

the Grassette

TERRE VISTA LLC

As many of you know my wife's mother divides her time between; Phoenix, Seattle, and Wichita. Well the time came for her to return to Wichita and because my wife and I were not comfortable with her driving the 1800 hundred miles from Seattle to Wichita. Since the winter is my down time I volunteered to fly out and then drive her home. I get along with my mother-in-law so I was really looking forward to the trip. My mother-in-law called me to add a little detour to our trip. My niece, her granddaughter, had a baby back in December in Phoenix and we have not got to see her yet, except for of course pictures on the internet. So she wanted to extend our trip and take a "short-cut" through California. Since I have never been to California, I thought why not, I love seeing new parts of our great country. During our trip we started at the northern most part of California in a little town called Crescent City. We went through the costal redwoods, which was awe inspiring. The redwoods can grow up to 300 feet tall and live about 2000 years and there size is unbelievable.

We then drove along PH 1 (Pacific Coast Highway) until we got



to Ft. Bragg where we cut back inland and traveled through the Napa Valley. The coast was beautiful but

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the road was so crooked that it was a slow go. In the Napa Valley I have never seen so many vineyards; in fact, it was solid grapes from Ft. Bragg to Santa Rosa which is just outside San Francisco. I got to drive over the Golden Gate Bridge at the height of rush hour, which surprisingly was not too bad. California driver are very courteous, if you use your turn signals. Every time I



needed to get over to another lane they always let me in, I was surprised. Oh by the way I loved San Fran and I cannot wait to go back and spend a few days. We spent the night in Tracy and began our way to Yosemite National Park; it was very beautiful place but not a whole lot to do in the dead of winter. The highlight of my trip, not withstanding being in the car for 10 days with my mother-in-law, was to come on the 4th day of our sojourn. We left Yosemite and went through Sequoia National Park. I thought that the redwoods were big the giant sequoias are colossal, not quite as tall as the redwoods but the trunks are massive. "General Sherman" is the biggest tree in the park and it was 275 ft. tall and a circumference of 102 feet. I am going to post pictures on my new and improved website terrevistalandscape.com soon. Or you can Google "General Sherman Tree" and see it for yourself. We then

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drove on and spent the night in Tehachapi, California. We got up the next morning and drove on through Palm Springs into Phoenix. Besides the sequoias I was most impressed with just how friendly the drivers in California are. My theory is that they have lived with traffic for so long that they can empathize with their fellow man and as a result have just become immune to traffic. Another thing that was very apparent during our 3200 mile trek was the unusual amount of state police that were about. We saw them in every state in huge numbers and the on thing in common is that they always had someone pulled



over. The only common reason that I could think of for this is the current state of the economy. I bet traffic tickets are a big money maker of the state legislatures. I know that in banking (my mom was a VP at bank in Tulsa) the biggest money maker was the \$35 service fee for overdrafts. I would like to see individual state budgets in a few months and see if my hypothesis is correct.

Turf's Up



We will be out in the next few weeks to apply the first round of pre-emergent and fertilizer. Then we will begin our spring clean-ups etc. Around week 3 we will get your lawns tidied up and then begin regular service.

Spring Clean up

We are now taking names for our annual spring clean up please give me a call so that you can be on our list we those services March and I wrapped up we will be starting our regular lawn maintenance schedule by then and will be hard to work in extra work that first month 685-1794.



will be starting
sometime in
want to have them
before April 1st as

Plants Breaking Dormancy Early

With the relatively mild winter this season, a question that we are dealing with a lot is many plants are starting to wake up early. In my own case I have daffodils that are already 6-8 inches out the ground. Plants that become dormant in preparation for winter must have a certain number of "chilling hours" before the buds will begin growth the next spring. "Chilling" hours are those in which the temperature remains between 32 and 45 degrees F. Plants differ in the number of chilling hours needed, with those adapted to colder climates usually requiring more than those adapted to warmer zones. Even plants within the same species can differ markedly in the number of chilling hours required for bud break. For example, apple varieties range from a low of 250 (or fewer) chilling hours to a high of 1700. The chilling requirements of some plants have been met already this winter. For these plants, dormancy is over and warm periods can lead to bud swell. Unfortunately, buds that have swollen have lost virtually all of their winter hardiness and can be damaged by severe cold.

So what do you do if you have a plant that has swollen buds? Actually, there is not much you can do to slow the bud development process because it is completely dependent on weather. However, watering during dry weather may help in an indirect way. Roots can suffer drought damage during the

winter. A tree with a damaged root system and damaged buds will be slower to recover than one with just damaged buds. Readily available soil moisture will aid in keeping the plant healthy so it will be better able to recover from cold damage. Also, it is important to determine if the swollen buds are flower buds or leaf buds. Even if the flower buds are killed by cold temperatures, the health of the plant should not be affected. If, in addition to the swollen buds, you also see small buds on the stems, then the swollen buds are flower buds and the small buds are leaf buds.

Even if the leaf buds swell and are killed by a cold snap, a healthy tree will still be able to survive. There are secondary buds that remain dormant unless the primary bud is killed. Secondary bud growth may be slower and less vigorous, but the tree will eventually recover.

Leaching Houseplants

Everyone knows that someone stranded in the ocean should not drink the salt water. The salt content of that water will make a bad situation worse. What many people don't realize is that this same principle can harm plants.

