

Top of the Windmill News

Spring 2020

TEXAS A&M
AGRILIFE
EXTENSION

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Roy Walston

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Calendar of Events

- February 29 - Fruit & Nut Tree Symposium (3 CEUs)
- April 11 - Hill Country Master Gardener Blooms & Barrels Plant Sale
- April 15 - Pecan Grafting & Production Workshop (3 CEUs)
- April 23-24 - 6th Annual Hill Country Land Stewardship Conference (CEUs available)
- April 25 - Household HAZARDOUS Waste Collection
- May 8 - Cow Pokes & Land Folks Conference (5 CEUs)



If you would like to receive the Top of the Windmill via email, please send an email to: kerr@ag.tamu.edu with the Subject title as: Top of the Windmill.

Preface

The Top of the Windmill newsletter is intended to serve as an informational newsletter for landowners throughout the Edwards Plateau region. Due to the size of our audience, over 600 landowners, we need your help to address programs specific to your areas of interest. If you would like to continue to receive this or any newsletters from our office please return the attached survey via email to the Kerr County Extension office.



Central Regional Pecan Show Results

The Central Regional Pecan Show was held January 8th in College Station on the campus of Texas A&M University. Kerr County growers had 9 samples advance to the regional show and place advancing on to the State Pecan Show set to be held July 12-15, 2020 in San Marcos, Texas. The results of the Central Texas Regional Show are as follows:

Burkett 3rd Place - Fred Speck
Cheyenne 3rd Place - Fred Speck
Choctaw 2nd Place - Fred Speck
Desirable 1st Place - Laura Rhodes
Forkert 1st Place - Fred Speck
Mahan 3rd Place - David Petmecky
Schley 1st Place - Fred Speck
Stuart 2nd Place - Laura Rhodes
Western 1st Place - Fred Speck



Texas A&M AgriLife Extension provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity

The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating

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Fruit & Nut Tree Symposium

With February just around the corner, homeowners interested in managing fruit and nut trees in their landscapes are beginning to think about tree planting, pruning and dormant season management to name a few. On February 29, 2020 Hill Country Master Gardeners and Texas A&M AgriLife Extension in Kerr County will be sponsoring a Fruit & Nut Tree Management Seminar at the Kerr County Youth Event Center on Hwy 27 in Kerrville. Registration will begin at 12:30 p.m. with the program to conclude by 5:00 pm.

Topics for the program will include: Pecan Management including variety selection, planting, fertility, irrigation, disease and insect control presented by Roy Walston, County Extension Agent – Kerr County; Mr. Tim Hartman, Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Horticulturist from College Station will discuss stone fruit tree management, proper pruning techniques, dormant tree spraying, insect control, winter fertilization and orchard weed control; Beth McMahon, Gillespie County Extension Horticulturist will discuss blackberries, apples, pears and pomegranate production and; Angela Fiedler, Kerr County Extension, Family & Community Health agent will discuss preservation of fruits as well.

Individuals holding private, commercial and non-commercial pesticide applicators may receive three hours of CEU's toward the renewal of their pesticide applicator license. A \$25.00 registration fee will be charged for this educational program. Please contact the Kerr County Extension office at (830) 257-6568 to RSVP by Wednesday, February 26th.

Blooms & Barrels Plant Sale

The Hill Country Master Gardeners will be hosting their annual Plant Sale on **April 11th** from **9a.m. – 2 p.m.** at the Kerr County



Youth Event Center. Educational programs and information will be available along with the opportunity to purchase landscape plants and rain barrels. So, put **April 11th** on your calendar and stop by and meet a Master Gardener.



Pecan Grafting and Production Workshop



A Pecan Grafting and Production Workshop is scheduled for **April 15th** at **9:00 a.m.** at Bill Hathaway's Orchard. This will be an informative and educational opportunity for those pecan producers interested in grafting pecans. Early season insect and fertilization management will also be discussed by Dr. Larry Stein, Extension Horticulturist from Uvalde.

The orchard is located on Texas highway 173, approximately 4 1/2 miles from Kerrville-Schreiner State Park. Turn left on Center Point River road and enter the first gate on the right; signs will be posted. Three hours of CEU's will be offered to Private, Commercial and Non-Commercial applicators. Anyone interested in learning more about pecan production will benefit from this field-day. Registration for the field-day is \$10.00 and is payable at the field-day. Please contact the Kerr County Extension office to pre-register for the field-day at 830-257-6568.



