes*

Many factors come into play when deciding to remove a tree, such as the cost of removal, the environmental effects of removal, the shade it provides, and even emotional ties. Declining trees within a natural area can often be allowed to die in place if there's no threat to property or person,

however it should be noted that declining trees attract insects, pathogens and animals.

Hazardous trees with structural defects should be evaluated a certified arborist with tree health care experience. Often, County Extension Agents can aid in this process, if experienced in plant health. Keep in mind, most pruning and removals can be dangerous and require a pro. Arborists have passed a national licensing exam and maintain annual certification requirements, all maintained by the International Society of Arboriculture.

So if you want to be proactive or have a suspect tree, there are many things that you can 'scout' for, in relation to tree health. Notating issues early will allow you to document the severity over time. Or maybe you're having a hard time making the decision to remove, and need some help. Below are a few symptoms or signs that can help you notice a tree calling for help ... and even help you to know when it might actually be time to let go.

IS IT A DESIRABLE SPECIES? There are many characteristics that make a tree "undesirable", including: weak wood prone to frequent breakage (THINK BRADFORD PEAR), always dropping large quantities of debris (mulberry), shallow roots that damage lawns and pavement (willows), often infested with diseases or insects specific (box elder and the box elder bug) to the tree species and invasiveness (mimosa, empress) by prolific reseeding in the landscape.



Maple with splitting at the base and phytophthora basal canker
photo by Amy Dismukes



Cropped pin oak *photo by Amy Dismukes*



Ash tree with severe epicormics growth on trunk and crown
photo by Amy Dismukes

IS THERE ROT OR FUNGAL STRUCTURES GROWING OUT OF THE TRUNK OR NEAR THE BASE OF THE TREE? Not all fungi are considered pathogenic, however, when mushrooms or rot is visible growing on or out of a tree, it's an indication of internal decomposition. If on the main trunk or at the base, more concern should be given, as mushrooms grow on decomposing organic matter, hence, the tissue within your tree is decomposing, making for a hazardous tree. Fungi growing on trees should be evaluated by a pro.

IS THE TREE LEANING? Obviously, a tree with a lean is more of a hazard over those growing upright. A special concern should be shown towards those with a SUDDEN lean, which indicates a weak, potentially damaged, root system.

IS YOUR TREE UNDER A POWER LINE? In middle TN, mature tree height under power lines is recommended to cap at 20'. If your tree is growing into lines and could cause injury or pose risk to drag a line, the utility company will take care of the

problem for you, with or without your permission. The practice is known as topping and is not a recommended practice. Topping can stress trees, lead to decay and produce shoots that are weakly attached to the tree, meaning more prone to breakage, etc. Topping also leaves you with a pretty unsightly tree, knobby knees and all.

IS THERE DAMAGE TO THE TRUNK? Cracks, seams, sloughing bark, open wounds can all lead to internal decay. Wood borers often use these opportunities to 'jump on board', hiding and feeding, damaging the vascular tissue. Sawdust is an excellent sign of wood boring insect activity. Severe damage to the main trunk may warrant removal. If the wound is smaller and the tree is healthy, it should begin to produce wound wood and heal the damage itself.

IS THE TREE HOLLOW? The arteries and blood vessels (aka xylem and phloem) of a tree are on the outside, under the bark. When the tissue is compromised, rot may set in. A hollow tree makes for a compromised structure and needs a professional for sound wood evaluation.



Bradford pear split, pinning a car *photo by Amy Dismukes*

ARE THERE DEAD BRANCHES FALLING OR HANGING WITHIN THE CANOPY? Trees in a state of decline are notorious for dropping large broken or diseased limbs, which is incredibly dangerous, especially if the tree large and could cause damage or injury. Prune for health and remove any crossing or rubbing branches, branches with very narrow angles, especially if your tree is prone to splitting.

IS THERE BUNCHY GROWTH AT THE BASE OR LOW IN THE CANOPY? Epicormic growth is growth that is stimulate and occurs in response to stress. New shoots develop as a result of a stressor, be it a sudden environmental change, thinning, crown dieback, heavy pruning or topping, root disturbance or death, wood boring insect damage, such as with Emerald Ash Borer, etc. Epicormic growth is an indication that there is something wrong and the issue should be evaluated.

