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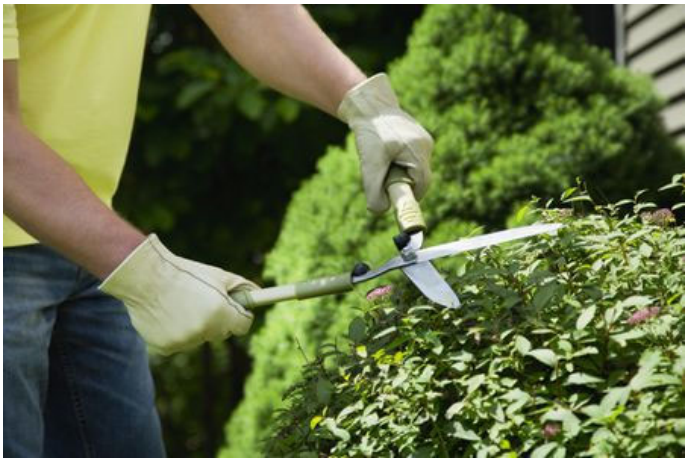
OSU Extension - Auglaize County Weekly Horticulture Newsletter – 10-4-19

Pruning trees and shrubs



Pruning can be done to achieve many goals in the landscape such as encouraging flowering; directing overall shape; managing pest problems; thinning; and rejuvenation just to name a few. No matter what your goal may be, the appropriate timing for "making-the-cuts" will help determine the optimal time to prune.

Winter can be a great time to tackle this maintenance practice proactively. It can be easier to see the overall plant structure, especially without leaves camouflaging main branches and lateral limbs. A simple word of warning is - if one prunes a spring-flowering shrub such as Koreanspice viburnum (*Viburnum carlesii*) now or this winter then the number of blooms next spring will be greatly reduced. Spring-blooming plants have already set their flower buds for next year and pruning these plants now or in the winter will remove those buds. Other plants that would be similarly impacted include lilac, forsythia, serviceberry and crabapples. These types of trees and shrubs should have been pruned shortly after they had bloomed in the spring.

Pruning cuts should be made just above a bud. Flush cuts, a cut made directly next to the main trunk or larger branches should be avoided. You will want to look for the collar and prune just on the outside of this area. And, it is no longer recommended to follow pruning cuts with a pruning paint.

It is a great idea, especially if you are relatively new to the pruning scene to take before and after photos, and then revisit the plant about every six months to see the reaction of the plant to the pruning cuts that you made. It can be a tremendous learning experience. You will likely see many examples of being spot-on, but there can be the occasional example of a pruning decision that you might be able to improve upon the next time.

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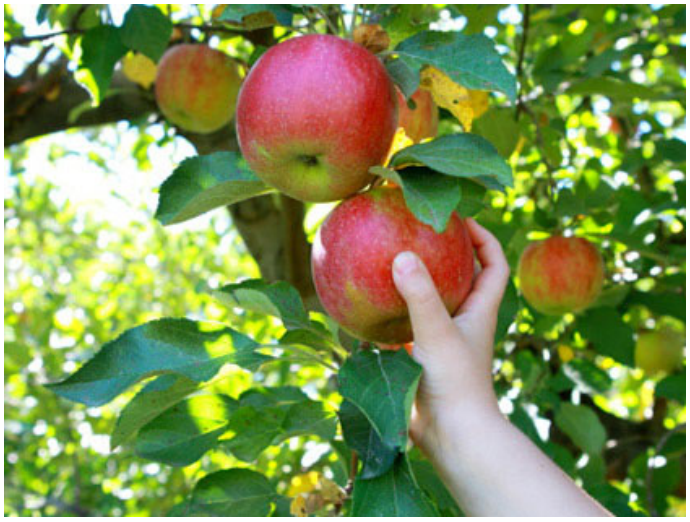
Prepare the pruning equipment before using it. The sharper the pruning equipment the less stress to the trees and shrubs. Also before making any cuts sterilize the equipment, especially if the equipment was last used to prune diseased plant material. Use a 10% bleach solution to sterilize the equipment.

So, head out to the garden and enjoy the therapy that pruning can provide...it can be truly cathartic!

Written by Amy Stone and Jeff Stachler

Local Observations

Grey goldenrod



Apples

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Good Afternoon! I pray you are well! Finally some significant rain!

It rained 3 days this past week. Rainfall on Friday, September 27th, ranged from 0.25" at about 3 miles west of St. Marys to 1.2" at about 2 mile west of Minster. Rainfall on Sunday ranged from 0.1" at Townline –Lima and Wapak – Fisher Roads to 0.75" at about 3 miles west of St. Marys. Rainfall on Wednesday ranged from 0" at about 2 miles west of Minster to 0.13" at about 5 miles east of New Hampshire. Rainfall for the week ranged from 0.64" at Townline – Lima and Wapak - Fisher roads to 1.45" at about 2 miles west of Minster. The average for the week was 0.92". The total for the Month of September was unbelievably 2.3". The total rainfall for the year equals 40.61". We have seen mostly above normal temperatures this past week.

I'm still harvesting tomatoes, muskmelon, watermelon and Swiss chard. My bees are not doing well at the moment.

VegNet

Plant health check – get to the root of it

September 28, 2019

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Root-knot nematode galls on tomato

As the vegetable growing season winds down, now is a good time to dig up plants in high tunnels and open fields and determine the health of the roots. Root diseases that may not kill plants outright can nonetheless stunt plant growth and reduce yields. Look for plants that appear less vigorous than others and remove them with a shovel, taking care to maintain root integrity. Shake off the soil and rinse the roots gently with water. Then examine roots for symptoms.

While some soilborne diseases such as Phytophthora blight can "explode" in the field from relatively low initial inoculum levels, many others build up slowly from season to season. Root-knot, caused by the the plant pathogenic nematode *Meloidogyne* spp., is increasing in prevalence in Ohio in high tunnel tomatoes and other crops in open fields. Root-knot is fairly easy to identify – galls are clearly visible on roots. The Northern root-knot nematode, which predominates in northern Ohio, causes small galls, while the southern species, which occurs in southern Ohio, causes large galls. Since root-knot nematodes have a very broad host range, crop rotation may not be helpful, although certain cover crops such as sudangrass are toxic to nematodes, and wheat and corn are not hosts of northern root-knot nematodes. Anaerobic soil disinfestation (ASD) is highly effective against root-knot.

