

TREE TIPS

TREE & SHRUB CARE FROM BARTLETT TREE EXPERTS

Fall is for fertilization by Tom Smiley, PhD

Fall is a great time to fertilize trees and shrubs! With cooler temperatures and regular rainfall, root development is usually vigorous at this time of the year. As roots grow, they can absorb nutrients, which then are translocated

Fertilization based on the results of soil nutrient analysis is best for both tree health and the environment.

to the leaves or stored until next spring. When spring arrives, the new leaves and twigs will have a ready and abundant source of nutrients that can be used to produce the food that trees need to thrive.

At Bartlett Tree Experts, we are interested in both tree health and the environment. Our goal is to provide the nutrients your plants need in the amounts they need, while avoiding the application of nutrients that are

not needed. To accomplish this, we start with a site inspection and a soil nutrient sample. If a soil analysis has not been conducted within the last three years, ask your Bartlett Arborist Representative to collect a sample and send it to our laboratory for analysis. The report that you receive back will let you know the conditions of your soil and provide you and your Plant Health Care Specialist with a detailed prescription of the nutrients essential to maintain your tree's health.

If you have had construction done on your home or place of business, it may have resulted in soil compaction. Your Arborist Representative can also diagnose the soil condition in construction areas. If the soil is compacted, our Root Invigoration™ treatment can improve soil conditions to allow rapid root development.

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What to do about ticks

by Kevin Chase and Neil Hendrickson, PhD



Ticks have become increasingly problematic to people and animals in the United States. Several ticks have a wide host range and attack people, pets, and livestock. A majority of Lyme disease cases are acquired from ticks picked up during activities around the home.



Management of tick populations can be a formidable task, but reducing exposure to ticks is critical in avoiding Lyme disease and other tick-borne infections. There is no one single treatment that will eliminate tick exposure on its own. Instead, an IPM (integrated pest management) approach, incorporating both cultural and chemical treatments, is most likely to have success.

First and most important is to protect yourself when in your yard by following health department tick safety guidelines such as using

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Fall is for fertilization *(Continued from page 1)*

Applying a layer of organic mulch over the root system is one of the best actions you can take at this time of year to prepare your trees for winter. Mulch insulates the soil, allowing water and nutrient uptake further into the fall. As mulch breaks down, it improves organic matter that encourages root growth. Arborist wood chips are one of the best forms of mulch available.



Bartlett Tree Experts provides a full line of soil care services that can improve the health of your trees and shrubs. Many of these services are best done in the fall. Now's the time to arrange for a consultation.

What to do about ticks *(Continued from page 1)*

repellent spray, covering your skin and checking yourself when you come inside.

The next step is to create a tick barrier of wood chips approximately three feet wide around lawn edges to reduce tick exposure. Mow the lawn frequently and rake up and remove piles of leaves. Discourage deer with repellents and fencing, and keep firewood in a dry area to discourage mice: mice and deer harbor the Lyme disease pathogen that is transmitted to ticks and eventually to humans. Mice populations can build up rapidly during years of caterpillar outbreaks owing to an abundant food source.

Finally, pesticide treatments targeting tick habitat, including wooded areas around the home and the borders along woodland edges, ornamental plantings, and stone walls can suppress tick populations. It is important to know the best time to treat for ticks in the area in which you live.

A few precautions and the management of tick populations in the residential or recreational landscape can substantially reduce the risk of Lyme disease and other tick-associated illnesses.



Creative work-arounds

We usually hand out tree seedlings at Arbor Day events. When those were cancelled this year, some Bartlett Tree Experts offices came up with alternate ways to share with their communities.

Our Wolfeboro, New Hampshire, office handed out seedlings as a “thank you” to the health care workers at Wentworth-Douglass Hospital in Dover.

On Long Island, Meghan Lemos dos Santos from our Southampton, New York, office partnered with the Charles Banks Belt Nature Center at Quogue Wildlife Refuge, to stage a “drive-through” tree giveaway.

Our office in New Milford, Connecticut, put together 75 Arbor Day goodie bags for the Kent Center School. The bags were distributed from a school bus that delivered lunches to all the students. As a child was handed a lunch, he or she was also handed a goodie bag with a tree to plant.



Goodie bags included a Bartlett tote with gardening gloves, a Bartlett cape, a coloring book, a notebook, and a tree seedling.

TREE FOCUS:

Japanese maple (*Acer palmatum*)

History

Japanese maples are a beautiful feature of many landscapes in this part of the country. There are many different varieties, and planters have variations in leaf color, leaf shape, growth habit, and bark appearance from which to choose.

Culture

- Performs best on well-drained but moist organic soil, at slightly acidic pH
- Variable by species, but often suffers from leaf margin scorching in full sun locations
- Deep shade will cause colored foliage to revert to green
- Shallow roots will benefit from mulch to reduce soil temperature and moisture fluctuations

Concerns

- Verticillium wilt is the most common and lethal pathogen of this species
- *Phytophthora* root rot and anthracnose foliar disease, defoliating caterpillars, and leaf-feeding beetles are also common health issues
- Prone to formation of girdling roots, which can slowly lead to dieback and mortality
- Early season aphid infestations also occur
- *Armillaria* is known to cause decline and death of this species
- Stressed plants may be attacked by ambrosia beetles

Bartlett Management Practices

- There is no direct treatment for Verticillium wilt, but potassium phosphite soil treatments help prevent infection and slow decline in infected plants
- Expose root collars, and inspect for and remove any girdling roots
- Prune mature specimens so that the unique branching architecture is visible
- Mulch and add organic matter when soil organic matter is less than 5%
- Treat preventively against ambrosia beetles when plants are stressed



In deep shade the colored foliage of various Japanese maples will revert to green.




WONDERS OF NATURE Rare prehistoric tree

The 'Wollemi pine' (*Wollemia nobilis*) is an extremely rare tree—it was known only through fossil records dating back 200 million years until a grove of living trees was discovered in Australia's Wollemi National Park in 1994. A new genus, *Wollemia*, was created and because *Wollemia nobilis* is the only living species of the genus, it is considered a living fossil.

There are fewer than 200 Wollemi pines in the wild. Amazingly, the original Wollemi grove was saved by firefighters during the 2019-20 Australian bushfires. Both the discovery of the trees and the recent fire rescue are well worth looking up online!

The tree has been propagated and specimens can be seen at many botanic gardens around the world.



Property consultations
now can help reduce
problems next year.

Your Bartlett Arborist can visit your property, and then your entire part of the process can be completed by phone or email.

Continuing tree and shrub care with safety in mind

As an essential business, Bartlett Tree Experts developed additional protocols starting in March so we could keep our clients and staff safe while continuing to do our work tending to the health of trees, and to the safety of people and property near trees.


Safety measures addressing COVID-19 health concerns are in place. We've implemented practices to safeguard both our clients and our crews, and methods to keep our trucks, cars and equipment sanitized.

The arborists in all our local offices continue to serve their communities while following the guidelines established in their regions. Consultations with clients are being conducted socially-distanced in person, and/or by phone or email.

Tree safety, insects and diseases are still part of clients' concerns for their properties, and our main concern as arborists. Your Arborist Representative would like to visit your property this

fall and give you a complimentary status report.

We've taken this year's new practices in stride; for us, mindfulness about safety is not new. Safety has always been a core focus at Bartlett.



Request a fall property
visit – a status report
is included with this
complimentary service.



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(877) BARTLETT (877-227-8538) in U.S. and Canada • www.bartlett.com
For Tree Tips information contact smurdock@bartlett.com

