



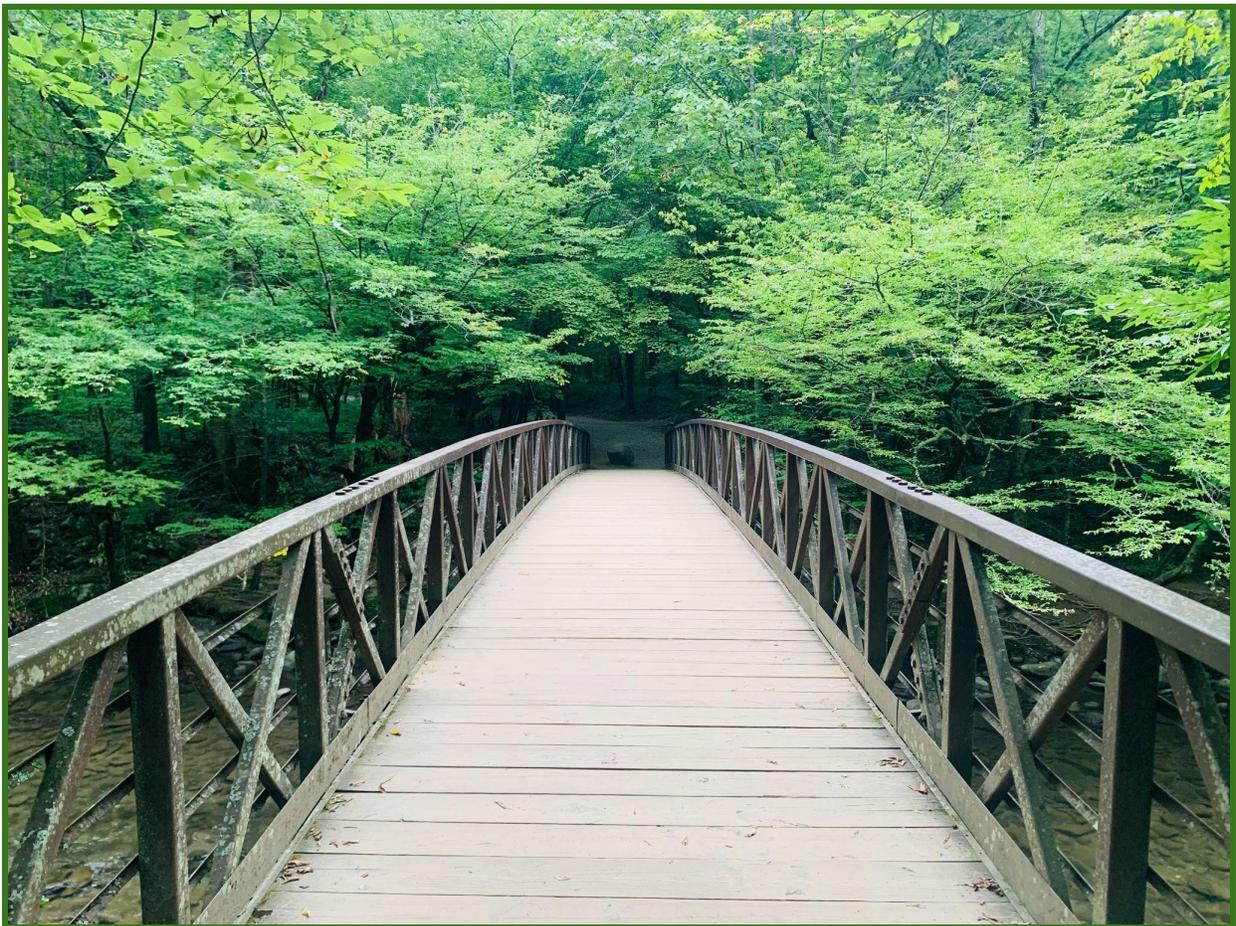
DR. R.E. MOON +
ASSOCIATES
est. 1982

Gardening by the Moon

October 2022 Digest

.....

OCTOBER: TRICKS & TREES



"Happiness is lying under a tree and looking at the sky through the leaves." (author unknown)

Halloween is approaching! And we don't want to frighten the little ghosts and goblins with **TERRIFYINGLY UGLY TREES!** Trees are the most valuable asset to your landscape. They are expensive and not easily replaced, but they can also be grand and eye-pleasing to your home and community. The trees in your yard are a vital part of the community planning so that their beauty will set the desired atmosphere for years to come. These trees will grow and thrive properly, providing shade, cooling, and year-round beauty. Maintenance items need to be enacted for these trees to remain healthy and vigorous.

