



Arkansas Re-leaf newsletter

For the Commercial Green Industry

Jim Robbins
Extension Specialist -
Ornamental
Horticulture

Jim's Corner



Welcome to Dr. Aaron Patton

I am thrilled to announce that starting January 1, **Dr. Aaron Patton** will join our faculty in the newly created position of **Extension specialist in**

turfgrass management. Aaron received his master's and Ph.D. from Purdue and B.S. from Iowa State University. Arkansas is very lucky to have Aaron on staff. Aaron will lead a statewide extension effort in turfgrass management and conduct research to meet the needs of the Arkansas turf industry. Aaron joins an already top turf team that includes Dr. John Boyd, Dr. Mike Richardson and Dr. Doug Karcher. Aaron's position was created by redirecting the ornamentals position formerly occupied by Dr. Gerald Klingaman. Many of you will get to meet Aaron at the Arkansas Turfgrass Association (ATA; www.arkansasturf.org) conference held in Hot Springs on January 17 and 18.

I was very pleased to see increased representation by Arkansas at the Southern Region of the International Plant Propagators Society (IPPS; www.ipps.org) in Charlotte, North Carolina, in early September. Existing members Jonathan, Barbara and Dennis Burnett (Burnett's, Sherwood) were joined this year by Dawood and Solomon Aydani from Pittman Nursery (Magnolia). The motto of IPPS is to "seek and share," and I believe the Arkansas group would agree that the unique combination of

talks and tours are hard to beat. While I appreciate how difficult and expensive it can be for many green industry businesses to attend and participate in professional meetings of any kind in and out of state, I also believe the effort is rewarded many times over. Believe it or not, travel to out-of-state conferences/trade shows is an effort for me since state funds do not support out-of-state travel.



Arkansas representation at the Southern Region IPPS meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina

At this time of the year, I always like to take stock of the past year and acknowledge those individuals who have made it possible for me to have another successful year. Most of you are not aware that because of my work location I am extremely dependent on commercial firms to allow me to conduct research at their place of business. While this on-site research can benefit the business cooperator, it makes it entirely possible for me to maintain an active research program.

Again this year I would like to thank Larry Reddmann (Reddmann Farms, Harrisburg), Tracey and Donna Bemis (Bemis Tree Farm, Little Rock) and special thanks to Joel Stout (Cricket

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Jim's Corner (cont.)

Hill Farm, Conway) for letting me conduct research at their businesses. I would also like to thank Manjula Carter at the Hope Research and Extension Center in Hope for doing such a great job of maintaining research plots for me at that location. Thanks also to the Roots/Novozymes company for funding a large trial at Joel Stout's nursery.

Special thanks needs to go to Dr. John Boyd, my friend and colleague, for transferring his "old" University pickup truck to my program. I am very excited to finally have a University vehicle so I can keep 18,000 miles of annual driving off my personal car. It also means that when I spill herbicide, it won't be in the trunk of my car anymore.

What's Up?

General

Hosta Virus X (HVX) has now been confirmed in Arkansas. This topic was actually brought to my attention by Grand Designs (Beth and Rand Retzloff, Little Rock). In October, I was involved in evaluating 81 cultivars at a garden center. Only 3 of the 81 actually tested positive for this new virus.

I think the story on HVX is evolving quickly. Factual information is hard to find, and diagnosis is VERY difficult unless you want to pay for an expensive laboratory test. To make matters more challenging, there are other viruses that infect hosta.

The Cooperative Extension Service will have a fact sheet on this virus by early 2007. Until then, you may want to check out these sites: <http://www.massnrc.org/pests/linkedddocuments/pestaalerts/>

[HostaVirusX_February_2006.htm](#) and http://inthecountrygardenandgifts.com/articles/hosta_virus_x.php. I think it is important for you to know about this disease; however, *I would not panic*. Not all variegation and leaf puckering is due to this virus. Some varieties ('Breakdance', 'Eternal Father', 'Kiwi Water-colours', 'Leopard Frog', 'Lunacy', 'Parkish Gold') in the trade *apparently* were caused by this virus.



