



Arkansas Re-leaf newsletter

Jim Robbins
Extension Specialist -
Ornamental
Horticulture

Jim's Corner



Wholesale nursery, greenhouse sod producers map available now.

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Wholesale Producers Map/Directory

Thanks to the cooperative efforts of Dr. Ron Rainey, Extension agricultural economist, Anne Borg, executive director of the Arkansas Green Industry Association (AGIA) and Arkansas Turfgrass Association (ATA), and the Risk Management Agency, a directory of wholesale nurseries, greenhouses and sod farms is now available! The printed version will be useful in marketing Arkansas' quality products to potential buyers. A web-based version will be developed before the next newsletter.

Sudden Oak Death (SOD) Update

A committee has been formed in Arkansas to coordinate issues related to SOD. The group, consisting of about 12 to 15 individuals, has met twice to participate in national teleconference calls with similar groups from across the nation. The next call is scheduled for late October. The group is planning to produce educational materials so we can

effectively communicate the appropriate facts about this disease. We want to avoid spreading misinformation that causes unwarranted concern for homeowners and businesses. We could easily imagine people getting carried away about every spot on their ornamental plants requiring concern on their part and wasted investigative time by businesses and government agencies. A solid understanding of the facts will be helpful to all of us. The goal is to make detailed presentations at professional meetings in January and February 2005.

Invasive Plant Issue Update

A group met twice in 2004 to discuss invasive plant issues. At this point, the group has not officially formed an Exotic Pest Plant Council, but it is functioning in a similar capacity. The group, under the capable direction of Theo Whitsell, botanist/field ecologist for the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, and Dr. Johnnie Gentry, professor and curator of the UofA

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Plant Profile

Elsholtzia stauntonii 'Alba' Benth. Staunton's mint shrub

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The American composer and critic Virgil Thompson characterized many famous individuals in musical portraiture. Horticulturalists lacking musical aptitude must do without the piano and rely on the pen to highlight favorite plants. Walking the mid-September plots in the research field finds many plants in desperate straits. After a wet June and July, much of August and now September has been dry. Crumpled, yellowing leaves and drought-stressed plants abound. Even the usually reliable seven-son flower saw fit to terminate its floral display early this year.

Prospering in a very difficult site next to a water-greedy wingnut is *Elsholtzia stauntonii* 'Alba', the Staunton's mint shrub. This white-flowered form is much more noticeable in the landscape than the usual light lavender species. It is also a bit shorter at perhaps two feet in height (compared to three to five feet of the species).



The mint shrub needs at least half-day sun and well-drained soils. Plants can be cut to the ground in late winter, since flowering occurs on new growth.

Cuttings taken in late spring or early summer root readily under mist and normally flower later the same year. Seed propagation is also easy. Seed sown in late winter yields plants that flower the following September.



Think of the mint shrub as the plant portrayed by Maurice Ravel's "Bolero." Most of the growing season features a repeat of clean, bright green ornamental foliage without great ornamental appeal. In September, white flowers open in cataclysmic excess. Then the plant slips into dormancy, spending the winter as a pile of sticks, recuperating. As such, the best use for the plant is in a perennial or shrub border where other plants provide interest when the mint shrub does not.

Jim's Corner (cont.)

Herbarium, is attempting to discuss and plan for exotic plant pests in Arkansas. Results from this group's efforts should have long-term benefits for the state.

Horticulture Survey

Dr. Ron Rainey and I finally completed the Arkansas horticulture survey. Some of the highlights include:

- Based on 2001 data, gross sales for Arkansas Green Industries are estimated at \$1.06 billion.
- \$51.8 million is the 2002 market value of nursery and greenhouse crops which is up 51% since 1997.

- Horticultural firms were directly related to the employment of 19,640 employees in Arkansas in 2000.

We would like to express our sincere appreciation to Farm Bureau, the Arkansas State Plant Board and the Department of Horticulture at the University of Arkansas for financial support of this immense effort.

Stem Girdling Roots (SGR)

This appears to be a hot-button issue right now with lots of finger pointing and discussion going on. In the end, I think this will have a positive impact on the Green Industry. Some individuals are pointing their

fingers solely at field producers of shade trees. While I have not observed this to be as significant an issue in Arkansas as other parts of the country, I believe a review of proper tree planting techniques is always valuable. I highly recommend that you visit the following website: <http://righttreerightplace.com/planting/howTo.asp>. Click on and watch the six-part video series.

Passing

I am saddened to report the passing of Carl Totemeier on July 3. Before retiring to northwest Arkansas, Carl had a rich and productive career in the botanical garden field with his final tenure as director of the esteemed New York Botanical Garden. This horticulture transplant was visible in northwest Arkansas as a result of his significant contributions to the Botanical Garden of the Ozarks, his visibility at the Fayetteville Farmers' Market and his many columns in local and national garden columns. Scott Starr wrote a very thoughtful tribute to Carl in the September issue of *Arkansas Gardener* magazine.

