

# Let's Talk About Trees and Roses



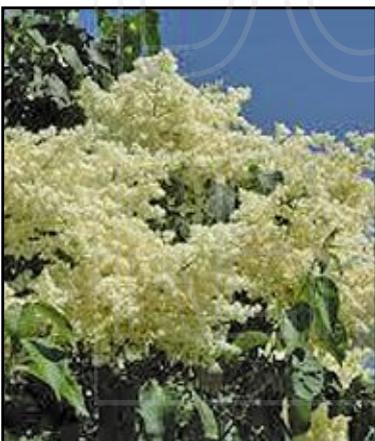
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So looking over the last two years of Pat's Corner I see I have talked repeatedly about watering your trees, so I will make this reminder short so I can talk about tree varieties. There is no one size fits all answer to how to water your trees. Why you might ask? It depends on the type of tree, your soil type, how much rain we have had and what time of year it is. The goal is to keep the top two feet of the soil evenly moist around a tree because 80% of a tree's roots are in that top two feet of the soil. The best way to check the soil moisture is to dig a test hole 24" deep out at the drip line of the tree and see if the soil is wet. If it is not wet all the way down you need to figure out how to set you drip to keep it evenly moist. Remember that what you water the lawn is not enough. Also keep in mind that if you flood irrigate, the trees cannot

stand in water more than a few days or the roots will die from lack of oxygen. Don't forget that a newly planted tree needs special attention during the first two or three hot summers while it gets settled in. Newly planted trees will have a better start if you keep the grass off the root ball. Wood bark mulch around the tree will hold down the weeds and keep the root ball cooler as we move into the summer heat. Please check the Pat's Corner tab on our website, canyoncreeknursery.net to review my previous discussions on watering.

Now on to the fun of choosing trees for your yard. We have trees for every size project from potted trees for folks who want to watch the tree grow to sizes for folks looking for instant gratification. Our selection of potted trees ranges from flowering crabs and plums to birch, maples, linden, honey locust, chokecherry, oak, and lilac to name a few. After you get over the idea that no tree is completely



"mess" free, selecting the right tree for your location starts with the same basic questions as we talked about for choosing shrubs. How much space do you have, north, south, east, or west location? How do you plan to water? How many hours a day of direct light? What would you like the tree to do? What other trees do you already have? As we work through those questions we narrow down the choices of which tree to pick. For example, you want a tree that will be 20ish feet tall, reliably hardy with fragrant blooms. The choices are Canada Red Chokecherry, flowering crab apple or Japanese Tree Lilac. Ok, so everyone has those, but they do well here in Billings. If you need a shade tree that can be 20' or more from the house and the tree can be 40 feet or more tall (beyond my lifetime) ash, maple, linden, or honey locust would fit your spot. Notice I haven't mentioned aspens or cottonwoods? Aspens are a shorted lived tree, 20 years or so, and they get every bug and disease known to man but we love them anyway. Then they die and we replace them with something else. Cottonwoods should never be planted near the house. Yes, they grow fast but they become a danger to you or your neighbor when they are old. That said we have aspens and

cottonwoods. If you are seeing yellow leaves on maple or oak trees, a yearly iron supplement is a good idea to help reduce the soil pH in our high alkaline soil.

Let's talk about fruit trees. We have apple, apricot, plum, pear, pie cherry and peach. Peach trees are for yards with a micro-climate and they will not survive wind or being dry. Apricots are like peach trees as they try to bloom in early April and often the blooms get frosted but the tree itself is very hardy. Apples and pears need pollinators for best fruiting. With apples, a crab apple blooming at the same time will suffice but pears need another pear. Many apricots and plums are self-pollinating but generally produce better with a companion tree. Apple and pear trees can get up to 20' tall but I say never let a fruit tree get taller than you want to stand on a ladder to pick fruit so regular pruning when the tree is dormant is the best way to control the size.

The roses are starting to bloom! We have a great selection of shrub, miniature, rugosa, climbing and David Austin roses in a rainbow of colors. We all know that roses can be a bit of work but the payoff is worth it. With all this wet weather we are having we already have some reports



of black spot. Black spot is caused by fungus that makes black spots on the leaves. The fungus spores can overwinter in fallen leaves and infected canes so good fall clean-up is essential. Fall and spring applications of all season oil will help smother overwintering fungus spores. Leaves with black spot will turn yellow and fall off. If you have black spot treatment with a fungicide labeled for black spot will help. Choosing varieties that are listed as resistant to black spot is worth consideration but if there is a must have rose don't hesitate to get ahead of potential problems. Roses don't like to sleep at night with their leaves wet as that is a sure path to fungus problems. Make sure that you water roses early in the day so they dry out before evening. If you have to water later in the day try to water only the soil and keep the leaves dry. Stop in to check out the color!



QUALITY TREES, SHRUBS, & PERENNIALS

www.canyoncreeknursery.net

406.652.1010

The Roses are Blooming!

Mon.-Fri.  
Sat.-Sun.

8:00am - 6:00pm  
10:00am - 4:00pm



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