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Corky root rot of tomatoes

End-of-season root health checks are especially important for high tunnel tomatoes, which are often produced in the same soil year after year. Root-knot, Verticillium wilt, corky root rot, black dot root rot, and Pythium root rot are among the root diseases that can predominate in long-term non-rotated tomatoes. The roots should be evaluated every year to assess disease development and the need for control measures such as grafting on disease-resistant rootstocks and ASD. A fact sheet describing tomato soil borne diseases and their management can be found here.

From New and Unusual to Common (or Maybe Not): The Dynamic World of Specialty Varieties

September 28, 2019

"Specialty" — as it applies to vegetable varieties – usually refers to ones differing in at least one noticeable way from the mainstream version of the crop preferred or expected by most buyers. That difference can be in

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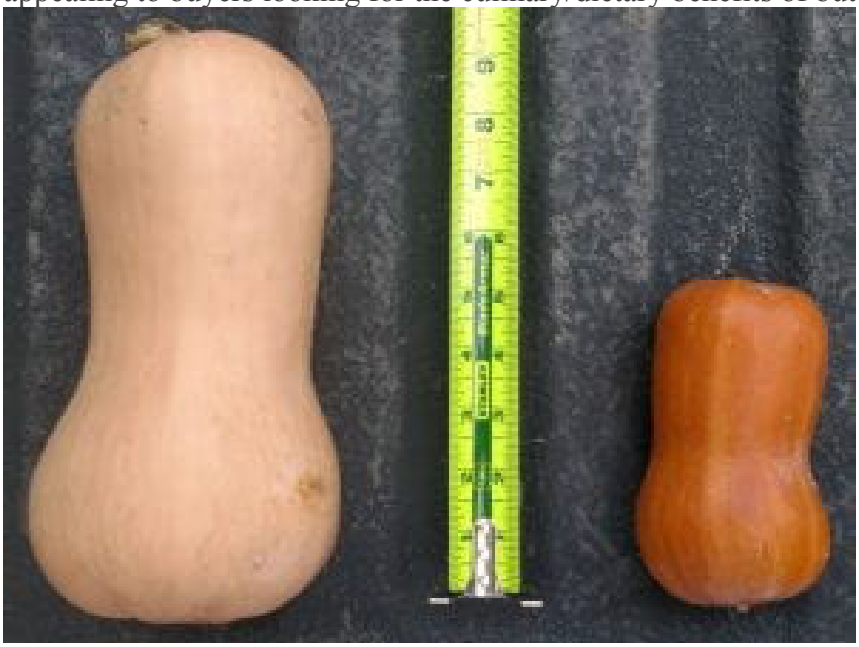
size, shape, color, flavor, texture, and/or other characteristics. Oftentimes, specialty varieties are initially grown specifically to attract or meet the stated interest of buyers looking for "something different from what they can get everywhere else" and willing to pay higher prices for it. In a small number of cases, markets for specialty varieties increase to the point that the specialty designation or perception falls away, i.e., the variety is so widely grown that it resets what is considered normal or mainstream, but that process can require years to complete. The opposite can occur, too, as markets for individual specialty varieties can remain small and fade quickly. In any case, when grown and marketed well to a sufficiently large number of buyers, even if local, specialty variety production can be profitable. Well documented cases of specialty vegetable and variety production being significant for many growers on both coasts and within easy reach of urban areas in states between them fill the extension, research, and industry literature. Some growers are, more or less, always searching for the next unusual variety that will help set their farm apart.

A variety just being different is not enough to attract and maintain the interest of most buyers. The difference must be meaningful. In the well-chronicled case of 'Honeynut' squash (e.g., see https://www.bonappetit.com/story/honeynut-squash-history), the most meaningful difference may be size since 'Honeynut' is positioned as a mini-butternut. Its small size makes 'Honeynut' more versatile and appealing to buyers looking for the culinary/dietary benefits of butternut fruit but in a smaller package.



We included 'Honeynut' squash in two experiments in 2019, planting it in the same rows as 'Metro PMR'. 'Honeynut' was used as the "spacer" between plots of 'Metro PMR', the actual focus of the experiments, both of which were managed organically. However, observing 'Honeynut' during the season and completing

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informal eating quality assessments, its appeal is clear. 'Honeynut' serves as a reminder of the benefit of considering alternative varieties, especially as the period for selecting varieties and ordering seed for 2020 gets underway.

Beware of late worms on peppers and tomatoes!

September 28, 2019

Fall armyworm and beet armyworm are two pests that we monitor with pheromone traps throughout the summer at several sites in Ohio. These two pests are sporadic in occurrence; they are sometimes absent in Ohio and sometimes present at damaging levels, especially in September and October. These were absent for most of this summer at Ohio sites, but are present now at some sites.

Fall armyworm attacks sweet corn, peppers, and tomatoes. This year, the fall armyworm was detected in Huron County, Medina County, and Franklin County starting in late August, and it is still being detected at those locations.

The beet armyworm has been absent at most sites but has been detected during the past week in Franklin County. It attacks peppers and tomatoes.

These two pests are challenging to manage because their appearance is so sporadic and because the larvae are generally tolerant of pyrethroids; they are better controlled by non-pyrethroids such as Avaunt, Proclaim, Radiant, or Intrepid.

Corn earworm is a third pest that is best known as a significant pest on sweet corn in late August and into September, but once the sweet corn is gone, the corn earworm can cause significant damage to bell peppers. It also attacks tomatoes where it prefers green fruit over red fruit. Corn earworm moths were detected at very high levels in late August at some sites, and they are still being detected at high density in Clark, Franklin, and Huron Counties.

-Celeste Welty, Extension Entomologist

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Downy mildew on pumpkins in Ohio

September 28, 2019

Downy mildew was found this week in organic pumpkins in Harrison County. Options for downy mildew control are limited in organic cucurbits, and at this point in the growing season the damage may not significantly affect yield. Downy mildew affects pumpkin leaves but not vines or fruit. The main danger, once fruits have matured, is defoliation and subsequent sunburn of the fruit. If plants are defoliated, and sunny weather is expected, fruits should be removed from the field and stored in the shade.