DOES YOUR TREE COLOR EARLY IN THE FALL? Early fall color (or leaf drop) can often be a sign your tree is stressed ... specifically water stressed. If a tree feels it cannot support the canopy above, it will begin to senesce earlier than normal. We saw quite a bit of early fall color and leaf drop after 2016 drought and have continued to observe the issue even this year. Many trees need a little more water than the normal guys, so keep that in mind! Finally, a few additional considerations when pondering the removal of a tree include: ° Will the growth of others be enhanced if the suspect is removed? ° Will my property value increase or decrease? ° Does the tree interfere with traffic flow or signs? ° Does the tree have historic or sentimental value? If so, it's ok to ponder the decision. You can always turn a bowl in remembrance of your special friend.

As always, happy gardening ... and remember, trees provide and 'care' for us so let's do the same for them.



Tulip poplar with early fall color and leaf drop

photo by Amy Dismukes

Thanks to the work of our T-shirt committee Lisa Headley, Shannon Hazelton and Mary Pogge, a new WCMG Tee-shirt has been ordered.

The new T-shirt design will be on a purple shirt and plans are to distribute them in early 2019.

GARDEN COMPANIONS

MY HOUSE PLANT ROUTINE

By S. Tucker Runyon



The end of summer marks several turning points and brings about certain bittersweet change. For me, and many other gardeners out there, it is the time to bring house plants in from their long summer vacation. Having been put out in late April or early May, most have had five or six months of warm weather to grow. And being that most house plants are tropicals, they not only live but thrive in our warm, humid southern summers. But now, that idyllic weather is coming to a close, and many of our plants move back indoors.

Here is a look at my routine and some of the reasons I do what I do.

One of the biggest concerns when bringing plants inside is the pests, that they often harbor. I have discovered a few tricks to reduce the number of problems (mostly through trial and error). Obviously, I try to monitor for problems all year, but when bringing plants inside, a little problem can turn into a big one very quickly. So, about a month before the average night temperatures get to the low forties, I apply a systemic insecticide or three-in-one that is designed for potted plants. I try to make sure all my valuable houseplants and tropicals are cared for before the nights get around 40/45 degrees. Then on

moving day, everyone gets a bath with the garden hose. I try to really focus my attention on the underside of the leaves where aphids, spider mites, and mealybugs hold fast. I then keep a close eye on them, and make sure I have my backup on hand for emergency use inside; an organic, plant based three-in-one garden spray. Just as with everything else, early detection is crucial.

Watering can also be an issue. Plants, both their leaves and soil, dry out much more quickly indoors than out. However, you also have to be careful not to overwater, as most house plants go semi-dormant in the winter. This also means, however, that they don't require much or any fertilizer! One less chore! One more thing, before I leave the topic of water, is humidity. Almost all plants would prefer and benefit from more moisture in the air than is often present in our homes, especially in the winter with the heat on. There are three ways to combat the low humidity.