What's Up

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service announced July 6 that Arkansas was added to its list of quarantined states for Japanese beetles.

Recent trapping surveys indicate that Arkansas now is infested with Japanese beetles. Adult Japanese beetles feed on fruits, vegetables and ornamental plants and cause damage to more than 300 potential hosts. Efforts to control the Japanese beetle cost an estimated \$460 million annually.

Aimed at preventing the spread of this pest to the western United States via aircraft, the Japanese beetle quarantine regulates the interstate movement of articles from regulated airports and prescribes strict loading, inspection and treatment requirements for departing aircraft. The western states protected by the Japanese beetle quarantine are Arizona, California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah and Washington.

Source: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/news/2004/07/jbquaran_ppq.html, July 21, 2004

[At this time. I do not see this having a significant impact on the Arkansas Green Industry, but I am working with Paul Shell at the Arkansas Plant Board to clarify any impact from this USDA-APHIS ruling. It basically impacts one direct airflight from northwest regional to the west coast.]

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I could not believe my eyes, but you can view and print a copy of the new ANLA standards at their website: <http://www.anla.org/applications/Documents/Docs/ANLAStandard2004.pdf>. The latest version of "American Standard for Nursery Stock," approved by American National Standards Institute this May, was posted on the ANLA website. The publication was last updated in 1996. Among the changes are the addition of the No. 45, No. 65 and No. 95/100 container classes. Also, the publication clarifies that for B&B trees, root ball depth should be measured at the root flare, even if loose soil exists above the flare.

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How's Your Workers' Compensation?

Jennifer Bonds
State Training Coordinator

Workers' compensation is an issue small business owners must face. Is my business exempt from workers' compensation? Do I pay or do my employees pay for the workers' compensation insurance? How does the Workers' Compensation Commission know I am doing the right or wrong thing? These are just a few of the questions you may have. The Workers' Compensation Commission advises use of the list below to conduct a quick check on your workers' compensation insurance.

Insurance Requirements

- Most employers in Arkansas with three or more employees are required by law to have workers' compensation insurance coverage for their employees.
- There are exceptions to the three-or-more requirement, so employers with fewer than three should check with authorities before assuming they do not fall under the workers' compensation laws. Employers in doubt may contact their agent or the commission's Information Officer, its Operations/ Compliance Division or the Legal Advisor Division.
- The insurance is purchased by the employer; no part of it should be paid for by employees or deducted from their pay.
- The coverage is provided through a workers' compensation insurance policy or by the employer receiving state approval to be self-insured for



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such purposes. Any other arrangement by the employer's representative may constitute fraud.

- Employers failing to comply with these laws may be subject to penalties by the state and, in addition, may lose protections afforded them by workers' compensation insurance and the laws of the state.

Please log onto the Workers' Compensation Commission's website at www.awcc.state.ar.us for more information. Content from this article was taken from www.awcc.state.ar.us.
Arkansas SBDC E-News - Biz Bytes

Upcoming Events

October 24-27 – IPPS Southern Region, Greenville/Spartanburg, S.C. Contact: Dr. David L. Morgan, 817-428-2296 or <http://www.ipps.org/SouthernNA>

November 3 – Tree Care Issues Workshop, Oklahoma State University. Contact: Stephanie Larimer at 405-744-5404 or Stephanie.Larimer@okstate.edu

January, 4-5, 2005 – Arkansas Turfgrass Association (ATA) Annual Trade Show and Conference, Hot Springs Convention Center. Contact: ATA at 501-224-4840 or <http://www.arkansasturf.org>

January 9-11 – Western 2005: The Big Show, Hyatt Regency Crown Center, Kansas City, MO. Contact: Western Nursery and Landscape Association at 816-233-1481 or <http://www.wnla.org/insidethewestern.htm>

January 14-15 – Arkansas/Oklahoma Horticulture Industry Show (HIS), Fort Smith, Holiday Inn Civic Center. Contact: Ray Campbell at raycam@dasnr.okstate.edu

January 15-17 – The Tennessee Nursery and Landscape Association Trade Show and Conference, Hamilton County Convention Center, Chattanooga, TN. Contact: TNLA, 931-473-3951 or <http://www.tnla.com>

January 27 – 24th Annual Landscape Maintenance Seminar, UoA, Fort Smith. Contact: Dustin Blakey at 479-484-7737 or dblakey@uaex.edu

February 3-4 – Arkansas Green Industry Association (AGIA) Trade Show and Conference, Hot Springs Convention Center. Contact: AGIA at 501-225-0029 or www.argia.org

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No endorsement is implied or discrimination intended for firms or references included or excluded from this newsletter.

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