

The Four Seasons Newsletter

The mission of Friends of Boone County Arboretum is to create community awareness and participation at the arboretum by involving individuals, families, schools, sporting groups, community organizations, garden clubs, and other interested parties.

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Quarterly Newsletter

Autumn, 2007

Spotlight On: Japanese Cryptomeria by Mike Klahr

Are you looking for a more “unusual”, less common evergreen? Tired of all the ordinary pines, spruces and firs? Then why not consider an attractive, densely-branched, conical evergreen tree with interesting texture and foliage? There is a tree that fits this description, and it is known as “Japanese Cryptomeria” (*Cryptomeria japonica*). The *Cryptomeria* genus is so unique, there is only one species, *japonica*. Some garden centers refer to this tree as Japanese Cedar, although it is neither a true cedar (*Cedrus*) nor a juniper (*Juniperus*). Graceful in habit, with its straight, stout trunk, interesting bark and erect, wide-spreading branches with spirally-arranged foliage comprised of very short needles,

Japanese Cryptomeria commonly grows in home landscapes to at least 40 feet in height and spreads to 20 feet in width. Hardy in climatic zones 5 and 6, this tree is easy to grow in Kentucky in full sun or light shade. It prefers moist, acid soil, so mulch around it and don't add lime or wood ashes over its roots. Keep it watered during a drought. Under good growing conditions, this is a long-lived tree. Native only to Japan and southern China, where it gets 150 feet tall and is grown for timber, Cryptomeria was first discovered in 1701, but was not introduced into America until 1861. There are at least 50 cultivars. Many of them are dwarfs. One of the best and fastest-growing cultivars for Kentucky is ‘Yoshino’, an upright, showy

specimen of Japanese origin, with blue-green summer foliage that may bronze slightly in cold winters. ‘Yoshino’ was first grown at the Yokohama Nursery in Japan in 1928. This cold-hardy cultivar keeps its uniform, handsome columnar shape and nice conical form on top without pruning, growing to 25 feet after 10 years, eventually reaching a height of 40 feet. Cultivars are grown from November cuttings that take 10 weeks to root, while the straight species can be grown from seed, after soaking and stratification requirements are met. As the tree matures, the tan and gray outer bark peels off in fibrous, vertical strips to reveal orange or coppery-red highlights underneath, becoming quite beautiful with age. In Japan, peasants use the strips of bark

to shingle the roofs of their houses. Tiny cones, taking 10 months to mature, are produced along the ends of the evergreen branches. The foliage is made up of very short, overlapping, leathery, incurved needles, resembling those of a giant sequoia, or some junipers, yet the needles are soft, not sharp and prickly like a juniper. The genus, *Cryptomeria*, derives its name from the Greek “krypto” (“hidden”) and “meris” (“a part”), due to the fact that the tiny flower parts are concealed.



It is with sadness we inform our group of the passing of Julie Gecks, Friend of Boone County Arboretum. Julie lived in Cincinnati and enjoyed walking at the arboretum with her walking group. She will be missed.



Welcome New Members!

Friends of Boone County Arboretum would like to welcome the new members of our Friends group!

Connie Householder

Keri Kaeding

Matthew Maley

Nancy Schwart

We encourage all new members to join us every 4th Monday of the month from 6:30-8:00 p.m. for our regular meeting. We start with a short

program and then discuss ways to improve the arboretum through volunteer work and community awareness. Refreshments are served. Mark your calendar for the following dates:

Monday, November 26
6:30 p.m. Boone County Extension Service

Monday, December 10
*Please note that this will date will take place of our regular monthly meeting.

Holiday Party 6:00
Boone County Extension Service

Friends of Boone County Arboretum memberships make great stocking stuffers! Give your friend or family member the gift of a whole year of “10%” off at their favorite Boone County garden centers! See Laura Kline for membership cards!



Highlight of Autumn by Norbert O'Hare



One highlight of autumn for those of us involved with growing trees and shrubs is colorful, falling leaves. You may have heard

that many climactic factors are stacked against us this year, and we shouldn't expect a great show. Well, the news isn't all bad.

Native American lore says that heavenly warriors kill the Great Bear each autumn, and that the vibrant colors in the forest are the Bear's dripping blood and splattering fat when the hunters prepare the meat. Perhaps they are using a slow cooker this year, so they can go out hunting again. After all, winter can be long and difficult.

While the drought will diminish color

somewhat, another affect of the dry season will be to delay the peak of the foliage season. If you're like me, before you realize that you should pack up the car with candied apples for a nice long tour, it's already over. Maybe we all can catch up to the display this year. But it may shorten the show, also.

Plants, soils, and climate have an interesting relationship. The amount of rainfall received, as well as the geological formation, drives the formation of a certain type of soil. The plants that occur are adapted to both the soil and the climate. Did the plants arrive before the soil had fully evolved because of a favorable climate, then adapt as soil changed? Or did they grow because of the soil, and conform to the climate? Or were they suited to both from the

beginning? It's a complex and intriguing question.

Plants must evolve or perish in the face of changing weather. Clearly, cast in this light, climate change could affect the very vegetation outside one's door.



Thanks to Norbert O'Hare for the submission of this article. If you would like to contribute a recipe, article, or anecdote for the Four Seasons Newsletter, please contact Laura Kline at 859-586-6101.