Previously this summer we found downy mildew on cucumbers and cantaloupes in our sentinel plots and on commercial farms. The disease appeared on cucumbers/melons much later in the growing season than expected, first detected on August 22. The strain of the downy mildew pathogen that appears early, usually in early July, is thought to originate in greenhouses in the Great Lakes region. This strain only affects cucumbers and melons, and we don't know why the early introductions did not happen this year. The strain that infects all cucurbits originates in the South, always arrives in August or later, and is likely the main

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culprit this year. We are currently testing isolates to identify the strain type from plants we've collected in Ohio.

BYGL

Fall Color may Indicate MORE than the approach of Autumn!

Authors
Thomas deHaas
Published on
October 3, 2019

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I received a call recently from Miguel Preza, the Integrated Pest Manager for a local nursery about the onset of early fall color.

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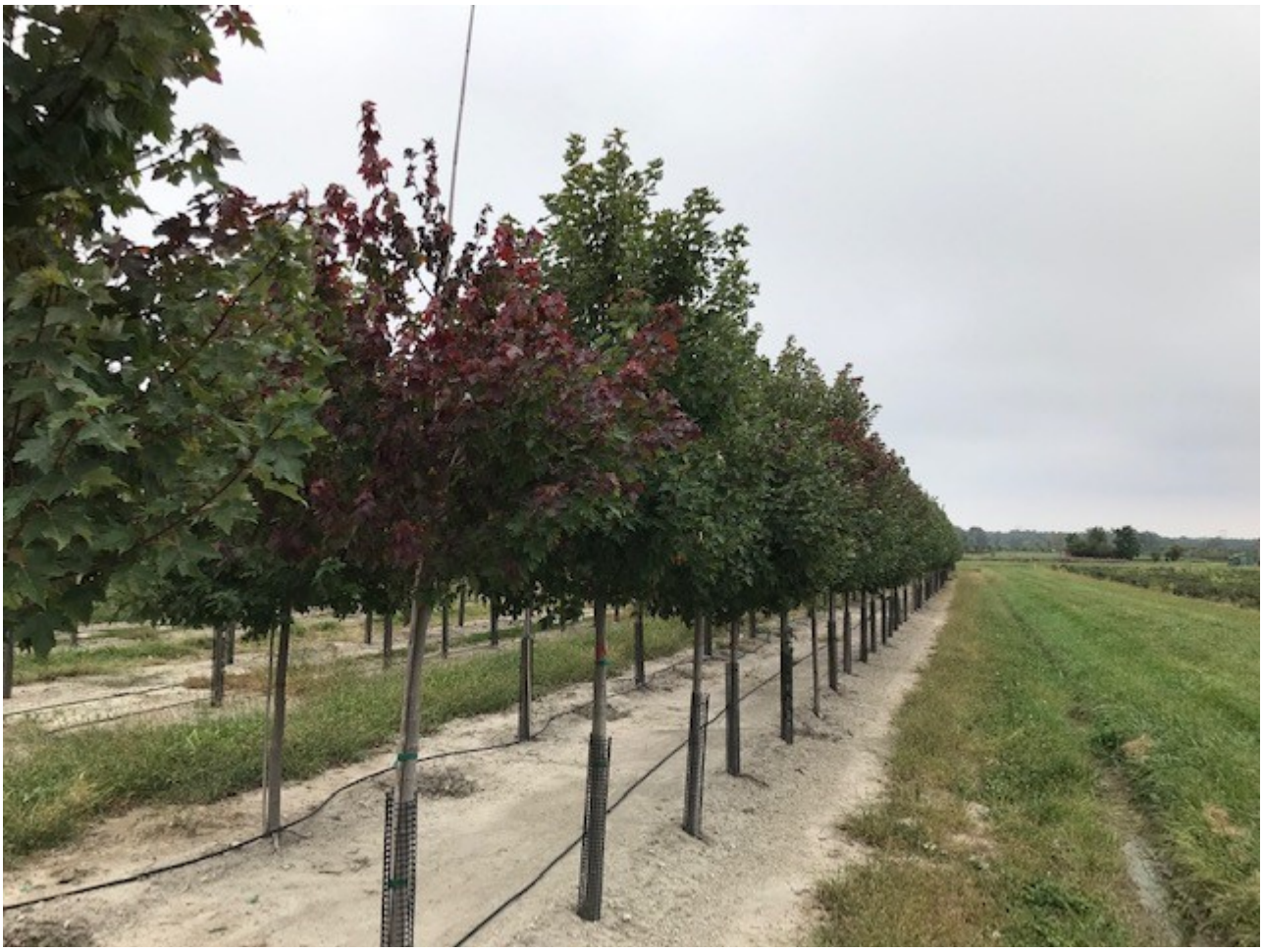

He said something very helpful, “If the tree or shrub looks different than the others, take a closer look.

