

# Canyon Creek CHRONICLE

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## Tree Roots, a Wine Glass, & a Dinner Plate

*Daniel Hayden (This is the second in a series of guest articles.)*

In construction, as in life, if you don't lay a solid foundation, everything else is more likely to be a problem. It's no different for trees, whose roots form the basis for their health and structural soundness. But what control do we have over tree roots that we can't even see because they grow so deep into the earth? A lot. Because, generally, they don't.

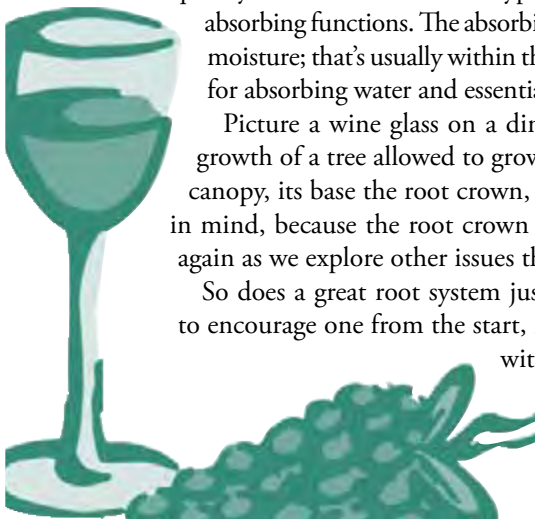
Much of the mistreatment of trees occurs because people don't realize where the roots are located (or they do and think it doesn't matter). Generally, most of a tree's roots grow within the top foot or so of soil and take a horizontal path that extends well outside the tree's canopy edge (the drip line). Obstructions, elevation changes, and other factors can influence this growth pattern, but knowing the natural character of root growth helps us make better decisions about what we do around trees. Structurally, a mature tree is a wonder of engineering. Its roots and stem (trunk) must support a canopy whose network of branching and foliage sways with the breezes and confronts even more wind force during storms. No wonder people think that roots must grow deep. Rather, as James Urban explains in *Up By Roots: Healthy Soils and Trees in the Built Environment*, a tree is a vertical cantilever that "resists overturning by relying on the anchoring of the horizontal roots."

Where the trunk flares at the base, it packs on extra wood to form a "bracket" that resists the stresses of weight and force. It then divides into buttress roots to distribute that loading force. The area that flares and transitions into buttress roots is called the root crown or root collar. This part of the tree is extremely important to structural stability. Once underground, these roots taper quickly and transition to other types of roots that perform anchoring, storage, and absorbing functions. The absorbing roots hang out where there's adequate air and moisture; that's usually within the top twelve inches of soil. They are responsible for absorbing water and essential elements that the tree needs.

Picture a wine glass on a dinner plate. This classic model represents root growth of a tree allowed to grow in an open space. The glass's bowl is the tree canopy, its base the root crown, and the dinner plate the root system. Keep it in mind, because the root crown and root system will come up over and over again as we explore other issues that impact proper tree care.

So does a great root system just happen? Nope. But before we look at how to encourage one from the start, in the next article, we'll get better acquainted

with the root crown. Then planting issues will make more sense. ***Daniel Hayden is an ISA Board Certified Arborist #TX-3748A and resides in Austin. You may reach him at [dhayden@bartlett.com](mailto:dhayden@bartlett.com).***



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## Four Points Chamber of Commerce Luncheon

Four Points Chamber luncheons provide stimulating discussions for local individuals, businesses and organizations to gain new insights and foster business growth. Membership is not a requirement to come to the luncheon but you'll want to register online to ensure your seat and receive early-bird discount pricing!

You can find all the details and register on the Four Points Chamber of Commerce Web site [www.fourpointschamber.com](http://www.fourpointschamber.com). While you are at the Chamber's Web site be sure to check out the other networking activities offered by the chamber, including the bi-monthly Connectors networking meetings at Concordia University and monthly Happy Hour.



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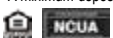
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## Immunizations: Not Just for Kids

By- Concentra Urgent Care

Although most toddlers in the United States have received all recommended vaccines, many adults and adolescents have not. These missed vaccinations increase their risk for infection, hospitalization, death, and disease spread, and they contribute to the estimated \$10 billion that is spent annually on vaccine preventable diseases in the United States.

Evidence shows that currently approved vaccines are safe and effective. However, coverage rates for persons of all ages vary nationwide. Reasons cited include lack of health insurance, unfamiliarity with vaccine recommendations, limited access at physicians' offices, or the perceived cost of vaccines.

What you need to know is that obtaining recommended vaccines in a timely manner can prevent disease. The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends the following immunization schedule for generally healthy adults and adolescents:

### VACCINE

<b>Influenza</b> .....	Yearly, especially if at risk
<b>Meningococcal</b> .....	One dose, age 11-12 or 13-18 if not previously immunized
<b>Tetanus-Diphtheria/Tetanus ... -Diphtheria-Pertussis</b>	One dose, age 11-12, then booster every 10 years
<b>Human Papilloma Virus</b> .....	Three doses, age 11-26 (females only)
<b>Measles - Mumps - Rubella</b> .....	..... If born after 1956, one or two doses if never immunized up to age 65
<b>Pneumococcal</b> .....	One dose, at or after age 65
<b>Varicella (chicken pox)</b>	Two doses if no prior infection or immunization received
<b>Zoster (shingles)</b> .....	One dose, at or after age 60

Specific recommendations for individuals may vary depending on age, prior immunization history and the presence of other existing conditions; please see the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Web site at: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/schedules/default.htm>. For more information about immunizations and where to get them, contact your health care provider, your Concentra health specialist, or visit the CDC's Web Site at: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines).