The American Hemerocallis Society has prepared a press release (<http://www.daylilies.org/AHSinforeleaseinvasives.pdf>): "Listing *Hemerocallis fulva* as an Invasive Species." According to the press release, "Several state and agency publications and websites list *Hemerocallis fulva* as an invasive species." Unfortunately, there appears to be some confusion in properly identi-

fying the rhizomatous *H. fulva* species and setting it apart from the non-invasive, clump-forming hybrid daylily cultivars.

To lessen the confusion, the American Hemerocallis Society encourages use of the following definitions to clarify the difference between *H. fulva* species and the hybrid daylily cultivars which are excellent garden plants.

Invasive Species: *Hemerocallis fulva* (Common names: Fulva, Tawny Daylily, Common Orange Daylily, Roadside Ditch Lily and Tiger Lily). *H. fulva* is an infertile triploid daylily which does not set seed but does spread by rhizomes. If left unattended, it can form large colonies over time.

Alternatives include any of the thousands of commercially available hybrid daylily cultivars which are clump-forming and non-invasive.

Source: Univ. of Kentucky Hortmemo #11, Nov. 30.

(NOTE: *H. fulva* is not on the Arkansas Noxious Weed List, http://www.plantboard.org/plant_noxious.html.)



I was saddened to read that the **famed arborist Dr. Alex Shigo** had passed away on October 6. Dr. Jeff Iles (Iowa State University) may have said it best: "Just like trees, some people grow taller than others. And in every sense of the word, Dr. Shigo was a giant."

Source: Tree Care Industry, Nov. 2006.

Dr. Jon Lindstrom has just released a new hybrid butterflybush (Buddleja) called 'Asian Moon'. 'Asian Moon' is a symmetrical, round shrub with light purple flowers that serves the same purpose as other Buddleja. 'Asian Moon' has been evaluated in test plots at Fayetteville, Little Rock and Hope and has shown to over-winter well in all three locations. A significant advantage for 'Asian Moon' is that it is sterile. Also, because it **doesn't set seed**, the flowering stage is extended, resulting in longer-lasting blooms. 'Asian Moon' will be available during the annual Horticulture Department Plant Sale, April 21, 2007. Later it will be available from commercial nurseries as unrestricted public varieties.



Retail

There was an interesting article in the September issue of *NM Pro* about "Selling plants, the ebay™ way." The article cited that from June 15 to July 19 this year, ebay™ sold 10,254 perennials, 5,219 trees and 4,351 shrubs. Who would have thought the on-line auction could do those kinds of numbers in just one month.



Highlights from a speech by Bob Negan to the Oregon Association of Nurseries. (Source: *Digger*, Nov. 2006):

- "It's all about giving your customers the kind of experience that makes your business memorable and parlaying that first experience into a highly profitable long-term relationship."
- Quit playing the price game: someone will always be lower. The key is to add value.
- It costs five times as much to get a new customer as it does to sell to an existing one. "It is imperative that every single customer becomes precious."
- "I don't care what business you are in; you can bundle" (i.e., meal deal at fast food: bundles sandwich, fries, drink).
- "Customers, I don't care who they are, want to be appreciated."

Landscape

The EPA recently (October 10) closed a period of public comment on the organic arsenical herbicides **MSMA**, **DSMA**, **CAMA** and cacodylic acid. (Source: <http://www.epa.gov/EPA-PEST/2006/August/Day-09/p12905.htm>.) MSMA is the primary herbicide available to homeowners and professionals for summer post-emergence weed control in bermudagrass and zoysiagrass.



In 2005 while attending the FarWest Show in Portland, I ended up spending time with Dr. Mike Dirr and a representative from a new company called Horticultural

Asset Management (HMI: <http://www.moneygrowsontrees.com/>). This newly formed company was in Portland to collect catalogs from wholesale nurseries to be entered into their landscape valuation database. Then in October I read an article in *Tree Care Industry* about HMI again. According to the industry, HMI offers an on-line source for **replacement cost valuations of landscape plants**. Several times per year I receive calls from homeowners, lawyers or green industry businesses requesting information on methods to value landscape plants. HMI may provide a new alternative to those seeking this kind of valuation information.

