



Arkansas Re-leaf newsletter

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Ornamental
Horticulture

Jim's Corner

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Dwarf Golden Pigeonberry

I have just survived another August filled with excellent trade shows and conferences. Somehow the meetings and tours get me re-energized and full of new ideas. For that reason, I have opted not to have Dr. Lindstrom write a Plant Profile this month since I need the space to share more things with you.

I found it fascinating that EVERY commercial landscape in central Georgia had *Duranta erecta* 'Aurea' (Dwarf Golden Pigeonberry) in it, and yet I had not yet seen this plant in Arkansas. It seemed to be the new Marguerite sweet potato (*Ipomoea batatas* 'Marguerite'). Hardiness appears to be zones 9-11 but who cares, we would use it as a colorful summer annual. Anyone have any experience with this plant?

Department news: I am sad to announce that Dr. Gerald Klingaman did retire on August 1. THANKS again Gerald for 31 years (!!!!!!!) of teaching, writing and sharing. I am happy to announce that after almost two years of vacancy, the fruit extension position is now re-filled with an exceptional candidate, Dr. Elena Garcia.

I am pleased to announce that starting in 2006 the Arkansas Turfgrass Association (ATA) and the Arkansas Green Industry Association (AGIA) will hold one joint trade show at the Hot Springs Convention Center on Wednesday and Thursday, January 18-19. Each respective organization will have their own educational seminars, but the one combined trade show will be a benefit to attendees and vendors.

For those nursery growers that missed our workshop on Financial Analysis and Risk Management in late July, you missed a great workshop. The workshop was

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composed of three parts. In the first section Laurence Crane from the National Crop Insurance Services talked about the new crop insurance program for nursery crops. John Haydu from the University of Florida gave a general presentation on Risk Management Principles and Concepts. For me, the highlight was a hands-on presentation by Alan Hodges, also at the University of Florida, on Financial Management Tools. They are beginning to accumulate Critical Financial Benchmarks for greenhouse and nursery growers. You can view some of their information at: <http://hortbusiness.ifas.ufl.edu/hortnba/>. I have about six extra copies of the binder from the workshop if you want a copy. First come, first served. The binder includes a CD with an Excel spreadsheet so you can enter your own financial

production information. I compliment Brad Hartwell (Al Williams Nursery - Piggott), Tracey and Donna Bemis (Bemis Tree Farm - Little Rock) and Tonya and Nathan Bonde (River Oaks Nursery - Hot Springs) for attending.

I apologize for doing a poor job of advertising the University of Arkansas Turfgrass Research Field Day in Fayetteville on August 2. They only offer this field day every two years, so we will have to wait until 2008 for the next installment. I am so impressed and proud of what Dr. John Boyd, Dr. Doug Karcher, Dr. Mike Richardson and their graduate students and staff are doing in the area of turf. While a great deal of the research is directed at golf turf, there were still plenty of outstanding reports on valuable

results for landscapers and sod producers. If nothing else, the turf variety trials are worth the trip.

I mentioned that Plant Flash Cards would soon be available. Well, they are now available through the Arkansas Green Industry Association (501-225-0029) for \$30. This set of 215 plant cards was designed as an additional tool to help prepare for the Arkansas Certified Nursery and Landscape Professional (ACNLP) test; however, garden centers may want to purchase a set as a quick reference at the check-out counter. The cards include trees (69), shrubs (94), perennials (19), groundcovers (9), vines (13), ornamental grasses (6) and lawn turf species (5). One side has color photographs and the opposite side has text information on plant size, flowers, fruits, etc.

What's Up?

My sincere congratulations to the **Donald Pittman family** for being selected as the **Farm Family of the SW District** for Arkansas. This means they are in the final running to be considered as the Farm Family of the Year for the entire state. For those that had not heard, the **Lawrence Reddmann Farm** in Harrisburg won that statewide designation last year. It is great to finally see ornamental horticulture getting some recognition for their contribution to agriculture in Arkansas.



This summer a **national Green Industry survey** (Economic Impacts of the Green Industry in the United States) was released: <http://www.utextension.utk.edu/hbin/greenimpact.html>. In that report, you will find interesting statistics such as: "51% or an estimated 42 million households purchased lawn and garden items at home centers in 2004."



Joel Stout (Cricket Hill Farm, Conway) brought to my attention an

excellent article ("Bark Adds Bite" by James Zablocki) in the July 1, 2005 issue of *American Nurseryman* on **bark as a container media**. The article is very well written.



For **greenhouse growers**, my good friend at Michigan State University, Dr. Art Cameron, wrote an excellent article in the June 2005 issue of *Greenhouse Management and Production* (GMPro pp. 30-35) on production techniques for several tropical-looking ornamentals including banana (*Musa*), elephants ears (*Colocasia*) and *Xanthosoma*. If you need a copy, give me a call.



If you are really stuck in finding a plant, I found another online (and hardcopy) source, The Plant List: <http://www.plantlist.com/list/txa01.htm>.



For **growers**, the USDA just released the "2005 Imported **Fire Ant Quarantine** Treatments for Nursery Stock and Other Regulated Articles" publication, and it is avail-

able online: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/pubs/ifapub.pdf>. Speaking of fire ants, the quarantine area in Arkansas has been expanded to include Montgomery County: http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/news/2005/08/fireantq_ppq.html.



For plant geeks like me, check out: <http://www.weirddudesplantzoo.com/index.html>.



There was a great article in the July 2005 issue of NMPPro for garden centers/retailers by Charles Powell on **pest control strategies for retail selling areas**.



