

RLC NEWS

May 2009

The Art of Pruning Specimen Trees by Terri Richards

It seems like my articles tend to coincide with things I'm doing in my own yard. These last couple of weeks I've been paying attention to something that is often overlooked by many.



Springtime brings on the growth of hundreds of new sprouts on our specimen trees. When left unchecked, these sprouts will eventually turn into full-sized branches and before you know it, that specimen tree really becomes an over-sized shrub. Japanese Maples, Amur Maples, Thread leaf Maples, Crape Myrtles and many other patio trees can become beautiful works of art really if properly pruned. The process intimidates many though, so here's a quick "how-to" guide:

1. Stand back & decide how you would like the tree to eventually look. Start by pruning any limbs that are crossing or rubbing against other limbs. Remove anything up against the house or lying on the roof. Avoid leaving little stubs of limbs—always try to cut back to a main branch.
2. Thin out the canopy by pruning branches that grow inward. You may also want to cut branches growing down that are now or will eventually be growing too low. If you have to duck to get

around a tree near your patio or sidewalk, it probably needs pruned.

3. If you take the time now to remove all those brand new sprouts from the limbs, you can usually do it with your bare hands very easily. They're soft now but will quickly mature to thicker branches that will require pruners or loppers. Also, removing all that unnecessary growth will force the tree to put its energy into the growth of those limbs you want. This will result in much prettier shaped tree in a shorter amount of time.
4. If your tree is under planted with shrubs or seasonal color, raise the canopy to create a few feet of separation between them.
5. Don't get too carried away—you don't really want to remove more than probably 20-30% of the canopy in one season. Keep in mind this is a process that should occur over several growing seasons.

These steps will get you on your way towards shaping up those specimen trees.

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It does require a little bit of an artistic touch though. If you're lacking in that department, just give us a call & we'll be happy to help.



"Going Green" to better everyone.

Roark Landscaping is currently converting all of our mowers to run on propane, and will continue to implement changes that supports our environment.

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LANDSCAPING
corporation

OUR MISSION

It is the mission and continuous goal of Roark Landscaping Corporation to provide the customer with efficient, prompt, courteous, and complete landscape service while striving to fulfill the needs of each employee of the company. In turn, this will keep prices competitive, lower operating costs, create a grateful clientele, and thus lead to referrals and company growth.



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Maintenance by Brian Schmittlein



Spring seemed to have come early this year with above normal temperatures and we were on the dry side with not much precipitation through the month of March. Then came a late snowfall and quite a bit of rain with colder temperatures. The plants and grass started to come out of their dormancy and this weather change put a stop to that. It appears that the warmer

temperatures are here to stay now with everything continuing to turn green and start growing once again. With the warmer weather, be sure to start watering as the rain becomes less frequent. If you don't have your sprinkler system started up, you will need to get that up and running as soon as possible. It's easier to keep the moisture levels in the soil than it is to let everything dry out and try to play catch up with the sprinkler system.

All the crews seem to have settled in their routes now and know the properties pretty well. If there are any changes that you would like to see in the service of your property let us know. We will come out and meet with you and then come out with the foreman and/or the crew and show them the changes.

For our customers who do their own mowing and/or bed maintenance, you'll need to service your equipment at the start of each year. During the late winter or early springtime, it's a good idea to change the oil, oil filter, spark plugs, and even the fuel filter if you have them in your equipment. Blades on mowers and trimmers should be sharpened and be sure to grease any of the areas that require it. Air filters do not necessarily need to be changed out but it is a good idea to keep them clean. Getting dirt and grass in your engine will severely cut down on the life of the piece of equipment. If you have any questions on your personal equipment, contact the business of where it was purchased. If you still have questions unanswered, we might be able to help you

Turf and Ornamental by Doug Cook

TURF

We are currently applying the second round of pre emergent to the turf. These are pre and post emerge applications for the control of broadleaf and grassy weeds. **It is very important for these applications to be watered in. If they are not watered in within 3-5 days or before mowing, we can't guarantee that it will be effective. Applications 1 and 2 are the most important.**

ORNAMENTALS

We have begun treatments on the shrubs. Dormant Oil/Insecticide will be applied mid April through May. It is Important for those of you not signed up on the plant health care program to call and order this treatment now since this is the only time of year that we can apply dormant oil to the shrubs. This is typically applied to hollies, and euonymus for control of scale.



Depending on the weather, fungicide applications will begin to be applied March through May. Humid, warm weather plays a major role in when the fungus attacks the shrubs. Preventative treatments are the most effective way to deal with the many fungi that attack your ornamentals. It is very important that we treat the new growth on the shrubs. Those of you on the plant health care will receive these preventative treatments with a high quality systemic fungicide. It is important for those of you not on plant health care that want these treatments to sign up soon. You will get much better results the earlier the diseases are dealt with.

We are still collecting information for auto-debit and credit card payments. If you are interested in either of these convenient payment options, please contact Cheryl at 294-3322 or e-mail to: cheryl@rlctulsa.com so that we can send you the appropriate forms and let us help you get started simplifying your life today!