Master Gardeners of Ontario

What's growing on?

Join the email list and have the newsletter sent to you directly. Send an email to editors@mgoi.ca with your name, email and group.

Summer, 2009 **www.mgoi.ca**

Butternut Canker

Mary Beverley-Burton, Guelph and Wellington County

Butternut Canker

Two fungal diseases, Butternut Canker and American Chestnut Blight, are about to join with Dutch Elm Disease as serious causes of Ontario woodland deterioration.

About 6 years ago we planted three Butternuts, *Juglans cinerea* – one for each of our children and their families. At that time I was aware that Butternuts are not particularly long lived but they are good looking. This spring I was distressed to find the young trees (now about 15 feet tall) have shriveled young shoots which are crispy dry. The bases of the multi-stemmed trunks have become discoloured and the bark is splitting.

Sean Fox from the U of G Arboretum reports that even young saplings can be affected and that shoots on the Butternuts in the Arboretum were also damaged by a late heavy frost. Butternut canker is widespread and may take several years to actually cause the death of a tree.

Header - Butternut at the Central Experimental Farm in Ottawa - photo by La Banane Jaune

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MGOI Communications

Kelly Noel, Chair, Communication Committee

One of the best resources an MG can find is another MG. Since the beginning, we have learned from other members in our group – during education sessions at meetings or while serving together at advice clinics. Now, in this electronic age, it is easier than ever to share with and learn from MGs all around the province.

MGOI's longest running communication tool is the list-serve, an email discussion group. Participants send an email to one address and it is relayed to all subscribers. This was recently changed to yahoogroups primarily to save money, but it turns out that the new group has some useful features that were not available before. You control whether you receive individual messages or the well-organized daily digest and you can turn the emails off while you are away and then log in later and read back through the archive of messages. It is open only to MGs in Ontario and you must ask to join – instructions on how to do that are on mgoi.ca under MG Communication.

The MGOI Forum: Online bulletin boards have existed for several years but MGOI has had one only since April. Postings, which can include pictures, are grouped by category and subject so it is easy to focus in on the "threads" that interest you. Members must log-in to access the messages but you can opt to get a notification by email when a reply is posted in a specific category. Again membership is limited to Ontario MGs. You can find the link to the forum in the members' section of mgoi.ca and register yourself. Perhaps it is redundant to have both an email list and a forum. Over time, one of these may emerge as the preferred communication

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tool, but for now, you are encouraged to try both.

Also newly available on mgoi.ca in the members' section is a PHOTO SHARE album. Post pictures there that you are willing to allow other Ontario MGs to use in presentations. Make sure to include your name and a description of what is depicted so it can be properly credited if used. To download a picture, click on the picture to get it to full size and then right click on it and choose Save Picture As. Can't find what you are looking for? put out a wish for a particular subject on the forum or mg-list.

Group websites: Six groups so far have taken advantage of MGOI's offer to have a website of their own as a sub-domain on mgoi.ca for a set up fee and a small yearly fee. Linda Hugli, MGOI's webmaster, has already trained some webmasters. If your group does not have a website, investigate this offer. A website is a great way to make sure all your members have the information they need.

The MGOI Newsletter, published 4 times per year, is the one communication tool that should reach ALL Ontario MGs, even those who do not use a computer. It is emailed directly to every MG who requests it – and emailed also to Coordinators who are asked to see that members who need it get a print copy.

An important goal of this committee is to get Ontario MGs in touch with each other.

I would like to extend a special thank you to Avalon Hamlin for many years of excellent service as the coordinator of the MG-list. Avalon is retiring from this position soon and we will be looking for a new coordinator.

Mystery Plant

Do you know this plant? The answer will be revealed next issue.

As far as we can tell no one named the Mystery Plant last issue. It was *Phuopsis stylosa* or Creeping Crosswort. Thank you Mary Ann Van Berlo for suggesting this puzzler. Good luck this time.

Things to Know About Trees

√ Planting a tree indicates your optimism for the future since in many cases it will outlast you.

√ Plant trees with their mature size in mind. That cute blue spruce that you plant in front of your door will one day tower over you and eclipse the sun.

√ Still the most commonly planted tree is Norway Maple in its various disguises and where do Norway Maples belong? (hint Norway or at least not in Canada)

√ Root flare at the base of the trunk keeps trees from falling over. Any damage to the larger support roots that radiate out from this area as a result of construction such as to sidewalks will destabilize the tree.

√ Within a couple of years of planting, finer lateral roots grow out well beyond the drip line near the surface of the soil. Damage to this area or adding soil on top of this area can harm the tree.

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Things to know about trees continued from page 2

√ Trees do not heal the way we do by regeneration and repair. They discard damaged and unneeded parts. To prevent disease from spreading to their healthy parts, they wall off the discarded areas.

√ You should never cut the leader on a tree because it is often fatal. Rot coming down through the centre of a tree trunk can weaken its structure and cause it to fail in the future.

√ When you trim a branch, it is very important to cut just outside the collar. If you cut too far out, the tree will take too many years to cover over and enclose the wound. If you cut into the collar, you affect the tree's ability to grow over the cut and you start another wound. The collar is often hard to see. Look for a slight thickening on the bottom of the crotch.