7th Annual Hill Country Land Stewardship Conference April 23-24, 2020

The Hill Country Land Stewardship Seminar is scheduled for April 23rd and 24th at the Y.O. Hotel and Conference Center. Each year we invite landowners from across the Edwards Plateau to convene and learn valuable land management principles. This two day seminar includes day 1 as a lecture series including range, wildlife management principles, landowner laws, estate tax management, 1-D-1 Property tax information, prescribed burning principles, are just a few of the topics we have covered in the past. Day 2 is tour day, where participants see first hand local ranches and meet local ranchers and how they manage their operations. One tour includes the Hillingdon Ranch with the Robin Giles family operating this ranch for 3 and 4 generations and how generational transfer can work. The second tour is a wildlife, range and livestock tour. This tour visits different ranches each year to highlight a particular operation and their management programs.



More information and registration details will be coming in the near future at the following site; <https://agrilife.org/bennetttrust/>.



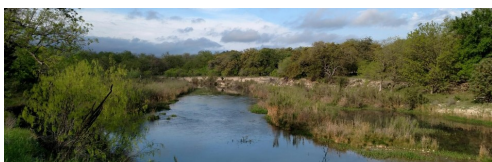
Cow Pokes & Land Folks Conference

The Kerr County Soil & Water Conservation District will be hosting a Cow Pokes and Land Folks Conference on Friday, May 8th at the Kerr Youth Event Center. The program will run from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. and offer five hours of Continuing Education Units for Private Pesticide Applicators and seven hours of advanced training for Master Naturalists.



The tentative schedule includes topics on Riparian Incentive program, Preservation of Southwest Texas Wildlife, Pesticides Laws & Regulations, Drones in Agriculture, Outlaws, Geography and Hill Country History, Eminent Domain and Private Property Rights, and Plant ID.

Registration for this program will be \$30.00 for early bird registration and \$45.00 at the door registration. Please make checks payable to Kerr County SWCD and mail to: 2104 Memorial Blvd. Ste. 103, Kerrville, TX 78028.



When Can I Prune Shade Trees

With the onset of winter following several good freezes we are set for pruning here in the Hill Country. While many trees may be pruned any time of the year, for example, pecans, cedar elms and ashe juniper, the live oak must be pruned during the winter months following several good freezes. These freezes should slow down the movement of any insects, in particular, the nitidulid beetle that transmits oak wilt from Spanish Oaks to Live Oaks. Oaks just as any shade tree require pruning for several reasons: prune out excess branches to prevent rubbing together, removal of broken or damaged branches, double leaders or narrow v-shaped crotches. Annual upkeep on many trees helps to maintain a strong structural support and reduce the breakage of limbs during the growing season. Most homeowners should limit their tree pruning to small branches which can be reached from the ground. The pruning of large branches and work off the ground should involve professional tree experts with proper equipment.



Many folks are under the impression that large shade trees need pruning just because they're getting too big and pretty or because it's a certain season. We witness this all across the state. Before having a tree trimmed, know why and how it should be done. Many pruning jobs could be avoided by knowing the growth habit of a specific tree and planting in a location that is sufficient for the mature size of the tree. Find out how fast and how large a tree normally grows. With this information you can avoid many maintenance requirements. Logic and reason also apply. For example, don't plant a white oak directly beneath utility lines. As the tree grows and interferes with the lines, the tree will be pruned. This completely destroys the natural character of the tree and often leads to its early decline. The same is true when choosing a tree for a planter or other limited space. Consider small or intermediate size trees such as Crape Myrtle, Foster Holly, or Redbud.

Trees planted in proper locations in the Hill Country should not need to be topped. Topping shade trees may often be recommended to prevent causing damage to the home. However, shoots which grow after topping are weaker than the original limbs. Shoots then must be selectively pruned to train for a main branch. Shoots left alone will be more likely to split off and cause damage unless they are removed every few years. Also, wood rots are more likely to be a problem in topped trees, resulting in poorer tree health and greater likelihood of limb breakage.

The only time wound dressing or paint is essential is in the pruning of oaks, especially when pruning is done out of necessity during the growing season. During this time pruning paint helps to deter beetles from being attracted to the freshly cut surface. Painting fresh cuts during this time should be done with a latex paint. Wound dressing or tree paint on all other trees is not essential; recent research has pointed out that tree paint or wound dressing is not as advantageous as previously thought. Dressings may actually harbor disease organisms rather than exclude them. It has also been determined that wound dressing slows the wound callusing (often called healing) process, rather than speeding it up. A good, clean unpainted pruning cut, while unsightly at first, will probably callus faster than a painted one.



If you have any questions concerning this article contact Roy Walston at the Kerr County Extension office at 830-257-6568.