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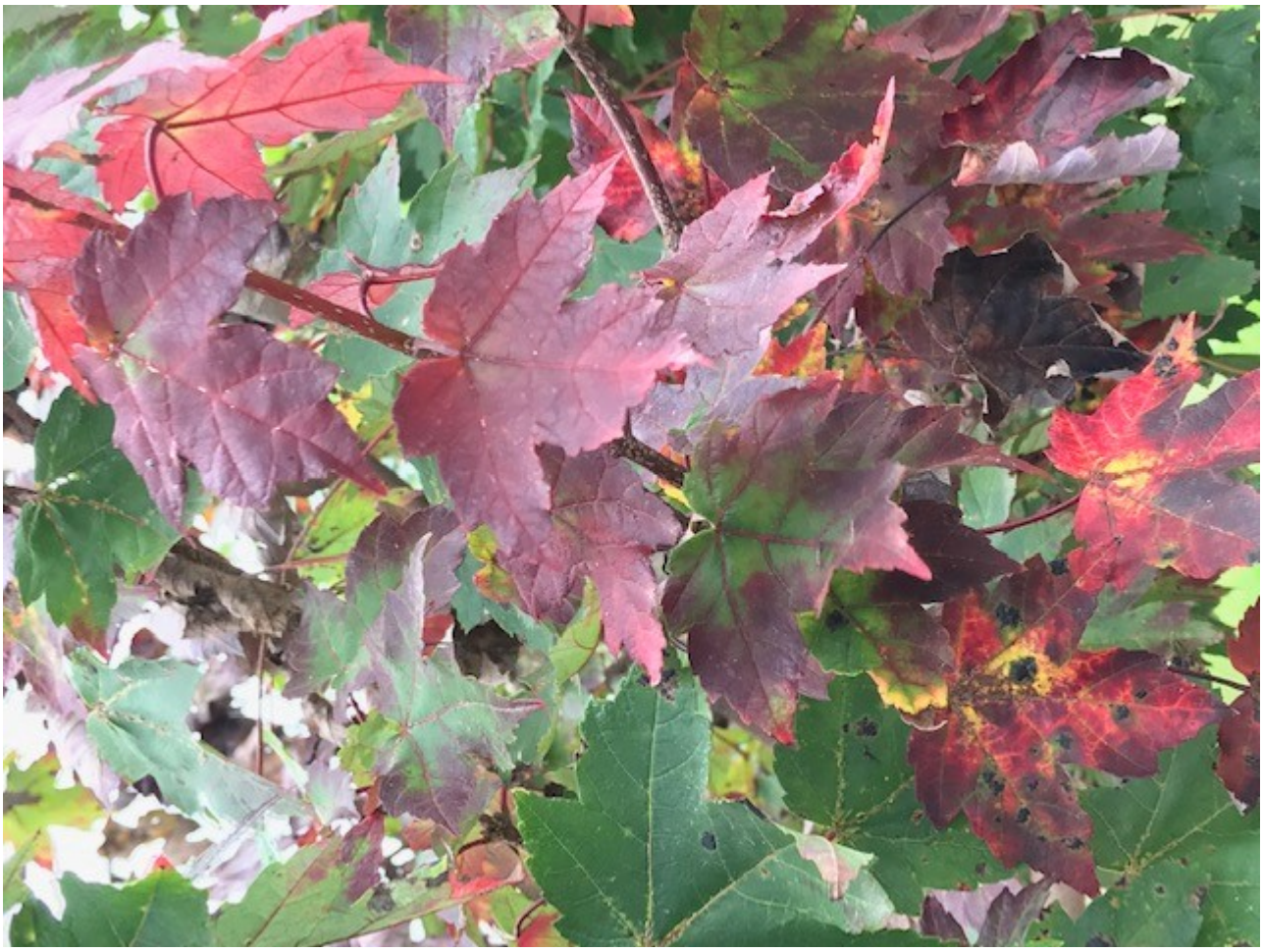

In a planting of red Maples *Acer rubrum,* a couple of trees were showing fall color ahead of the others. On closer inspection, the trees in color were infested with oyster shell scale.

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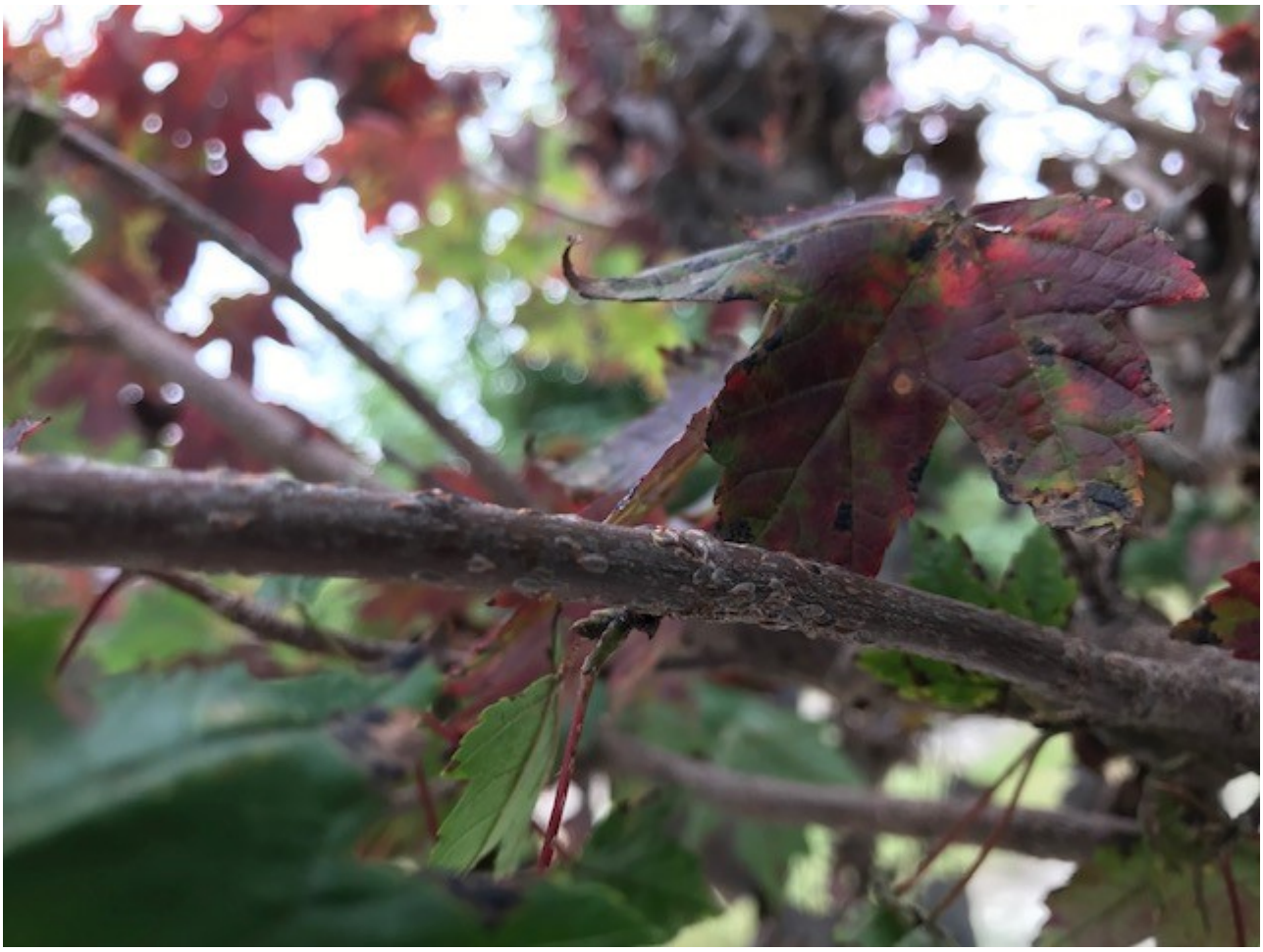

Oystershell scale is a common armored scale that can infest more than 100 plant species. Among the common hosts are lilac, ash, dogwood, maple, and willow. Males and females are about 1/10" inch long and resemble oyster shells.