√ It is not a good idea to trim a tree's branches just after planting. Any damage causes stress. A year or two after planting is the time to start "limbing up" so that the mailman will not get "clotheslined" when he walks under it. It will be harder on the tree if you wait until it is more mature.

√ It makes little difference to maples and birches if you prune them when the sap is running.

MGs in Action

Throughout this busy season our volunteers are making a difference.

Prince Edward County Master Gardener, Barbra Stock offers advice at their most successful plant sale held on May 23 in Picton.

Many of our groups conduct successful plant sales with profits being used to fund education and other projects. Advice clinics and presentations to community groups raise our visibility within the community as well. Writing newspaper articles and other media exposure also gets the word out.

Our volunteers are also involved in judging local gardens for Communities in Bloom or other garden contests.

So many activities, so little time. Well done Master Gardeners! You make us all proud!

√ Pruning between the middle of August and when they go dormant in late fall is not good for trees because it encourages new growth which will not have time to harden off. Pruning any other time of year should be fine.

√ Important reasons for pruning a tree are to let light and air into the canopy.

√ Removing mature trees and major limbs is skilled and dangerous work. Call someone qualified and insured.

√ When planting a small tree, it is often useful to slice down the outside of the root ball with a sharp knife. This encourages new growth out into the native soil and helps prevent circling roots in pot bound trees.

√ When planting trees a hole larger than the root ball with sides that slope outward is best. Minimize the amendments so that the roots will go out into the native soil as soon as possible. Remove as much of the wire and wrapping as you can. Compost and mulch on the surface is ok as long as it does not cover the crown area too deeply.

√ Staking if needed should be removed before the end of the first year.

√ A good way to slowly water a new tree is to drill a small hole in the side of a bucket one centimetre from the bottom and let water trickle out of the hole near the base of the tree.

√ A tree in trouble usually does not need fertilizing.

√ It is only a matter of time before the Emerald Ash Borer reaches your area. Efforts to confine it to the Windsor area have been unsuccessful.

√ Encourage the planting of native trees.

European Buckthorn

Gary Westlake, Peterborough

European Buckthorn

As I get the opportunity to pass by or go through the gardens of others, I often see trees that give me the willies. These trees are the European Buckthorn. In stands of one or two young trees or shrubs, they look harmless and almost handsome with their strong, clean foliage and dark berries. Unfortunately, the unsuspecting homeowner who leaves these visitors from the underworld to their own devices is in for a major battle.

For the complete article see the MGOI website.

Guelph Centre for Organic Urban Farming

Mary Beverley-Burton Guelph and Wellington County

The garden site for this enterprise is on part of the acreage occupied by the University of Guelph Arboretum just off College Avenue. The garden is 1 ha in size in an almost flat area which is totally lacking any water supply. Imagine the almost impossible task of getting the green light to dig a well within the city boundary! As a consequence, water harvesting from rainfall is essential. The site is regularly visited by a population of rabbits, ground hogs and raccoons with deleterious effect!

The site-manager is Martha Gay Scroggins who is tireless and innovative. She is incredibly knowledgeable having run an organic business for several years. Martha Gay is on the scrounge for items such as newspapers, old straw, toilet paper rolls, string, used pots and seeding trays plus containers and a variety of tools.

There will be plants to attract pollinators including a "white garden" to bring in insects that search out flowers in the gloaming: also spiny/prickly plants to deter the veggie-munching herbivores. Martha is trying out some unusual vegetables such as globe artichokes.

A really wonderful facet of this garden is the involvement of the local day-care centre - using the kids to "plant" the tops of tin cans to repulse birds and mammals as well as the more conventional "dirt jobs". For more information contact Ann Clark at 519-824-4120 - eaclark@uoguelph.ca

Events

July 4 – (10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.) – Annual Prince Edward County Communities in Bloom Garden Tour featuring county gardens and a gourmet lunch at The Waring House. Tickets: $35.00. Contact Lenore Kennedy at 613-476-1825. Buses leave Picton Fairgrounds at 11:00 a.m.

July 10 – MGOI AGM at the O H A Convention, Trent University, Peterborough

July 10, 11, 12 – OHA Convention at Trent University, Peterborough

August 12 (11a.m.-8 p.m.) and 13 (10 a.m.-5 p.m.) – Lakefield Horticultural Society – Antique & Flower Show at the Lakefield Community Centre. Admission: $5.00. Contact Aileen Dean 652-3924 www.lakefieldhort.org

September 17 – Lake Simcoe South Master Gardeners – Paul Zammit will present The Future of the Garden Business. Tickets are $5.00. Contact: lssmastergardeners@gmail.com.