Fertilizers are salts. They must be salts in order for the plant roots to take them up. However, salt levels can build up over time and eventually may harm plant roots leading to scorched leaves and unhealthy plants. Though this can happen under field conditions, especially in low rainfall areas, it is particularly critical with houseplants. Houseplants have a certain soil volume that doesn't change until a plant is repotted. Thus salt build-up can be a crucial concern especially if plants are fertilized heavily. Leaching an overabundance of salts can be an important practice to insure the health of our houseplants.

Leaching is not a complicated or difficult process.

It consists of adding enough water to wash out excess salts. How much water is enough? Add the amount of water that would equal twice the volume of the pot.

This, of course, would need to be done outside or in a bathtub or sink. Water must be added slowly so that it doesn't overflow the rim of the pot.

If salt has formed a crust on the surface of the soil, remove it but don't take more than 1/4 inch of the underlying media. This may also be a good time to repot the plant.

Fungus Gnats

Fungus gnats are small insects (1/8 to 1/10 inch long) that are common in high-organic-matter houseplant soils that are kept moist. Though adults are mosquito-like in appearance, they do not bother humans or pets. It is actually the larvae or maggots that can injure plants by feeding on the roots.

Symptoms include sudden wilting, loss of vigor, poor growth or yellowing leaves. Use of sterile media and avoiding overwatering can help prevent infestations. Existing infestations can be controlled with pyrethrins such as bifenthrin (Ortho Rose & Flower Insect Killer) or *Bacillus thuringiensis v. israelensis* (Gnatrol).



To do's

1. Add compost to garden
2. Towards the end of the month start cleaning flowerbeds.
3. Test garden soil for nutrients and pH.
4. Visit the Wichita Garden Show March 5th thru the 9th.
5. Prune apple trees so that sunlight might reach through.
6. Fertilize woody plants before new growth appears.

7. Plant cool season gardens (lettuce ect.)
8. Core aerate cool-season lawns.

Wild Garlic, Wild Onion and Star-of-Bethlehem

by Ward Upham

Wild garlic (*Allium vineale*) and wild onion (*Allium canadense*) are two closely related plants that can become weed problems in home lawns and landscapes. Though wild garlic and wild onion look much alike, each has an odor that is characterized by its name – wild garlic smells like garlic and wild onion smells like onion. These plants are perennials that can also reproduce by seeds and aerial bulbils. Bulbils form at the top of the stem and are oval and smooth. Wild garlic also reproduces by underground bulb offsets, but wild onion does not. Both species produce a clump of plants that is unsightly in a lawn. Control recommendations are the same for each though we now have a couple of new additions to our arsenal. Traditionally we have used 2,4-D or 2,4-D + MCPP + Dicamba (i.e. Trimec, Weed-Out, Weed-B-Gon). These products should be sprayed during March on a day that is at least 50 degrees. The newer products we have are Weed Free Zone and Speed Zone. Both are combination products that contain a formulation of Trimec plus carfentrazone. These may be used at lower temperatures than the traditional products (below 50 degrees). A spreader-sticker added to the spray should help any of these products be more effective. At times, the spreader-sticker is already mixed into the weed killer; no additional amount is needed. These herbicides are also effective on dandelions.

Unfortunately, we have not had a good chemical control for Star-of-Bethlehem. The best products we had were Coolpower (31.3%) and Turflon Ester (23.8%). Coolpower is a commercial only product, but Turflon Ester is available to both commercial and homeowner users. However some recent research out of Virginia Tech has improved our outlook. Scientists there did a study in which they gained 96% control of Star-of-Bethlehem one month after treatment by

using Quicksilver, a formulation of carfentrazone at the rate of 4 fl. oz/A. Quicksilver is a commercial only product and therefore is not available to homeowners. However, both Speed Zone and Weed Free Zone contain carfentrazone and would certainly be worth a try if you have this troublesome plant.

"WHEN DRUGS ARE A GOOD THING"

I had a "drug" problem when I was a young person. I was "drug" to church on Sunday morning. I was "drug" to church on Sunday night, and I was "drug" to church on Wednesday night. I was "drug" to Sunday school; I was "drug" to vacation Bible school and "drug" to the family altar to pray. I was also "drug" to the woodshed when I disobeyed my parents, told a lie, brought home a bad report card or did not speak with respect. Those "drugs" are still in my veins, and they affect my behavior in nearly everything I do and say and think. They are stronger than cocaine, crack or heroin. If more children had this "drug" problem, America would certainly be a better place.

-Anonymous



My Soap Box

"The whole aim of practical politics is to keep the populace alarmed and hence clamorous to be led to safety, by menacing it with an endless series of hobgoblins, all of them imaginary." —H.L. Mencken

This is a quote that I put in the Grassette last year, it was written over 100 years ago and is still true today. At the time I wrote I did not realize just how prophetic it would become. Yes, I am still miffed about this "so-called" stimulus package. The politicians are filling us with fear by saying such things as, "these are unprecedented times," "this is the worst economy in a hundred years." To me all times are unprecedented, as for the economy, this is by no means the worst economy in even thirty years. In 1979 inflation was 18% today it is 4%; unemployment was 12% today it is 7%; and the home mortgage rate was 22% today it is just over 5%. So the next time you see a politician using fear as a weapon for change remember what Mark Twain said "politicians, like diapers, should be changed often; both for the same reason. Now there is change we can believe in.

Now I am not saying the economy is not ailing a bit but the best thing we can do is to go out there and spend money, government spending is not the solution Americans are. Did you know that the amount of money that the government has proposed to spend is 1.2 trillion dollars. Let me put that number into prospective, if you were to spend 1 million dollars per day since the time of Christ (2000+ years) you would still have money left over.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

To my wife Stephanie 2/24/?



March 4th thru 8th 2009

Terre Vista



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