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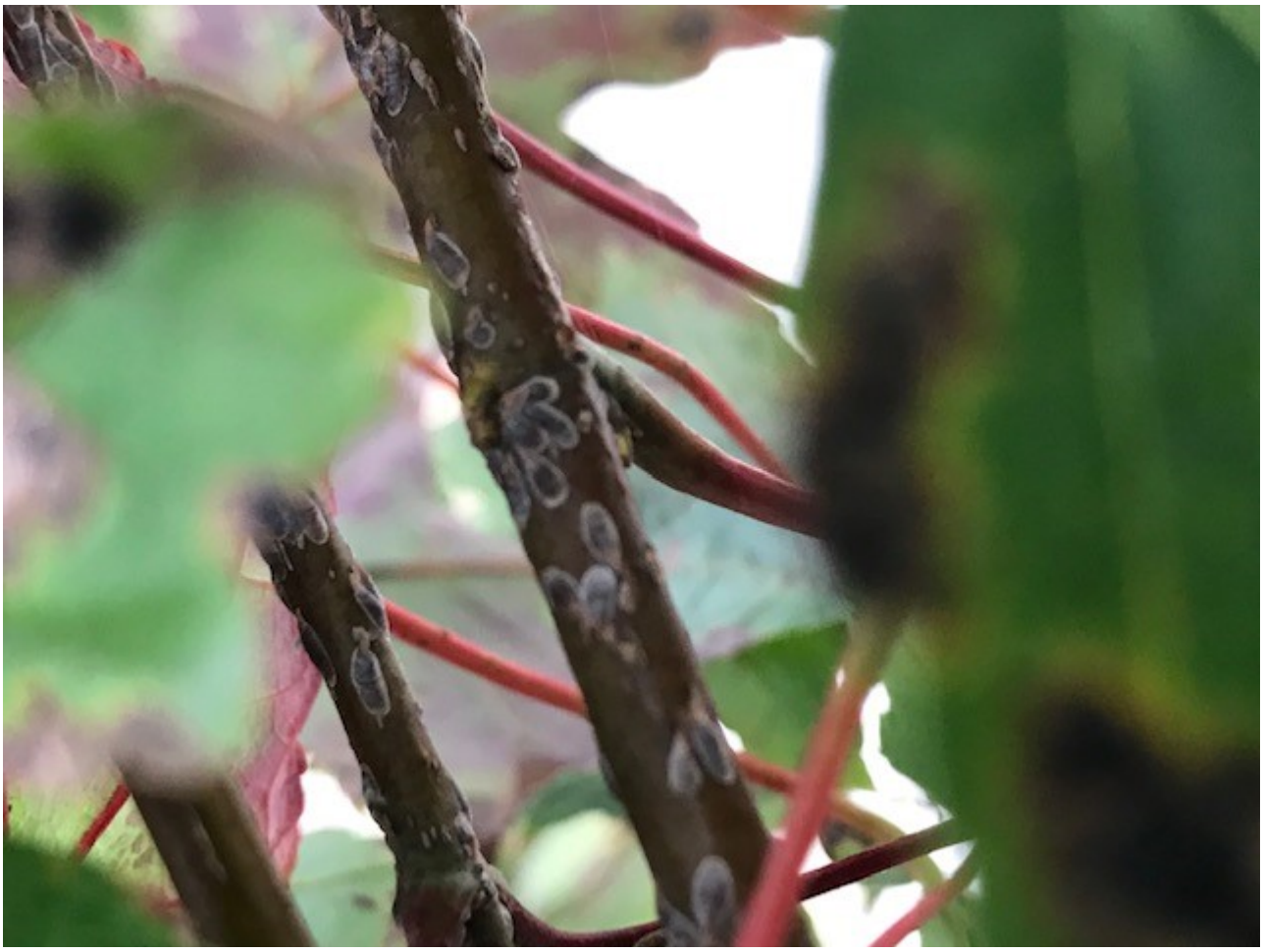

Their drab, bark-like appearance makes them easy to overlook, even on close inspection. Heavy infestations can kill twig or branches.

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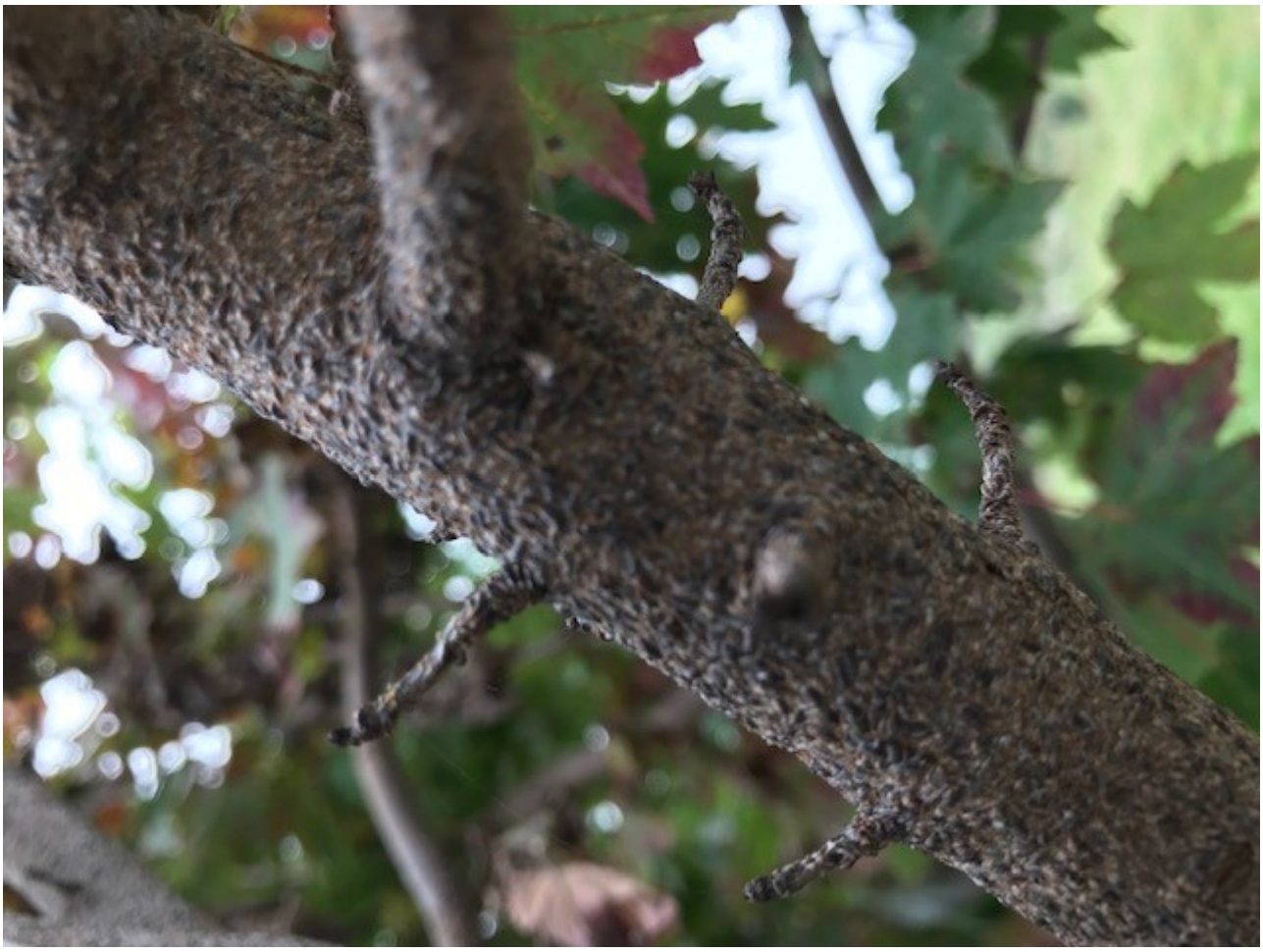

