

dr. bug's bugbytes

BY ROBERT CAMERON

Deer Mice

Deer mice are commonly encountered in rural and suburban homes near fields and wooded areas as well as cottages, outbuildings and sheds. In homes they often end up in garages and attics. They are usually referred to as deer mice or white-footed mice.

Of all the mice that are encountered in homes, these are the ones that most closely fit the picture of mice that are 'cute'. They are bicoloured, being a buff gray to reddish brown above and white below. Their tails are also distinctly bicoloured and covered with short hairs. They have long whiskers, large ears and eyes and a very pointed nose. Deer mice are nocturnal. They are good climbers, which is why they often end up in attics or ceilings. They feed on insects, nuts, seeds and small fruits. They love to eat birdseed and pet foods, which are often

readily available in the home. They enter structures in the fall looking for winter harbourage. Cottages and parked RV's are ideal as they are seldom used over the winter. Extensive damage can be done to upholstery, seating material etc.

In our area, deer mice are mostly a nuisance pest, causing problems similar to other mice. However, in Western and especially South Western North America they are carriers of Hantavirus, which can be a serious viral illness of humans with a 40-50% mortality rate. The virus is transmitted primarily by the inhalation of dust particles contaminated by urine and feces from infected mice. Great care must be taken in these areas when cleaning up a deer mouse infestation.

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Giving You the Dirt

By SEAN JAMES, N.P.D.,
PRESIDENT OF FERN RIDGE LANDSCAPING

On watering...

It's been brought to my attention that I may have misled you all last month and that, just perhaps, there's more to say about watering. When I discussed drought tolerant plants for the shade, it was not my intent to imply that the plants never needed water but rather that their water needs were much lower - and some more so (less so?) than others. Asking around, I find general agreement that Hosta need very little water and in many years need no attention at all. My thanks to a member of the Hosta Society and the Georgetown Horticulture Society for bringing this to my attention.

Speaking of water, most non-drought tolerant plants including turf grass require an inch of water per week. As with everything else, there are better and worse times. Irrigation is best done in the early morning, which allows the water to soak into the soil. Droplets on the leaves will also dry sooner in the morning sun thus reducing the chance for fungal infection.

The worst time to water is the early evening since leaves will stay wet all night promoting infection. Watering at mid-day loses a huge amount to evaporation.

Folks often forget about trees during dry periods. Trees desperately need water to cool themselves on hot days. The good news is they cool your yard at the same time. To water a tree, set the hose on the lowest-trickle possible and leave it at the base of the tree over night.

An excellent way to water your garden

is with the 'sweating' hose. Lay it out, snaking through the garden. I pin it down with cut up coat hangers. Lee Valley sells a fantastic system with piping, pressure regulators, adaptors and smaller, more adaptable and less obvious sweating hose. I'm installing it in areas of my own garden this month. Just cover the system with mulch and you'll never know it's there. Just a reminder that mulching will do great things to reduce your garden's need for water.

It's worth investing in a quality sprinkler and a good timer. I stay away from the programmable ones in favour of the twist-to-set egg timer style - simpler, cheaper - just like me.

Keep in mind that many plants actually die from over-watering. When it all comes down to it, the only way to tell if a garden needs water is to stick your finger in the soil. If it's cool and moist, it's ok. If it's warm and dry, give it a drink.

Since you put so much work into your garden and with the Region on the verge of charging what water actually costs, how you spend your water is worth paying attention to.

B.T.W. The Milton Horticultural Society is having a garden tour on June 26. Many lovely gardens are open to walk through including my own. You can start at the Milton Town Hall Garden and get tickets (cheap!) and a map. It's a lovely way to spend a Sunday.

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Made to order

Tannery Manor designs furniture for individual customers

By JENNIFER ENRIGHT

The Tannery Manor only sells leather furniture made on site at its location at 545 Main Street East in Milton. And owner Anton Burnatowski says there's a decided advantage to making the furniture that you sell to your customers.

Everything from the size, styling, colours of the leather, the type of leather, even the foam used inside the furniture can be made to order depending on a person's individual preference. "Basically, we have a line of furniture that is customized to people's needs."

He and his staff work with customers to design chairs, sofas, ottomans, recliners, and many other types of seating for the home or business. People can choose from over 200 different colours for their furniture. While earth tones are popular, there are other shades available including bright red and purple. Even the height and depth of a piece of furniture or the quality of the foam used inside a piece can be customized to suit a particular customer. The Tannery Manor has over 40 grades of foam available on site, and the company also sells Foamite mattresses through a new division known as Foamite Milton. "We have different compressions of foam," explains Anton. "It's all a quality piece of foam, but some people prefer a softer foam to a harder foam; so they can get that kind of customizing."

Anton says the furniture his company makes is designed to last. All pieces are made of quality leathers and each frame is constructed of wood as opposed to particle-board. "We have a lifetime warranty on our frame and mechanism for springs and a five-year warranty on workmanship."

Anton, who has worked in the furniture business for 35 years, says he enjoys offering his customers what he considers to be a

superior product, particularly a product that's designed for its durability. "Leather furniture will last a lifetime and that's why we make most of our styles with a loose back and a loose seat which are attached by zippers," explains Anton. "Ten to 15 years down the line, if they (customers) wish to refill their furniture (with new foam) it's an inexpensive operation as opposed to cheaper furniture which is made with a tight seat and a tight back."

Tannery Manor is open Monday to Friday from 8 am to 4 pm and on Saturday and Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm. For more information, call Tannery Manor at 905-864-6245 or 1-877-864-6245. The email address is tannerymanor@bellnet.ca.



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