MY HOUSE PLANT ROUTINE *continued*

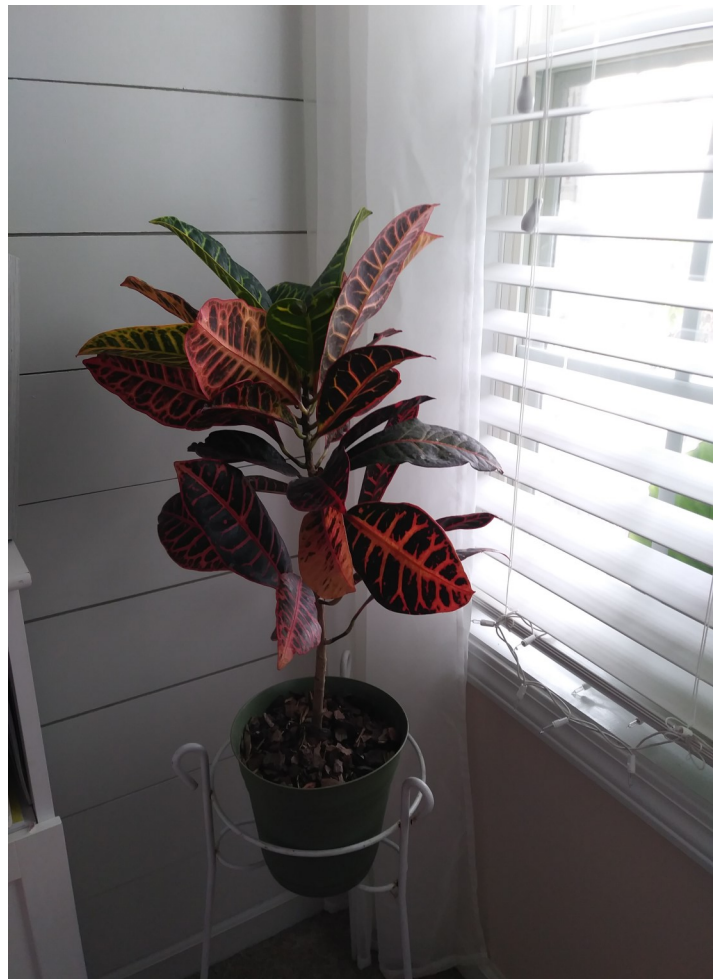


1) Misting with a spray bottle several times weekly, 2) placing pots in a shallow saucer with pebbles and water or scattering shallow dishes near/under the plants, and 3) placing plants close together. When they are close together, they trap and share moisture. The water in the saucers evaporates, raising the humidity in the surrounding area. Remember, some plants can have huge setbacks adjusting to too many things changing at once. Any changes should be made gradually.

Lighting is another factor to monitor when moving plants. With many of my house plants that get to "go on vacation", I place them in slightly less sun than they would "prefer" outside. This makes moving indoors in lower light less stressful. And, let's not forget that when spring comes around again, and that is never a moment too soon for me, GRADUALLY acclimate your plants back out to where they will spend the warmer months. Many plants, for instance

almost all the figs (figus), hate change, and lose lots of leaves when stressed. Once things level out, they tend to quickly pick up where they left off. One thing I have observed before for larger plants is to keep them on an attractive dolly or cart to make relocating a breeze. They can be rolled anywhere as long as it is relatively smooth. Every year, I see so many house plants that have been carelessly placed outside. And every time, the severity and intensity of the light scorches the plants, which is entirely unnecessary and avoidable.

This advice may feel a bit like preaching to the choir, but hopefully some of these tips and reminders will help someone and come in handy.



THE BARK

November

- Plant tulip and daffodil bulbs for a stunning display next spring
- Cut back the yellowing foliage of herbaceous perennials, and lift and divide overcrowded clumps to maintain their vigor
- Plant out spring bedding displays of pansies, violas and primulas
- Prepare a bed for planting autumn garlic
- If you have access to fresh manure, now is the time to spread it across the surface of your vegetable beds to rot down over winter
- Stake top-heavy brassicas
- Tidy up your strawberry plants - cut off any dead leaves and remove runners
- Continue to clear fallen leaves off the lawn to keep it healthy
- Create compost bins for collecting fallen leaves and dead plant material
- If the soil is dry, give your garden one last good watering before the ground freezes
- Once plants are dormant, it is a good time to lift and relocate any plant that you want to move
- Winterize spigots and take in hoses



- Water fall crops during dry spells
- Order seed catalogs
- Organize seeds and determine what you will need for spring
- Don't overlook other great plant choices for holiday color. Poinsettias aren't your only option. Consider kalanchoe, cyclamen, bromeliads, 'Diamond Frost' euphorbia, Christmas cactus, orchids, or even blooming mini-cactus.
- Pot up amaryllis, paperwhites or pre-chilled hyacinths so you'll have winter blooms inside for the holidays and beyond.

December

- Cover unused beds with mulch or a thick layer of leaves
- Clean gardening tools
- Clean any pots or seed trays
- Feed fall crops (do this every 6 weeks during the growing season)

January

- Inventory left-over seeds
- Keep an eye out for spider mites, mealybugs and scale insects on houseplants
- Start planning gardens and other yard projects
- Keep your bird feeders full
- Compost or chip your Christmas tree
- Get a soil test to prepare for amendments in spring

CONTINUED GROWTH

WCMGA Monthly Meetings

NOVEMBER 12

ANNUAL HOLIDAY DINNER AND AWARD PRESENTATION

DECEMBER

NO MEETING– HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

JANUARY 14

SPEAKER– TBA

Several members have expressed interest in having a long sleeve / polo type shirt with the design embroidered on it.

This type of shirt is more expensive than the Association can handle. Ryan Palmer has a contact who, if you provide your own shirt (or tote bag), can do the embroidery for \$8.