Oystershell scales overwinter as eggs under the waxy cover of the female. Eggs hatch in mid- to late April and the crawlers are active into early May. There is one generation each year.
In general, controls will be more effective if the scale population on a plant is first physically reduced by pruning out heavily infested and sickly branches. In some cases, large sized scales can be scrubbed off with a stiff brush. Horticultural oil sprays kill primarily by smothering, so they will be less effective against scales crowded together or occurring in layers the plant.

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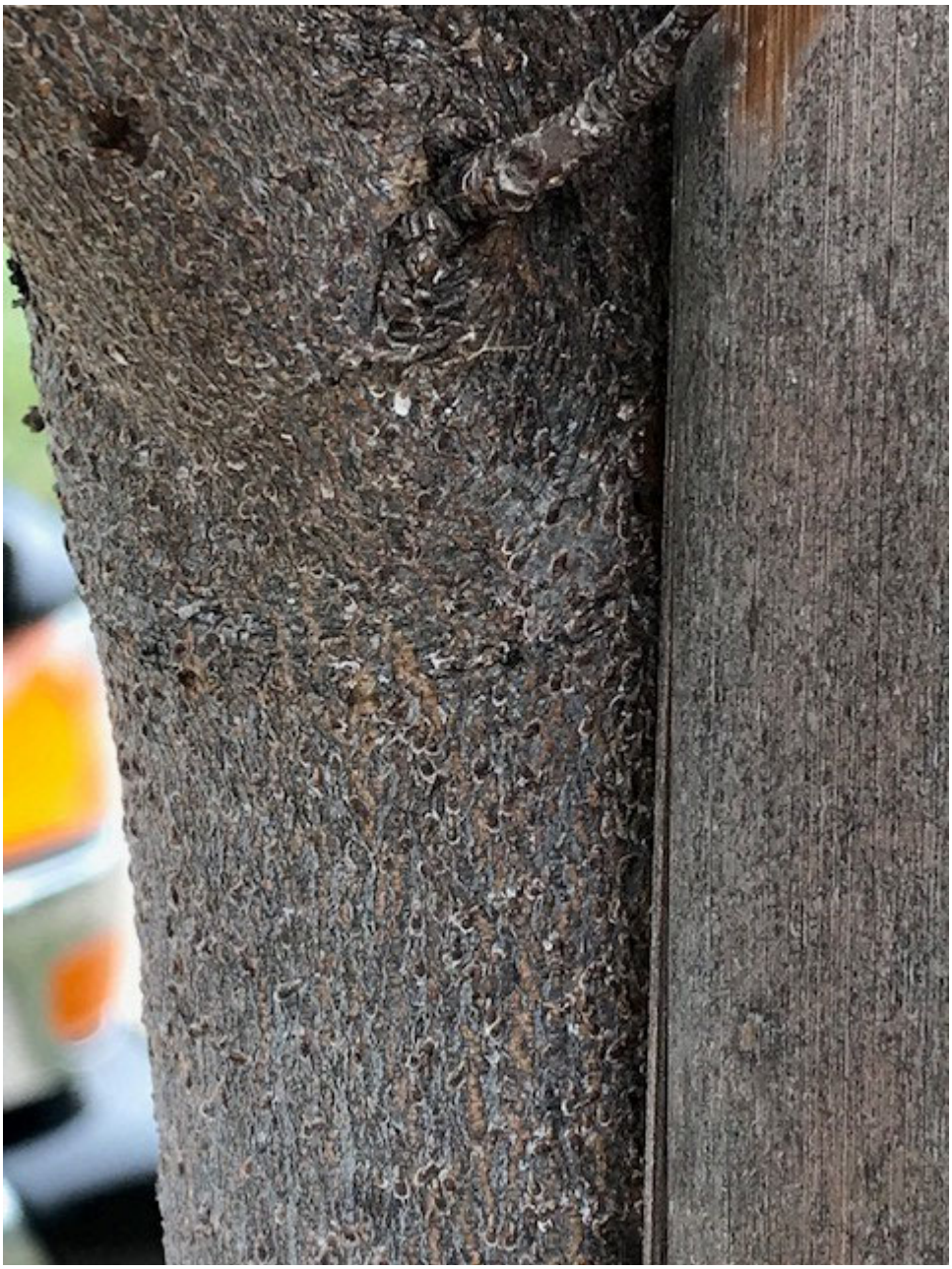

