



Fall 2005

**Unique Garden Centre**

# From the Ground Up ↑

## GETTING TO KNOW US

### **RICHARD: EMPLOYEE OF THE SEASON**

Richard, a long time employee of Unique Garden Centre, is our featured employee for this newsletter. You'll usually find Richard in the nursery section of the Garden Centre, armed with his pruners to keep the trees and shrubs in peak condition and always ready to assist you with advice on the best plant for you. He also operates the Bobcat for moving product and loading for customers. At times, Richard works with the landscape crew. The next time you visit our Garden Centre, be sure to seek out Richard and congratulate him on his years of service and dedication to the company.

## PLAYING IT SAFE

Pets are a man's best friend. Outdoors is one of their favorite places to be, but there are some plants in the yard that our furry little friends should avoid.

Most people take the proper care to avoid pet hazards when spraying pesticides or applying fertilizer to their lawn, but rarely think about the plants in their yard being hazardous to their pet's health. Plants such as yew, fox glove, lily-of-the-valley, castor bean seeds, daffodil bulbs, hyacinths, tulips, lilies, ivy, hydrangea, rhubarb leaves & begonias should not be ingested by animals as these plants are poisonous. Some clues that your pet has eaten a poisonous plant include: abnormal breathing, no desire to eat, rapid pulse, & vomiting or diarrhea. If you believe your pet has consumed a poisonous material, call your vet immediately.

It is impossible to watch our pets every move. Although most plant poisonings of animals will produce some symptoms of discomfort in varying degrees, but few are serious. Keep your pets safe by trying to prevent the possibility of your pet getting a hold of toxic plants by simply not planting them or keeping them out of your pet's reach.



## A CLEAN START TO A NEW SEASON



Although we all want to avoid thinking about it for as long as possible, winter is quickly approaching. With the end of summer and beginning of fall comes yard clean up chores to ensure the survival of your plants through the harsh Saskatchewan winters. Trees and shrubs, lawns and vegetable and flower gardens all require a little extra maintenance to ensure their strength and survival into the next growing season.

With fall most people associate the falling of leaves from trees, and of course, raking (everyone's FAVORITE yard chore). It is important to rake the leaves as soon as possible, as leaving them on your lawn for an extended length of time causes your grass to suffocate and die. Poplar leaves are especially prone to doing this. This year to save some time, instead of bagging all the leaves, take them to the curb and mow them



What do you get when you cross a four leaf clover with poison ivy? A RASH! For more tips, visit our spring hits.

with the mower into small pieces to lay on top of flower and shrub beds (this works especially well if you have a mulching mower). A layer of leaves 1-2" provides a warm blanket to plants and after time passes, will also provide nutrients to the plants. DO NOT place leaves on an already mulched bed as it will provoke weed growth.

Winter brings cold temperatures, which can be particularly harmful to young trees. New trees are very susceptible to sunscald. The cold winter temperatures combined with sun can cause the trunks of younger trees to split and then decay, which is known as sunscald. To prevent this from happening to your trees there are two methods. One is to paint the trunk of the young tree with white latex outdoor paint. Another is to wrap the tree with tree wrap around the trunk. Young evergreens also require protection. Place stakes in the ground and burlap wrapped around as to protect the tree from harsh winds and heavy snow and spray with wilt proof.

Other tasks to prepare you for the end of the season are necessary, but do not require the same amount of work as dealing with preparing the trees for winter. Clay pots, used for container gardening, need to be kept dry and empty through the winter so they do not crack and break. Any large clay fixtures in your yard, such as fountains, should be covered with tarp to prevent any breakage that might occur due to the cold. Most importantly, do not forget to have your sprinklers blown. It is not a very nice thing to realize in spring, after the long cold winter months, that your water line has frozen and caused damage.

Fall and winter should not be something to fear, especially for the life of your plants and the look of your yard. With the proper clean up, everything should be just the way you left it once spring hits.



# Tree maintenance Quiz (PART 1)



Take this quiz to see how much knowledge you have about tree care and how a tree would fare under your care. The answers to the questions can be found on page 4 of the newsletter.

1. A 5 year commitment is necessary after planting a tree. Within these 5 years it is important to have proper care for your plant, which includes...
  - a) Water generously, weed around base of tree, prune & fertilize.
  - b) Ask a member of your local garden centre to visit the tree every year.
  - c) The truth is, trees require little to no maintenance after the first couple weeks.
2. It is appropriate to fertilize your tree after the first year in your yard, but...
  - a) Only should be done the way your local garden centre suggests.
  - b) Should be done while using herbicides.
  - c) Should be placed around the bottom of the tree.
3. The correct time of year to prune is...
  - a) Fall, as part of fall clean up.
  - b) Anytime of the year (whenever you have time).
  - c) Late winter to early spring (a few exceptions apply as they bleed sap).
4. It is important to remember what when pruning your trees?
  - a) Cut sides & top to keep the shape you desire.
  - b) Cut branches in "collar" & cut branches to be even with the trunk.
  - c) Do not cut off sides or top, but prune in areas outside "collar".
5. It is important to mulch trees because...
  - a) It adds nutrients & helps keep the tree standing properly.
  - b) It limits weeds, retains water in soil & helps protect tree from extreme fluctuations in temperature.
  - c) It makes the appearance of the tree that much nicer.