FALL TREE TRICK'S LIST

by Dr. Moon

- Prune & cut the dead wood out of your trees:** Canopies of trees need to be lifted and lightened, and dead wood due to the freeze needs to be cut out. Oak trees can be pruned anytime until the end of February or starting again in July. ***Do not prune in March, April, May, or June*** to avoid spreading oak wilt disease. You can prune all other trees during the dormant season—light prune, removing crossover branches, sucker growth, and water sprouts. When making cuts, do not leave stubs. Never cut trees back from the top. When cutting back side branches, always cut even to another branch. Always remove dead wood and broken branches whenever you see them.



Example of dead wood that needs to be removed from this tree.

- Check the staking materials on your trees monthly:** If your tree has been in for one year, shake the trunk, and if the root ball does not move, it is time to remove all staking materials. **Do not let the materials cut into the bark, damaging trees!** If the root ball is still moving, leave on staking materials but make sure to loosen all ties as needed to prevent damage to branches and tree trunks.



Fertilize your trees:

- Apply 1/4 to 1/2 pound of a complete turf fertilizer per inch trunk diameter spread evenly from trunk out past the drip line of the tree to encourage root growth out of the root ball.
- Fertilize all trees older than four years one or two times per year. Trees planted under three years need fertilization in February, May, September/October. Young or weak trees need extra fertilizer. If they do not get enough fertilizer, tree health and vigor will suffer.
- Examples of fertilizers would be HOA Fertilizer or Scotts Turf Builder for Southern Lawns, but you can use any fertilizer with a high first number that is preferably slow-release.



Yellow leaves are a sign your tree needs fertilization, presenting as a nutrient deficiency, making the leaves yellow instead of healthy green.

- Fall Tree Planting: please reference last month's newsletter for more detailed information but **PLEASE NOTE-** If you lose a tree, replant the tree. The freezes in the previous two years have killed and severely damaged many trees. I know it is an expense to plant a tree, but replanting it is worth the money. If your tree was severely damaged and you had to cut the entire top of the tree out to remove dead wood, you should replace it.

Dr. Moon began his career in horticulture by working for the Texas A&M Ag Extension Service until 1982. He then started his own independent horticultural consulting business-- Dr. R.E. Moon + Associates. He has over 40 years of experience in the field of

consulting. Dr. Moon holds a Masters in Horticulture and a Ph.D. in Crop Science from Oklahoma State University. He is passionate about serving others, and he loves what he gets to do for work. Any chance he can get, Dr. Moon loves spending time in the Rocky Mountains with his wife of 54 years, Suzanne, and his three daughters and their families.

TRICKY TREES

by Dr. Louie Gradilla

There has been confusion and many questions about trees with sloughing bark, especially this year because so many trees have freeze damage. If your tree has freeze damage, there will usually be vertical freeze cracks that open up into the heartwood of the tree. The bark can fall off, but it will crack open and stay on the tree unless the tree has died. The bark will fall off dead trees.

What creates confusion is that some trees have exfoliating bark. The bark of these trees will peel and fall off as the tree grows. Some examples of trees with exfoliating bark are Lacebark Elm, River Birch, Chinquapin Oak, Bur Oak, Chinese Pistache, and Natchez Crape Myrtle.

This peeling and exfoliating are natural. If these trees have freeze damage, they will appear as vertical cracks. In both instances, do not remove loose bark. Let it fall naturally.



Freeze Damage



Exfoliating Bark

SCARY APHIDS

by Jennifer Hall

If your crape myrtles are shiny and wet looking, but it is not raining, you have aphids. They seem to be thriving in these cooler night temperatures. To treat aphids you can use Bio-Advanced that has a 3 and 1 product that controls Insects, Diseases, and Mites, or you can treat aphids with Neem Oil, which also helps with insects, mites and some diseases. The sticky wet "honeydew" will disappear once you control the aphids.



October Moon Tips

- If you have leaf spots or powdery mildew, control with Neem Oil or any tree fungicide. If your tree has insects, then treat the tree with BioAdvanced Tree and Shrub. This solution will systematically treat your tree, and it also feeds your tree. If you prefer an organic control, use Neem Oil. Apply as per label instructions.
- Mulch rings are for the establishment and to protect trees from the mower and line trimmer damage. Maintain mulch at no more than 2 inches at any time and keep mulch pulled back from root flare. If you want to remove mulch rings, rake the mulch rings level and let the grass grow up to the trunk. **Be careful** with mowers and line trimmers if you remove mulch rings. **Do not build a mulch volcano around your tree!**



October 2022 Issue of Gardening by the Moon