Manage® (halosulfuron) turf herbicide by Monsanto® has been replaced by Sedge-Hammer® herbicide from Gowan Company. Sedge-Hammer™ herbicide can be used for controlling nutsedge in turf and landscaped areas, including those with established woody ornamentals. (Source: www.gowanco.com.) SedgeHammer® will become more common in the trade as supplies of Manage® are removed from inventories.

Greenhouse/Nursery Growers

Dogwood syrup?

I recently tried salt blocks as a method of preventing **rabbits** from **chewing the tree trunks** in my plot. The idea was shared by Dr. Robert McNeil, who helped organize and attended the July 2006 KNLA/KDA/UK-sponsored trip to Ohio nurseries. Four participants saw Klyn Nurseries, Inc., Perry, Ohio, successfully using salt blocks to prevent **rabbit damage to irrigation lines**, which was based on the theory that the rabbits were after minerals that were in the water or building up inside the irrigation

tubing. My irrigation lines are shielded from rabbit damage, but my tree trunks are not protected. Salt may build up on the trunks. Therefore, at the end of September, about one week after first noticing rabbit damage, I put out salt blocks and mineral salt blocks on the east and west sides of my trees. On October 8, 2006, noticeable feeding on the blocks, with the mineral blocks being preferred, was noted. Unfortunately, so was new chewing damage to my trees.

Dr. Tom Barnes, UK forestry professor, states that rabbits chew to get the sugar out of phloem and that they chew those tree species with the highest sugar content. Additionally, they chew to keep their teeth sharp and worn and also to get minerals. Of nine species of maple, including three sugar maples and three species of dogwood, the rabbits preferred the dogwoods! Perhaps Klyn's rabbits are a problem only on irrigation lines because they are pursuing only minerals and have preferred phloem species available in the surrounding woodlands. For those who grow primarily shrubs and only see damage to irrigation lines, salt blocks may be a way to deter rabbits. The tubing we thread our spaghetti tubing through has been nearly 100% effective at preventing rabbit damage. It should be noted that these comments are based on observations, not a replicated experiment. (Source: Kentucky Nursery Update #52, Nov. 7.)

NEW!

*New Publications
(read/download at
www.uaex.edu):*

Stem Rot of Annual Vinca,
FSA7545, Dr. Vann
Azalea Leaf and Flower Gall,
FSA7546, Dr. Vann
Grey Mold of Greenhouse
Ornamentals, **FSA7542**,
Dr. Vann



Arkansas Re-leaf

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Upcoming Events

January 4-5 – Mid-States Horticultural Expo (KNLA, TNLA, & SNA Trade Show), Kentucky Exposition Center, South Wing, Kentucky; State Fair Grounds, Louisville, Kentucky. Contact Betsie Taylor, KNLA Exec. Dir., 800-735-9791, url <http://www.knla.org>.

January 7-9 – Western, Overland Park, Kansas. Contact <http://www.wnla.org/>

January 17-18 – PLANTS 2007: joint **AGIA and ATA** seminars and trade show, Hot Springs Convention Center. Contact AGIA at <http://argia.org/argia2/home2.shtml> or ATA at <http://www.arkansasturf.org/>.

January 25 – Landscape Maintenance Seminar, University of Arkansas – Fort Smith.

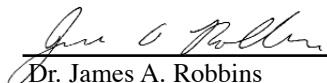
February 1-3 – Gulf States Horticultural Exposition, Mobile, Alabama. Contact www.gshe.org.

February 26 – UofA Retailer Spring Tune-up Workshop, 6-9 p.m., Extension Headquarters, Little Rock. Contact Jim Robbins for information: 501-671-2307 or jrobbins@uaex.edu.

February 27 – UofA Retailer Spring Tune-up Workshop, 6-9 p.m., Pauline Whitaker Animal Science Cntr., University of Arkansas campus, Fayetteville. Contact Jim Robbins for information: 501-671-2307 or jrobbins@uaex.edu.

March 2-4 – Arkansas Flower & Garden Show, Little Rock Convention Center. Contact <http://www.arflowerandgardenshow.org/>.

March 29 - April 1 – Azalea Society of America (ASA) 2007 National Convention, Nacogdoches, Texas. Contact <http://www.nacogdochesazaleas.com/>.


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