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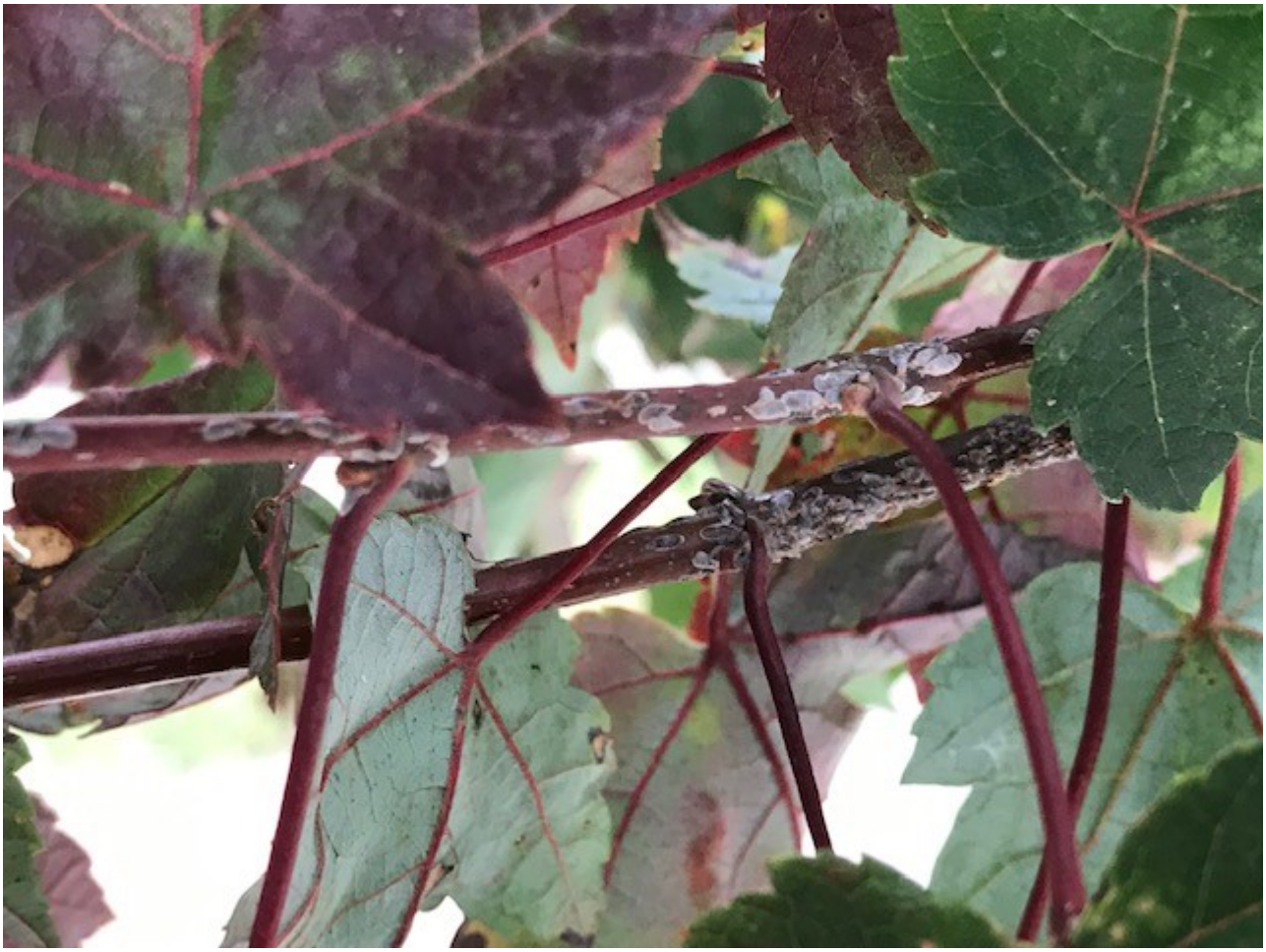
Insecticidal soaps provide a new alternative. They are very effective against both active and settled crawlers. Oils and soaps are safe to use and are especially good choices for sensitive areas, such as where people are present soon after treatment. Because of their short residual, they help to conserve beneficial species.
Scale control can be challenging and may need to be repeated over several seasons. This is due in part to the protection from contact insecticides provided by the waxy coverings over immobile, mature scales.



Proper timing of insecticide applications is a major key to success. Applications must target newly hatched scale crawlers which are active in June and July. Crawlers are very susceptible to control measures as they move over plant surfaces to find a feeding spot. Once settled on the plant, they begin to secrete a covering and are protected by it.
https://entomology.ca.uky.edu/ef433
So look a little closer if you are seeing a plant act differently than you think it should.

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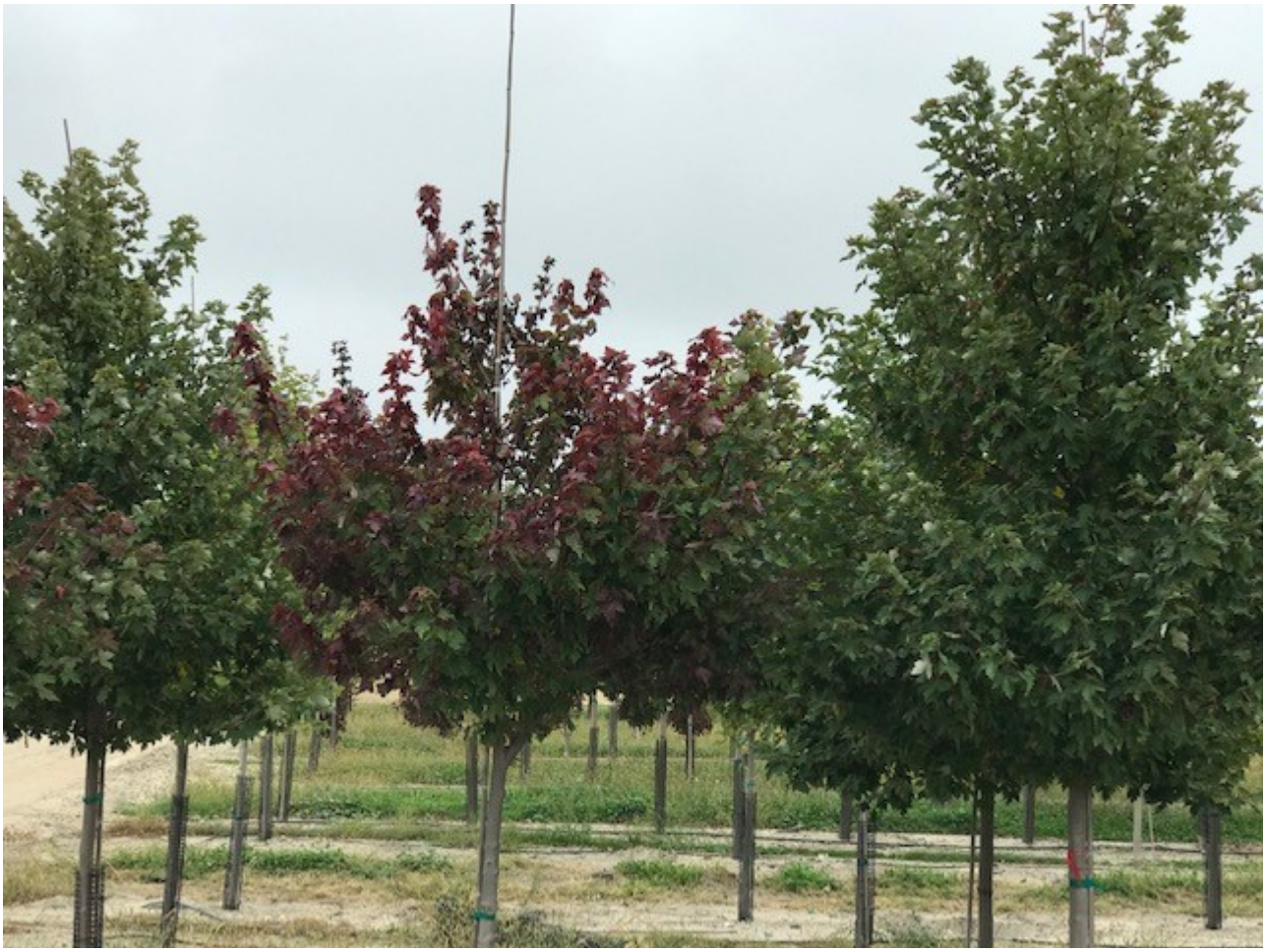