September 19, 2009 (8:30 a.m.- 3:45 p.m.) Zone Four Technical Update 2009, "Gardening for Life¨. Exploring: Organics, Pollinators and Natives at the Orchard Park Office Centre – Ignatius Jesuit Centre of Guelph, 5420 Hwy 6 North, Guelph. Cost: $40.00 – all-inclusive. For more details, see front page link on http://gwmastergardeners.mgoi.ca OR request a registration form at mgguelph@hotmail.com

September 26 – Zone 8 Technical Update at Algonquin College, Ottawa. For more information contact Edythe Falconer at edythelf@netscape.ca

October 17 – Coordinators Conference at Landscape Ontario, Milton

November 14 – Norfolk County Technical Update "Norfolk County - In the Carolinian Zone" at the OMAFRA Office, 1283 Blue Line Road, Simcoe - $30.00 by September 14, $35.00 after September 14. Registration: Debra Featherstone, R.R. #4 Simcoe, ON N3Y 4K3 519-429-3225 deb@featherstonetravel.com Information: Jackie Cave 519-586-9286 jackiecave@hotmail.com

January 9, 2010 – The Toronto Master Gardener Technical Update at the Toronto Botanical Garden. Details to follow.

Don't forget about these remaining Summer Workshops

Niagara Parks School of Horticulture on Saturday, July 18 and Sunday, July 19. Cost $250 – Plant Diseases, Insects, Organic Vegetable Gardening. Contact: June Streadwick 905-934-6137 or streadwick@sympatico.ca

Humber College, North Campus on Friday, August 7 and Saturday, August 8. Cost $195 – Organic Turf Care, Renovating the Residential Garden, Four Season Color with Woody Plants, Plant Tour. Contact: Sid Baller 416-675-6622 ext. 4467 or sid.baller@humber.ca

Georgian College, Barrie Campus on Friday, August 14 and Saturday, August 15. Cost $195 – New Pesticide Legislation, Diagnosing Pest and Diseases, Treatments and Controls. Contact: Carol Dunk 705-737-0147 or carol@caroldunk.com

Annual General Meeting

MGOI's 2009 AGM will be held during the Ontario Horticultural Association's Convention at Gzowski College, Trent University in Peterborough on July 10 at 4:30 p.m. Register as a delegate to the convention and enjoy the speakers, bus trips or boat cruises. Our own Edythe Falconer and Kelly Noel will be presenting workshops on Friday and there are lots more to enjoy throughout the week-end. Details can be found on the OHA website.

Registration for the convention has been good this year and between delegates and volunteers we expect over 500 gardeners to have a great time.

Sharing the Harvest

Chris Bremner, Temiskaming Shores

As you harvest your vegetable this summer, please think of the unfortunate persons especially children, who do not have enough to eat. Do not allow the spinach to bolt but give the extra to the food bank in your town. Extra carrots are always welcome at the food banks and they store well. Beans and peas need to be used almost immediately for the best flavour and freshness. So often food banks receive the purges of the pantry, but from experience, I know that the clients even welcome zucchini. Buy Local, Share Local.

Milestones

New MGiTs

Lanark County – Paul Pietsch, Gerda Franssen, Bev King, Victor Wark

Certification Exam

Rideau Thousand Islands –Anne Maxwell, Sandra McNeil

Niagara – Rebecca Abray

New MGs

Halton Region MG – Patty King, Doris Calder

Norfolk County – Jackie Cave

Northumberland – Joy Cullen, Marguerite Long

Ottawa-Carleton – Gail Labrosse

Sarnia/Lambton – Krista Cowieson

5 Years

Lake Simcoe South – Mary Lou Swanson, Elizabeth Brims

Niagara – Wendy Dunnville, Lynne Forrester, Marie Johns, Ellen Mitchinson, Rose Setosta, Diane Turner, Yuki Woolstencroft

Sarnia/Lambton – Grace Carver, Anne McFee, Ruth Simpson, Jennifer Plaus.

10 Years

Lake Simcoe South – Barbara Evans

Sarnia/Lambton – Mary Moulden, Mary Makuch

15 Years

Lake Simcoe South – Ken Smith

Sarnia/Lambton – Ginny Schleihauf, Avalon Hamlin.

20Years

North Bay – Vickie Wiemer, Helen McCombie, Adrian van der Bijl

Emerita/Emeritus

Lake Simcoe South – Judith Rogers

Norfolk County – Fraser McClung

Ottawa-Carleton – Monique Paré

Peterborough – Ruth Arndt

Sarnia/Lambton – Avalon Hamlin

In Memoriam:

Rideau Thousand Islands – Dorothy Elston passed away May 3, 2009. She was an active Master Gardener for 10 years from 1991 – 2001. Dorothy had one of Kingston's most extensive peony gardens.

Toronto –Phyllis Shepherd passed away this spring. Phyllis joined the Toronto group in 1990 and had been emeritus the past few years. She is missed by all

Congratulations

Essex-Windsor – Ontario Volunteer Awards were presented to Rosemary Chaput, Jane Hilbers, Joan Jolin, Cindy Lanoue, Linda Lloyd-Dupuis

Halton Region – Karen Walsh has received The Horticulturist Certificate with Distinction from the University of Guelph

On May 1 at the River Run Theatre in Guelph, Mary Beverley-Burton was honoured to be the recipient of a Lifetime Achievement Award – Science, Technology and Research at the YWCA/YMCA Guelph's annual Gala to recognize Women of Distinction. Exceptional women in the community who are considered to be Architects of Change are nominated; there are 9 categories and 2 awards for lifetime achievement.