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## NATUREWATCH SN-OUTBREAK!

*by Jim and Lynne Weber*

The change from late summer into early fall can trigger some unusual natural events, and at this time of year in Central Texas, we can often see periodic population explosions of the American Snout butterfly.

Often mistaken for migrating Monarch butterflies, the American Snout (*Libytheana carinenta*) is a medium-sized butterfly with a brown upperside, wings orange at the base, and white spots near the tips of the forewings. Their underside is a mottled grayish-brown pattern, much like a dried, dead leaf. Snouts are named for their elongated mouthparts, and when they hang from the underside of a branch, which they most often do, their 'snout' resembles the stem or 'petiole' of a leaf and their folded wings appear to be the dead leaf itself. It's the perfect camouflage for defense against avian predators.

In the caterpillar stage, snouts are dark green with yellow stripes along the top and sides of their body, with two small, black tubercles on the top of their thorax. These caterpillars feed on all hackberry species, but they prefer spiny hackberry. While Austin is at the northernmost boundary of this plant's range, it is close enough that we get to experience a 'sn-outbreak.' After a good rain, spiny hackberry plants (also known as granjeno or desert hackberry) grow numerous new leaves. In response, the snout butterfly lays its eggs on these new leaves,

which provides the fuel for a significant number of its caterpillars. In Texas, it only takes 12 days to go from egg to caterpillar to adult butterfly.

The ecology behind this event is related to several factors. First, the population of snouts is positively correlated to the intensity and duration of dry periods that immediately precede significant rains. These droughts seem to greatly diminish parasites that can harm and kill snout larvae. Second, adult snouts wait out these long, dry periods by remaining in 'reproductive diapause', a state of arrested development/reproduction and decreased metabolism in response to the adverse environmental conditions. This condition reverses when the rains arrive and trigger the third factor, new growth on the spiny hackberry host plants. Female snouts will only lay eggs on this prolific new growth, and coupled with the lack of parasites, this creates a population boom.

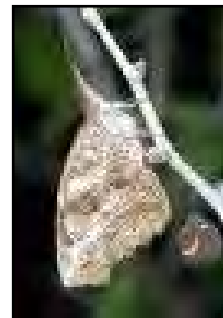
Most often, sn-outbreaks occur in South Texas and Mexico, where the spiny hackberry is plentiful. However, one of the largest recorded snout emergences occurred in late September of 1921, when over the course of 18 days more than 6 billion southeasterly-bound snout butterflies flew over San Marcos to the Rio Grande River. That's an estimated 25 million per minute! While not every year is quite that spectacular, keep your eyes

open about two weeks after a rain, and you should see region-wide migrations of snout butterflies as they waft by in pretty impressive numbers.

Send your nature-related questions to [naturewatch@austin.rr.com](mailto:naturewatch@austin.rr.com) and we'll do our best to answer them. If you enjoy reading these articles, look for our book, *Nature Watch Austin*, to be published in October by Texas A&M University Press.



Above: American Snout – upperside



Left: American Snout – underside

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To find out more about Omar, please contact Grace Lindgren, LMSW, Wendy's Wonderful Kids Recruiter, at the Adoption Coalition of Texas (512) 810-0813 or [gracelindgren@adopttexas.org](mailto:gracelindgren@adopttexas.org). Adopting a child from the foster care system requires little or no cost to the adoptive family and funding may be available to help the adoptive family support the child or sibling group. To learn more about the foster care adoption process, please call the Adoption Coalition of Texas at (512) 301-2825, email [info@adopttexas.org](mailto:info@adopttexas.org) and visit our website at <http://www.adoptioncoalitiontx.org>

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#### September 2011 - Sign up for Ourgift and Colin's Hope will receive donations during September!

OurGift.Org™ has chosen Colin's Hope as one of the charities that will benefit from donations in September. Please visit [www.ourgift.org](http://www.ourgift.org) to learn more and sign up to receive the daily deals from local businesses. It's a great way to help prevent childhood drowning! You get a great deal, a local business is supported and Colin's Hope will get a donation!



#### October 1 - Colin's CrossFit Challenge

CrossFit Lakeway is hosting a community event from 8:00am-10:00am at BACKWOODS in the Hill Country Galleria to benefit Colin's Hope. The Crossfit Challenge will be open to all fitness levels. There are Beginner / Intermediate / Advanced divisions and prizes will be awarded to 1st and 2nd place in each division. Registration is \$30. For more information or to sign up, please visit [www.crossfitlakeway.com](http://www.crossfitlakeway.com) or call 512-689-3798. Help us Prevent Drowning...One workout at a time!

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