There was an interesting article in the August 2005 issue of GMPro titled: "Greenhouse Retrofits Eligible for **Energy-conservation Grants**." It sounds like Section 9006 of the 2002 U.S. Farm Bill allocated grant money for agriculture producers in areas with a population of less than 50,000. The grants are for energy-efficient facility retrofits.



Interesting quote in the August 2005 NMPPro issue: "Havenyfield Tree Farm... estimates that only five species make up 80% of all trees planted in any given market."



For **greenhouse growers**, there is an excellent article in the August 2005 issue of GMPro on "Ten Things to Avoid for a Quality Poinsettia Program."



The following article was written by my good friend Mark Halcomb, University of Tennessee - August 31 *Nursery Notes*:

Deer Damage Prevented or A Ribbon Plus Stinky Stuff = No Deer Damage

I had noticed a few nurseries had strung a white, flat tape or ribbon around individual blocks of nursery stock, to keep deer out, I assumed. I really had no idea how well it worked, until I was asked about it. I spoke with those using it and those selling it.

A constant response I received was, "It works!" A smell repellent is applied to the tape. I heard three points: keep it nose level on the deer, allow passage through the farm and reapply it every month. No negatives were mentioned, and I asked.


Producer #1 erected it to be nose level, cut it to dig, retied it and learned it was no longer at nose level due to the knot taking up some of the slack. He learned how critical the height issue is because deer entered the block. Readjusting the height to nose level stopped the problem. The smell reminds him of turpentine.

He also pressed the point that deer must be allowed to cross the field. You cannot erect this tape around a 40-acre field and expect them to go around. Do not attempt to block the deer. Producer #1 suggested using it around blocks less than 3 acres in size. Allow passage.

Several producers have tried the nylon Mule tape that is commonly used to secure the wire basket across the top of machine dug balls. It works decent for most, but it gets wet and sags with the added weight. It is 5/8 inch wide and comes on 20-pound spools. Producer #1 stressed buying the lighter weight tape because of less sag.

The original tape that producers started with is called Plot Saver Deer Barrier Ribbon, 3/4 inch wide. It is not absorbent and does not sag after a rain. It appears to be woven strands of plastic.



<i>Lagerstroemia indica</i> Crape Myrtle		
Size:	small shrub to small-sized tree (3' to 40' tall)	
Flowers:	exceptional summer flowering plant; flower colors vary from white to pink to purple	
Fruit:	woody capsule; not showy and somewhat messy	
Fall Color:	nice flame colors on some cultivars	
Bark:	exceptional on some tree cultivars ('Natchez', 'Biloxi')	
Culture:	full sun; drought tolerant once established	
Disease/Insect:	powdery mildew, leaf spot	
Use:	specimen, summer-flowering shrub/tree; best in zones 7 and 8	
Cultivars:	many for size and flower color	
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Plant Flash Cards

There are two commercial repellants that can be used to wet the ribbon being sold locally that I know of, and there may be more. Underwood offers Liquid Fence for \$35 per quart that will make 4 gallons of solution at \$8.75 per gallon. The Co-op offers Deer Stopper for \$125 per gallon that will make 10 gallons of solution at \$12.50 per gallon.

The staff at both told me how good their product is. The producers I spoke with had only used the Deer Stopper. Both should be re-applied

monthly. There may be a better method of making the application, but one method is to slide a soaked rag along the tape or ribbon, while wearing a rubber glove. A bucket of the solution was carried for re-wetting the rag.

Another idea was to carry a backpack filled with the solution. Wear a rubber glove while sliding a rag along the ribbon. Wet the rag within the left hand almost constantly with the nozzle also being carried within the left hand and rag. The right hand operates the trigger.

Realize that hunters or dogs may force deer to cross the ribbon, but they keep going. Several producers learned that grass string did not work. Producer #2 has been using the method for about three years. He states that it still works, but perhaps not as well, because the deer have gotten somewhat accustomed to it.

He says, "If it were not for Deer Stopper, I would be out of business. The product used to cord balls is better than the Plot Saver Deer Barrier Ribbon for two reasons, in my opinion. It is more absorbent, and it does not break down in sunlight as does the plastic tape. I've observed the deer are becoming increasingly accustomed to the smell. We are now applying it every 14 days. This seems to help."

Timely re-application is critical. So is weekly maintenance to keep the ribbon at a constant nose height on an adult deer. The deer were here first. They are creatures of habit. They follow the paths their parents used. Allow deer lanes across your fields.

I have heard some very positive success stories about this method. No failures. The producers I listened to had wanted it to work very badly. I learned years ago when dealing with deer, many things work for a short period of time, regardless whether you attempt smell repellants or fences. It is critical that you become committed and repair or replace daily to enforce the method. Do not erect and forget.



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Upcoming Events

September 30 - October 1. Middle Tennessee Nursery Association Trade Show. McMinnville, Tennessee. Contact www.mtna.com

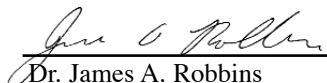
November 9-11. Tree Care Industry (TCI) Association Expo. Columbus, Ohio. Contact www.tcia.org

October 23-26. Southern Region International Plant Propagators Society annual meeting. Gainesville, Florida. Contact <http://www.ipps.org/SouthernNA/programs.html>

December 1-2. The Great Southern Tree Conference. University of Florida Conference Center, Gainesville, Florida. Contact www.greatsoutherntreeconference.org

January 18-19. AGIA/ATA Trade Show and Conference. Hot Springs Convention Center. Contact AGIA at 501-225-0029 or www.argia.org

January 26. Landscape Maintenance Seminar. University of Arkansas - Ft. Smith.


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