Brought to you by the



 <p><b>Unique Florists</b></p> <p>We have your flowers for any occasion!!</p>  <p>467 Broad St. N. Regina, SK. S4R 2X8 Fax: (306) 545-4345</p>	 <p><b>Unique Garden Centre</b></p> <p>132 Broad St. N. 777-0190 <a href="http://www.uniquegardencentre.com">www.uniquegardencentre.com</a></p>  <p>*Open 7 days a week now until season close!</p> <p>*Ask any garden questions to the horticulturalists we have on staff</p>
<p>Sherwood Co-op (Rochdale) 777-0183</p> <p>Marketplace Co-op (Quance St.) 777-0182 <a href="http://www.uniqueflorist.ca">www.uniqueflorist.ca</a></p>	 <p><b>Unique Landscapes</b></p> <p>467 Broad St. N. 777-0186 Fax: (306) 545-4345 Email: <a href="mailto:uniquegroup@sasktel.net">uniquegroup@sasktel.net</a></p>  <p>*We offer both commercial and residential landscaping services!</p>

# Spotlight On

Our “Spotlight On” page provides information on a different tree, shrub and perennial in each addition of “From the Ground Up”



## **MINIGLOBE HONEYSUCKLE** (*Lonicera x xylosteoides* 'Miniglobe')

Miniglobe Honeysuckles flower in May. At this time, they sport a white flower, though not prominent, still gives off a natural beauty. This plant thrives in moist soil and yet very drought tolerant once established. Although Miniglobes can be planted alone, when planted together they can make great small hedges with a height of one metre tall and wide.

## **AUTUMN SPIRE MAPLE** (*Acer rubrum*)

This tree is one of beauty in the fall, hence the name Autumn Spire Maple. During the fall months, this Maple is decorated with bright red, eye catching leaves. Before the bright red colour in fall, the Autumn Spire Maple has red flowers growing in the early spring months. Full sunlight is the best growing condition for this tree. At mature height, this tree reaches 15 metres tall and 8 metres wide. The Autumn Spire Maple does not thrive in an area that is prone to air pollution, which makes this tree perfect for any yard in the clean air of our Saskatchewan prairie.



## **GERMAN IRIS** (*Iris germanica*)

The German Iris comes in a wide assortment of colours, making it an ideal perennial for all yard colour schemes. Fall is the perfect time to purchase this plant as the relocation season includes both spring and fall months, but can be bought at anytime of the year if purchased in a pot. These flowers require the full morning sun and flowers during the summer months. At mature size, this plant reaches 5-120 centimetres.



Autumn is a second spring when every leaf is a flower.



# WILL YOUR PLANTS SURVIVE THE WINTER?

Winter. Just the word sends shivers down people's backs. Given that it is still relatively warm out, I'm sure that most people do not want to think about the freezing temperature, but it is important that people prepare their plants for the winter even during the summer months.

Winter kill occurs due to extreme cold. Plants that have been winter tolerant in the past may fall victim all of a sudden to winter kill if there is an extreme drop in temperature during the fall or if it is a particularly wet fall (as wet leads to growth in plants). Signs that winter kill has occurred include total death of the plant, kill in ends of branches, breaking open of the trunk, sprouting of plants in the trunk during the next growing season, unusual colour in the fall and initial flush of leaves that wilt.

Last year, certain types of trees showed an inability to fight off winterkill. Trees such as apples, pears, maples, lilacs, rose, monarda and chrysanthemums, showed the most signs of winter kill.

To try and prevent your plants risk of becoming winter killed, we have a few tips to follow. First off, fertilize in April, May, or June, and reduce watering mid-August and still further mid-September, but some watering is required until final freeze up. Pruning should be done in spring and by the latest, in July. This is because any new growth that may occur has a chance to harden before winter hits.

A little care for your plants at the appropriate time goes a very long way. This ensures plants are equipped as best as possible to emerge in the spring strong and healthy. Like children, we can only do so much; the rest is between them and Mother Nature. Let the strong survive!



**Even if all other factors provide for optimum growing conditions, a plant's ability to survive a Saskatchewan winter depends on the genetic makeup of the plant, NOT where it was grown initially.**



## CREEPY CRAWLERS

Protect your plants! Spider mites are a big threat to household plants during the winter months, so it is important to know the facts. From signs and symptoms, to fighting off the bugs that plague many indoor houseplants at some time during their life, this article tells you what you need to know when facing the little monsters.

### PREVENTION:

- \*Plants under stress tend to contract these bugs
- \*Favorable conditions for mites: dry, dusty plants
  - \*Make sure plants receive enough water
  - \*Dust off leaves when look like they need it
  - \*A happy plant is a healthy plant!

### IDENTIFICATION:

- \*Plant leaves lacking luster (appear to have pin pricks / rough bumpy texture)
- \*looking closely: tiny webs usually on underside and on stems of plants (where it is driest)
  - \*Once you see the webs, if you look really close using a magnifying glass, you can see tiny movement (most cannot detect a spider mite using the naked eye).

### ANNIHILATION:

- \*Wash off infested plant with cold water (smaller plants rinse under sink or shower, larger plants wipe off leaves with soft cloth).
- \*Insecticidal soaps may be used, but must be applied to the mite in order to kill it.
- \*Spray soap every 5-7 days for 6 weeks to kill eggs as they hatch (plant should be washed off before each soap use).
- \*Continue to inspect plant for any signs of spider mites after initial 6 week period.
  - \*If plant too heavily infested, best just to throw it out to prevent other plants from being infested
  - \*Treat all plants that MAY become infected (being in the same room as an infected plant) because they may have already contracted the bugs.

### ANSWER KEY TO TREE MAINTENANCE QUIZ

- |      |      |      |
|------|------|------|
| 1. a | 3. a | 5. c |
| 2. c | 4. b |      |