

Gardener's notebook

Watch out for shrub intruders

SILKEN WEBBING on juniper and cotton easter shrubs means webworms have moved into the landscape.

Webbing on junipers is likely to be on interior branches, while on the outer foliage on cotoneasters, says Ray McNeilan, Oregon State University Extension home gardening agent.

The juniper webworm is reddish-brown and about 1/2 inch long. The cotoneaster webworm is dark brown to black and also about 1/2 inch long.

Sprays containing diazinon are recommended and should be applied early in the spring. Apply the spray when the weather permits several hours of drying time.

RED RASPBERRY AND BLUEBERRY

plants won't have much fruit to yield if they aren't treated for insects and disease now.

Blueberries should be sprayed for fungus disease and red raspberries require a drench for control of crown borers, according to Ray McNeilan.

The raspberry crown borer attacks plantings in early March. Diazinon is recommended. Apply two to three pints of drench to each plant crown.

Rain doesn't interfere because it's a drench, not a spray.

The fungus diseases afflicting blueberry plants is called "mummy berry." This disease prevents berries from ripening, instead causing infected berries to turn reddish-buff or tan before shriveling and hardening.

Funginex, Benlate or captan sprays recommended for mummy berry. Use two or three applications through the blossoming period, which usually lasts from the end of March to mid-April.

BALLED AND BURLAPPED TREES usually get off to a faster start than bare-root transplant trees because roots aren't disturbed much in planting, says McNeilan.

However, even though the roots of the trees are covered, they are susceptible to damage moving from the store.

After getting the tree home, plant it as soon and possible. Or heel it in, by digging a shallow trench to put the plant in an upright position and covering its burlap-

ped portion with moist soil.

The planting hole should be one foot wider and the same depth as the root-soil ball. Be sure it is in a well-drained location or set on a mound of soil. This will raise the root system above a high water table.

Untie all twine from the base of the trunk and lay back the burlap so that none extends above the soil level.

If the soil around the roots is tight, the burlap can be removed before planting. Don't fertilize in the hole. Water enough to soak the entire root area, but don't over water.

Apply a two to three inch mulch layer of wood chips, shredded bark or other organic material on the soil surface above the tree's root system, if possible.

Tractor injuries avoided by some precautionary moves

The first warm days of spring bring out an abundance of flowers, birds and people anxious to get at the job of farming or gardening. Unfortunately, the well-meaning person who starts his tractor after a long winter rest is often careless and rusty with his safety techniques.

Just as surely as the flowers bloom in spring, we can anticipate some fatal accidents to farmers in Clackamas County in 1982. In fact, most farm accidents occur between May and October each year. Clackamas County has the dubious distinction of experiencing from one to three tractor fatalities each year, usually as a result of tractor overturns.

This column is written to alert the novice and the experienced farmer alike to the dangers of tractor use, especially the use of older tractors which are more prone to upsets and often do not have roll-bar protection. This warning goes particularly to younger or less experienced operators who may be operating equipment on the weekends for the first time in their lives. Please take some time now to think safety as you plan to use tractors and heavy equipment this spring.

Nearly all fatal accidents with tractors are caused by overturns to the side which are caused by hitting a raised object such as a stump, operating the tractor with a front-end loader or operating the tractor on a steep incline. In most such fatal accidents, a farm implement was attached to the tractor or was being towed. Personal experience and comments from others in-

dicating that being in too big a hurry is often a major contributor to tractor accidents.

Here are some points to think about before operating a tractor:

1. Be sure to get enough sleep; dress comfortably; don't overtax your tractor driving abilities; take occasional breaks.
2. If you are sick, distressed emotionally, taking strong medicines, or otherwise unable to operate safely, don't drive the tractor that day.
3. Do each tractor job at the most efficient speed, but go more slowly if conditions are bad, rough, slick or muddy ground, poor visibility, or tall growth so that you can't see hidden obstacles, slopes, etc.

Clackamas County is blessed with many types of terrain. Unfortunately, many of our small farms are located on rather hilly ground. This should alert every family who owns a tractor to the built-in dangers of their property. Each day, attention should be given to careful operation of the equipment.

The Clackamas County office of Oregon State University has available detailed information on the safe operation of tractors and other farm equipment. OSU Extension also has a handbook on ways of preventing accidents and the steps that can be followed if an accident occurs. This pamphlet, titled "Farm Accident Rescue," covers all types of farm accident causes. The bulletin may be purchased through the Clackamas County Extension office, 655-8631.

No shrub is safe

Fungus flourishes in wet areas

Fungus diseases of plants flourish in wet, warm weather. In western Oregon, even landscape trees such as hawthorn, sycamore and willow don't escape the fungus onslaught.

As the new leaves of these trees appear in the spring, they are attacked by a variety of fungus diseases, says Ray McNeilan, Oregon State University Extension home gardening agent.

Leaf and twig blight in sycamores causes the young leaves to turn brown and die as they emerge from the buds. Leaves that survive later develop brown spots on either side of the main leaf vein. The spots eventually can merge and cover most of the leaf. Severe infections can cause the tree to lose most of its leaves.

Brown spots along the mid-ribs of new leaves on willow

trees are a tell-tale sign of willow twig blight. The leaves become scorched and withered and eventually drop.

Small reddish-brown spots on the upper surface of hawthorn tree leaves means hawthorn leaf spot is present. After a wet spring, the spots can be numerous and the infection severe.

These diseases can be controlled through use of a copper fungicide spray. Copper fungicide is most effective if the first spray is applied when the buds first open and the leaves are unfolding. Spray two or three more times at ten day intervals.

Also, prune and destroy infected twigs and branches where possible, McNeilan advises. Clean up and remove fallen leaves and twigs regularly to prevent re-infection.



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