BALL MOSS



Ball moss is an epiphyte. It is capable of manufacturing its own food from nutrients and moisture taken from the air. Unlike mistletoe, it does not derive its food from the host. Although often associated with plants that are in an advance stage of decline, it is not the cause of the decline. In some areas, the moss becomes so dense, that it possibly is restricting normal bud development. Although spread is somewhat restricted, the area of the state where the moss is found continues to expand. Roughly ball moss is found within the area formed by drawing a line from Del Rio to

Fredericksburg to College Station to Bay City to Corpus Christi and back to Del Rio.

Small seed are produced in a capsule on a slender 3-5 inch stalk. The stalk extends above the bunchy plant growth. When mature the capsule opens and seed are released into the air. They are carried by air currents until they contact the rough bark of the tree. The seed stick onto the surface and germinate. As the plant grows, root like structures attach the young plant to the rough surface. In the case of a tree this is the older bark. Although the structures extend down into the bark, they are not true roots. They are called 'hold fasts'. Although ball moss will attach itself to many different rough surfaces, property owners are most concerned about shade trees.

Control: Ball moss is controlled with foliar applications of Kocide DF, Blue Shield and Champion are approved by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). These products are most effective when applied in late winter. The time between February and mid -May is suggested as the best period for treatment. A rain following treatment application is necessary for maximum effectiveness. It is speculated that the moss quickly takes in nutrients through its leaf like structures following rain or heavy dew. When evaluating the copper fungicides as a control for ball moss, an application was observed to remain on the tree for 7 months before significant rain occurred. Soon after that the moss was observed to die. Retreating is suggested if the trees are heavily infested. This is necessary because of the difficulty in getting complete coverage. It is suggested that the copper be applied at the rate of 4-6 pounds or Kocide DF or similar type product per 100 gallons of water. Spray trees to drip point with the spray directed at the moss infested limbs. Within a few months the moss will have a dry, gray unthrifty appearance. It be several months after the application, before the moss will begin to fall from the tree. The hold fasts will have to decay sufficiently to release the moss from the bark. Strong windstorms can decrease the time required for removal of the moss following its death.

Copper is a heavy metal and possibly acts as a poison that blocks the normal biochemical functions. Copper can cause foliage burn to some plants and should be used with caution around plants not listed on the label. Peach, plum, apricot and nectarine in leaf are especially susceptible to injury from spray drift. Apples and pears are not affected by the copper fungicides. Kocide and the other copper hydroxide fungicides are frequently recommended for the control of fire blight on pear and apple trees. The fungicides are approved on a local needs registration in the southeastern United States for the control of certain pecan diseases. A second concern is that spray drift can temporarily stain structures a light blue. Use precaution when applying the copper sprays. Spray on days when the wind is blowing away from sensitive areas. It will wash off when exposed to frequent rain.

Mechanical removal has been used successfully. However, new plants are formed quickly as new seed land on the limbs. Safety is also a concern, moss is present on many of the small limbs and branches of a tree. This creates an unsafe condition when trying to remove the moss.



Household HAZARDOUS Waste

The City of Kerrville holds an annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection. For the 2020 Fiscal Year, it is scheduled for April 25, 2020. Location and details coming soon.

Listed below are a few reminders for the HHW event:

- HHW drop off is for city and Kerr county residents only and not intended for commercial businesses;
- All HHW items must be in containers not greater than 5 gallons;

Prohibited items include

- TVs or CRT computer monitors,
- ammunition or explosives,
- biohazards or radioactive material,
- gas cylinders,
- new or used motor oil.

Accepted items include

- batteries and antifreeze,
- cleaning products and pool chemicals,
- pesticides and insecticides,
- yard fungicides and herbicides,
- latex and oil-based paints, paint thinners and removers,
- fluorescent bulbs,
- thermometers and thermostats,
- propane tanks with less than a 50 lb. capacity
- automotive tires (limit of 8).

To protect both yourself and the workers who accept your HHW at a collection site, follow some basic guidelines and tips for storage, transportation, and care of your material:

- Keep products in their original container and make sure labels are readable. This ensures you know which products you have and so do the workers who accept and sort your HHW.
- Store and transport your chemicals upright, not on their sides. Make sure if you are taking HHW to a facility or event, that you have it secured in your vehicle and it is not leaking – it can be dangerous if leaking containers of incompatible chemicals mix.
- **NEVER** mix products together. This can be dangerous, even fatal.
- Keep chemicals in a cool, dry place out of reach of children and pets.

Using Dormant Oils



Phylloxera and scale can be a problem in homeowner or orchard pecan trees. This is best controlled through the use of dormant oil sprays applied during the winter months with a 97% dormant oil mixing 4 gals of oil with 100 gallons of water or a 4% solution. Phylloxera galls are small galls developed on limbs of pecans that overwinter the larva stages of insects. These insects hatch out and during winter months and feed inside the gall until spring when they emerge.

