

Community

Town Gardener

Questions and answers

By TOM CAVAN

Question: I have brown spots on the edges of the leaves of my Crimson King Maple, what is happening to the tree?

Answer: This is a common question with a working answer. When you inspect your trees and discover a leaf disorder of any kind, take a long look at how the leaf has been affected. Ask yourself are the leaves being eaten? The damage is usually uniform in habit, if the markings

are irregular then you probably have a conditional problem which can and will transform into a disease problem! Does the edge of the leaf appear to be uniformly brown all around the edge of the leaf. This particular problem is usually related to the root system unless you experienced a phenomenal shift in temperature in spring. When weather prematurely heats up in spring and all plants begin activity the growth is tender and young. This growth is very susceptible to damage. If the weather turns cold and freezes this tender growth will be burned because those tender shoots contain a lot of water. Therefore the rupture of the cell wall will leave dead tissue which in turn provides a receiving area for disease and pest problems. It is important to recognize how a plant is being impaired by nature. Once you determine the problem and at what stage the problem is at then and only then do you take measures to solve the problem. If you cannot determine the origin of the problem clip off a sample inside crossing branch where healthier parts meet the problem, place it in a clear bag (so you don't share your good fortune) and take it to your resident gardener for identification.

Question: My lawn has dry patches even though I water regularly when its hot, what is wrong?

Answer: The problem is probably your watering time and quantity of water you're giving your lawn. When watering your lawn you leave your sprinkler position for approximately 3 hours for a 6" depth of water penetration, which is what you need to water the roots or encourage them down there where they should be. The roots then flourish in cooler temperatures with more nutrient availability. If you change the sprinkler too often all you do is syringe the grass and allow 1-2" of watering depth. The roots will now turn up to the water resulting in loss of roots at the preferred depth and shallow roots which heat stress due to poor conditions from drying during the heat of day. Try to water in the mornings before the heat of the day due to the plants growth cycle and then there is much less evaporation. If the sod or seed is being established on a slope you must watch your timing of watering due to the angle of the slope. Twenty minutes per sprinkler position until you cut the first time return to the proper time.

If you have any questions, please call the Grapevine Hotline at 519-833-2117.

Gardening conference

The Fourth Great Gardening Conference will bring leading garden makers, garden writers and garden enthusiasts from Great Britain, Holland, the United States and Canada to the Civic Garden Centre in Toronto on October 18, 19 and 20th. The speakers and their topics have been carefully selected to provide both amateur and professional gardeners and designers with practical information and a new way of viewing the garden and the landscape.

The conference will look at the garden from various points of view including that of the plant-person, the designer, the artist, the photographer and the historian. The speakers will give new direction to the use of shape, colour and texture in the selection of plants hardy for our climate, inspiration from some of the world's most beautiful gardens, an understanding of the garden as art, practical and aesthetic information to enable you to improve or design and plant your own garden and a review of some cultural traditions which have influenced contemporary garden design.

The speakers are Jorn Copijn, one of Holland's leading landscape architects and garden designer; Edith Eddleman, an amazing plantswoman from the United States; Michael Laurie, professor at the University of California at Berkeley; Jolie Moir Messervy, author of Contemplative Gardens, lecturer and garden designer; Canada's doyenne of landscape architects, Cornelia Oberlander; Allen Paterson, the Director of the Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington and Marco Polo Stufano, the Director of Wave Hill Garden in the Bronx, New York City. The dinner speaker on the Friday evening will be Sam Abell, international, award-winning photographer.



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