If you are interested in having the shirt of your choice embroidered, please be prepared to provide the shirt, tote, etc. (no hats) to RYAN **during our November annual dinner meeting - Monday, November 12**

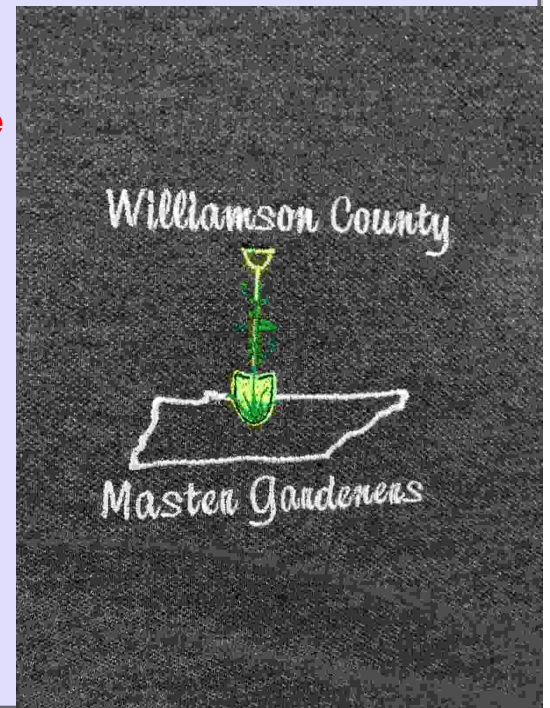
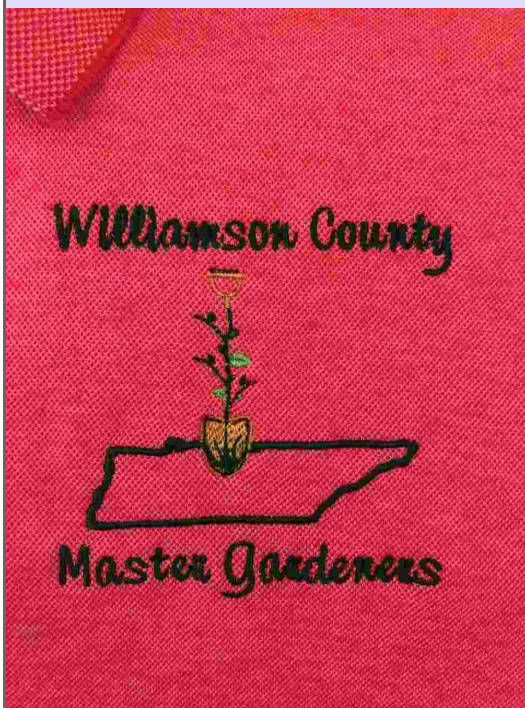
Your item, will be ready for you to pick up at our January Association meeting.

There will be a choice of three embroidery colors to choose from. (see photos)

If you are interested in this offer, please

bring your item to be embroidered along with \$8 (cash or checks only please) to the November 12 meeting.

If you have questions prior to our November meeting, please contact Ryan at 615-310-3758



A decorative border made of green leaves and flowers surrounds the text. The border is thicker on the left and right sides, with more intricate floral designs at the top and bottom.

2018 Annual Awards Dinner

MONDAY November 12, 2018

6:00 p.m.

Williamson County Ag Center

**Meat and drinks will be provided by
WCMGA.**

**Please provide a dish and/or dessert to
share with everyone.**

**Use the sign-up sheet [here](#) to indicate
what you are bringing and if you can
volunteer for setup or cleanup.**

The meat will be ordered on

November 7, 2018,

so please sign up before then.

**All WCMGA members, including spouse,
significant other, and immediate family
are invited.**

**For those who sign up to volunteer with
the dinner, please arrive at 4:15 p.m.
Your assistance is much appreciated.**

Thank you.

FOR SPROUTS

Riddles

What do you get if you divide the circumference
of a pumpkin by its diameter?

Pumpkin pi

What do you call a stolen yam?

A hot potato



PRINT AND COLOR ME!

Newsletter Articles Wanted

You can earn volunteer hours by writing about a garden you visited, a technique you tried which worked (or did not), or your enthusiasm for some special plant, or any interesting garden topic.

Keep contributing. Keep reading. Keep sharing. Please send your contributions to: wcmgatheperennial@gmail.com.

Need to record your amazing
volunteer hours?
Click [HERE](#)

THE DIRT



SAVE THE DATES –

2019 regional MG meetings

May 21, 2019—eastern region Blount County

June 20, 2019—central region Sumner County

October 12, 2019—western region Hardeman County



Mary Ann Callahan explains vegetable gardening at the 4H Fun Fair



WCMGA Mission

The mission of the Williamson County Master Gardeners Association (WCMGA) is to provide research-based, horticultural education, while promoting environmental stewardship, via community volunteerism.

WCMGA operates under the umbrella of UTIA and the UT/TSU Williamson County Extension Office.

Contact Us

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