Champion Tree Program in Boone County

Want to nominate your favorite tree? The Boone County Urban Forest Commission has initiated the Boone County Champion Tree Program with grant funds provided by the Kentucky Division of Forestry. The Champion Tree Program will help identify the location of the oldest and largest trees in Boone County, a community which has experienced substantial population growth during the past 15 years. It will also educate the public about the value of trees by publishing information

about each tree type, location and history. The project is expected to be completed within 9 months and a Boone County Champion Tree Catalog will be published in June, 2008. To learn more about the Champion Tree Program and to nominate your favorite tree, you may visit the "Nominate Your Favorite Tree Today" link. The nomination form is quick and easy to fill out with simple questions pertaining to the tree height, width, canopy cover and favorite story. If you are not able to

access the nomination form from the internet, you may obtain one at any Boone County Public Library branch or by contacting the Planning Commission Office at 859-334-2196. The deadline to submit your nomination is December 14, 2007.



30 Tips, 30 Days



The Boone County Arboretum is a partner with the State of KY's Earth Day Celebration. To show support year round, our newsletter will

periodically list a few of the 30 tips you can easily accommodate into your lifestyle to make a difference in our environment.

www.earthday.ky.gov

Replacing old heating and cooling equipment with Energy Star qualified models can cut annual energy costs by 20%.

Drain used oil into a container and take it to a collection center.

Save on fuel cost and reduce emissions by driving a hybrid vehicle.

If it's on the ground, it's in your water. When it rains or snows the

water carries pollutants such as sediment, fertilizer, oil and pet waste into streams and rivers. Clean up after pets, cover bare soil, don't over fertilize and properly dispose of motor oil.

Got a Green tip you would like to share? Email Laura Kline at laura.kline@uky.edu to have it listed in our 30 Tips, 30 Days column.

Horticulture Concerns: Tree Planting by Mike Klahr, Extension Agent/Certified Arborist

Question: Is this a good time to plant trees and shrubs? What varieties do you recommend?

Answer: Selecting the right varieties for the location and transplanting them in the fall gives trees and shrubs a head start on winter and helps them provide pleasure and beauty for years to come. Now through November is the best time to transplant most trees and shrubs. Ornamentals lose less moisture because fall days are shorter, outdoor temperatures are cooler and, hopefully, rainfall will increase this fall. Also, many of these plants are deciduous and lose their leaves in the fall so their demand for water is declining. Trees and shrubs also undergo internal changes now that promote root growth and increase tolerance to winter weather. Woody ornamental root systems continue to grow at soil temperatures above 40 degrees, so planting now will give them 6-8 weeks before soils reach this temperature. Evergreen species, especially broadleaf evergreens like boxwoods, hollies and Rhododendrons, continue losing water from their leaves during the fall and winter, so it is best to plant them in early spring, to avoid “desiccation” or drying out over the winter.

For best results, choose ornamentals that are hardy to the area. Since we are at the northern end of Zone 6, it is safer to go with plants that are hardy to Zone 5 or lower. Planting an assortment of shrubs and trees will slow down the spread of disease and insect

problems. It is important to select ornamentals that are adaptable to environmental and soil conditions of the site. Lists of plants for clay, drought, shade, acid or alkaline soils may be obtained from the Boone County Extension Office. Several ornamentals can be successfully planted in early to late fall. They include coffee tree, crabapple, elm (disease-resistant varieties only) ginkgo, honey locust, linden, sugar maple, pagoda tree and serviceberry. It is best to wait until after leaf drop later in the fall to plant birch, flowering dogwood, oak, red maple, sweetgum and tulip tree (tulip poplar.)

Two common mistakes many home gardeners make are choosing ornamentals that grow too large for the location and improperly planting them. A specimen planted with great expectations can grow into a headache when you have to severely prune to keep it away from the house, or the utility company must drastically cut it back to keep branches out of power lines. Be sure to dig a transplant hole that is wide enough. It should be at least two to three times the diameter of the root ball; even wider is better. A hole that is saucer-shaped is better than a bowl-shaped one. Ornamentals should not be planted any deeper than they grew in a container or in the field. Use the soil line on the trunk to gauge how deeply to plant balled-and-burlapped ornamentals.

It is less damaging to plant a tree too shallow than to plant it too deep. You do not need to fertilize newly planted trees and shrubs with nitrogen during the first year because it will cause excessive leaf and stem growth at the expense of root development. Amending the soil with sand, compost or peat moss is unnecessary and can keep an extensive root system from developing. Since inadequate moisture during dry periods is the primary threat to transplant survival, be sure to thoroughly soak the ground after transplanting. Water thoroughly once or twice a week rather than applying a little water every day. After transplanting, apply a two- to three-inch layer of mulch. Avoid piling mulch around the base of the trunk because this may encourage rotting and mouse and vole damage over the winter. A layer of mulch will help conserve soil moisture and discourage weed growth. Mulching also helps moderate soil temperatures, reducing “frost heaving” and root damage during winter freezing and thawing cycles.



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Shepherd's Pie

by Glenn Curry, Boone County Extension Homemakers 2003 Cookbook

Get in the comfort food mood this fall with a healthy helping of delicious Shepherd's Pie; add a side salad and you've got a great, easy meal.

- 1 pound ground round
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 1/2 tsp. garlic powder
- 1 (12 oz.) can of mushroom soup
- 1 red pepper, chopped
- 1/2 cup frozen green beans
- 4 cups mashed potatoes
- Salt and pepper to taste

Sauté ground round with diced onion and sliced mushrooms. Do not drain meat, onion, or mushrooms. Add the garlic powder, salt and pepper to the undiluted cream of mushroom soup and stir well. Add soup mixture to the meat, mushrooms, and onion in pan and add the chopped red peppers, stirring until thoroughly mixed—juices will hold it together.

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Into four individual crocks or bowls, spread the frozen green beans on bottom of each crock. Fill crocks with meat mixture. Top each crock with 1 cup mashed potatoes. Bake until potatoes are crisp and slightly browned, about 20-25 minutes.

This can also be baked in a medium sized baking dish instead of individual crocks. Increase baking time if necessary.