Something else might be present!

Other Articles

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Planting Bulbs: Tips for Success with Tulips and More

Categories: Headline, Plants, Weekly Tips
September 28, 2019 | Meghan Shinn
Pin It

Fall-planted bulbs can be true treasures for the garden. They're planted at a time of few other garden chores, in blissfully cool weather. Their fresh foliage and colorful flowers that appear in spring are true joy after winter's bleak scenery. And it feels like magic—all that beauty from what is now just brownish lump in the palm of your hand. Keep these five points in mind as you're planting bulbs this fall.

1. Get a tulip reality check. Many tulips won't perform well past their first spring, so resolve to treat them as annuals. The best bets as "perennials" are Darwin Hybrids, Single Earlies, Single Lates and Species Tulips.

2. Go for critter-resistant types. If you've had problems with squirrels, rabbits, deer and other animals, stick with daffodils, alliums, scilla and snowdrops.

3. Skip the bone meal and fertilizer. Bone meal will just encourage animals to dig, and newly planted bulbs don't need food. Add fertilizer next spring, after they've bloomed.

4. Pot the bulbs, then plant the pot. Bury it just up to its rim. When the bulbs sprout in spring, dig it up and set it anywhere for a showpiece container planting.

5. Know how deep to plant. The packaging should say how deep to dig, but in general bulbs should be planted in holes 3 to 4 times their own height. (A 1-inch crocus goes in a 3- or 4-inch hole.)

Gardening Basics 1: Understanding Light Conditions

Categories: Garden Design, Headline, Weekly Tips | Tags: garden design
September 26, 2019 | Meghan Shinn
Pin It

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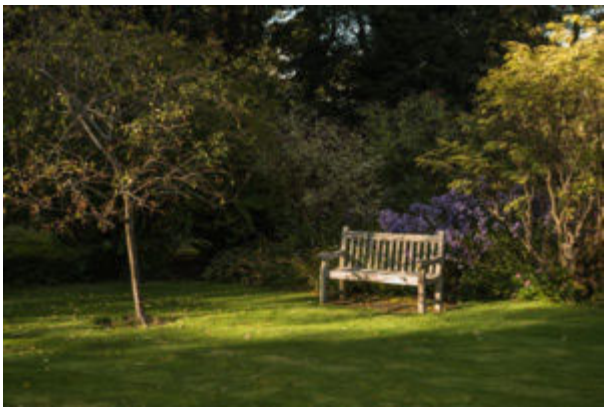

by Tammie Painter

The health of any garden starts with keeping plants in their proper growing conditions. Trying to grow plants in the wrong soil type, soil pH or light quality will turn even a low-maintenance species into one that requires extra work and extra resources to help it survive.

An understanding of three planting conditions that strongly affect your garden's health will keep your plants thriving and allow you to solve problems when they arise. This post, the first of three in a series, will cover light conditions.

Key condition #1: Quality of light

Light is one of the easiest planting conditions to determine. Most plants come with tags stating their light requirements; if they don't, you can easily find the information online or in a book. To figure out your garden's light conditions, you only need to look out your window during the growing season.

Botanically speaking, light requirements range from full sun (at least six hours per day), partial sun (four to six hours per day), partial shade (one-and-a-half to four hours per day) or full shade (less than ninety minutes per day). Timing also matters. Some plants—coral bells (*Heuchera* cvs.) and false spiraea (*Astilbe* spp.), for example—tolerate full morning and evening sun, but cannot withstand direct afternoon sun in summer.

A plant that receives too much sun quickly suffers. No matter how much you water, the plant appears wilted even after the sun goes down. Leaves may turn yellow from sun-bleaching or from overwatering. If shade isn't provided, the plant grows poorly and the leaves drop off or burn, eventually leading to the plant's death.

On the opposite end of the spectrum are full-sun plants in too much shade. As they stretch toward any light available, these sun lovers grow tall and lanky with distorted leaf development. Because many plants rely on light cues to bloom, any plant in the wrong light conditions will fail to flower well and fruiting will be less productive or non-existent.

The solution is fairly simple: Observe your garden before you fall in love with a certain type of plant. If the sun blasts your garden beds most of the day, a fern garden dotted with hostas and hellebores will not work. Likewise, if your garden leans toward the shady side, dreams of a cactus garden should be reconsidered.

When not tending to her shady garden in Portland, Ore., Tammie Painter creates botanical art and writes full time. She is the author of several books, including Going Native: Small Steps to a Healthy Garden.

Prepared by Jeff Stachler
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