

Canyon Creek CHRONICLE

OCTOBER 2012

VOLUME 6 ISSUE 10

Pruning Guidelines for Prevention of Oak Wilt in Texas

Oak wilt, caused by the fungus *Ceratocystis fagacearum*, is the most destructive disease affecting live oaks and red oaks in Central Texas. Most of the tree mortality results from tree-to-tree spread of the pathogen through interconnected or grafted root systems, once an oak wilt center becomes established. New infection centers begin when beetles carry oak wilt fungal spores from infected red oaks to fresh, open wounds on healthy oaks. Wounds include any damage caused by wind, hail, vehicles, construction, squirrels, birds or pruning. Research has shown that both oak wilt fungal mats on infected red oaks and insects that carry oak wilt spores are most prevalent in the spring. *Below is a brief description of how you can reduce the risk of fungal spread when pruning.*

Always paint fresh wounds on oaks, including pruning cuts and stumps, with wound dressing or latex paint immediately after pruning or live tree removal at all times of the year. Clean all pruning tools with 10% bleach solution or Lysol™ between sites and/or trees.

If possible avoid pruning or wounding of oaks during the spring (currently defined as February 1 through June 30). *Reasons to prune in the spring include:*

- To accommodate public safety concerns such as hazardous limbs, traffic visibility or emergency utility line clearance.
- To repair damaged limbs (from storms or other anomalies)
- To remove limbs rubbing on a building or rubbing on other branches, and to raise low limbs over a street.

On sites where construction schedules take precedence, pruning any live tissue should only be done to accommodate required clearance.

Dead branch removal where live tissue is not exposed.

Pruning for other reasons (general tree health, non-safety related clearance or thinning, etc.) should be conducted before February 1 or after June 30.

Debris from diseased red oaks should be immediately chipped, burned or buried.

Regardless of the reasons or time of year, proper pruning techniques should be used. These techniques include making proper pruning cuts and avoiding injurious practices such as topping or excessive crown thinning. If you are uncertain about any of this information, you should consult with a Texas Oak Wilt Certified arborist, ISA Certified Arborist, or an oak wilt specialist from a city, county or state government agency such as the Texas Forest Service or Texas AgriLife Extension Service.

References (available at <http://www.TexasOakWilt.org>):

- Appel, D.N., and R.F. Billings (eds.). 1995. Oak wilt perspectives: Proceedings of the Nation Oak Wilt Symposium, June 22-25, 1992. Austin, TX. Information Development, Houston, TX. 217 p.
- Billings, R.F., and D.N. Appel (eds.). 2009. Proceedings of the National Oak Wilt Symposium. June 4-7, 2007, Austin, TX. Texas Forest Service Publication 166. 267p.
- Prepared January 12th, 2011 in cooperation between Texas Forest Service, Texas AgriLife Extension Service & International Society of Arboriculture Texas Chapter.

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Austin Newcomers is dedicated to introducing new residents to Austin while extending a hand to make new acquaintances and join fun Interest Groups. Rosina Newton, the Horticulturist and Education Coordinator at The Natural Gardener, an award-winning Austin nursery, is the featured speaker. She will talk about Native and Xeric Landscaping, especially important in the present drought.

The monthly luncheon will be held on Wednesday, October 17 at Green Pastures Restaurant, 811 Live Oak St, Austin TX 78704. The luncheon is \$20 per person; reservations are required, and payment must be received by Thursday, October 11.

The club website is www.AustinNewcomers.com and the telephone number is (512) 314-5100.

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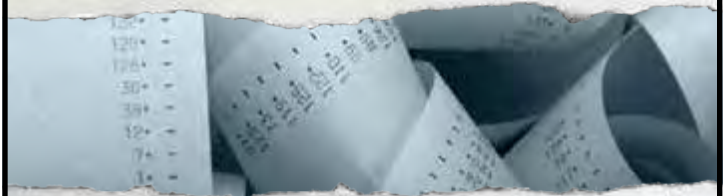
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Tennis

Tips

By USPTA/PTR Master Professional **Fernando Velasco**
Owner, Manager and Director of Tennis
 Grey Rock Tennis Club, Austin, TX

HOW TO HIT A TWO-HANDED BACKHAND

In last month's newsletter, I gave tips on how to hit a Forehand. In this issue, I will offer you instructions on how to execute a two-handed backhand for a right hander.

STEP 1 - Ready position: The body is facing the net and both of the hands are on the handle of the racket. The left hand should not overlap the right hand and it should be gripping the racket slightly tighter than the right hand. Feet are shoulder width apart and the body in is good balance.

STEP 2 - Back swing: Once the player makes the decision to hit on the left side, the body should start taking the racket back before the ball bounces. Notice the slight change of grip on the right hand toward the top of the handle (continental grip). Notice the turn of the upper body and the right foot leading the left foot. Eyes are still focused on the incoming ball.

STEP 3 - Point of Contact: The eyes now shift toward the point of contact which should be in front of the right foot. The right hand is still slightly relaxed, but the left hand is doing most of the work at the point of impact. The racket has made contact with the ball and weight of the player has shifted toward the point of contact. It is important to keep the right shoulder closed and not open the left hip too early. Flexing the right knee will allow more flexibility and power on the ball.

STEP 4 - Follow Through: Once the racket has made contact with the ball, let the arms extend out toward the target selected. The elbows now are bent and the head of the racket is wrapping around the left shoulder.

Look for next Issue: The One-Backhand Groundstroke



Home Athletics Schedule October 2012

Date	Sport	Opponent	Time
10/2	VB	Howard Payne	7 p.m.
10/12	WS	Ozarks!	1 p.m.
	MS	Ozarks!	3 p.m.
10/13	XC	Concordia Invitational%	2 p.m.
	WS	Texas-Dallas!	5 p.m.
	MS	Texas-Dallas!	7 p.m.
10/16	VB	Hardin-Simmons	7 p.m.
10/18	VB	Schreiner	7 p.m.
10/26	WS	Howard Payne\$	5 p.m.
	MS	Howard Payne\$	7 p.m.
10/27	VB	Hardin-Simmons\$	7 p.m.
	VB	Hardin-Simmons\$	7 p.m.

VB (Volleyball)
 MS (M. Soccer)
 WS (W. Soccer)
 % at Cedar Park High School
 ! at St. Stephen's
 \$ at Town & Country (Field 26)

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athletics.concordia.edu

Splitting Hares

Nature Watch
by Jim and Lynne Weber

Colloquially known as 'bunnies', rabbits and hares are small mammals that can be found in a variety of habitats, including meadows, woodlands, grasslands, deserts, and even wetlands. But did you know that there are true differences between rabbits and hares?

Rabbits are clearly distinguished from hares in that rabbits typically have young that are born blind and hairless (altricial) and hares have young that are born with hair and able to see (precocial). Since young hares are well camouflaged and mobile within minutes of being born, the mother does not protect them and is with them only long enough to nurse. Rabbits, other than cottontails, live underground in burrows, but cottontails, like hares, live in simple grass nests above the ground called 'forms.' Unlike rabbits, hares usually do not live in groups (although a group of hares is called a 'drove') and they are generally larger than rabbits, with longer ears and black markings on their fur. Hares are also called jackrabbits, as they are very quick and can run up to speeds of 45 miles per hour! They have jointed or kinetic skulls, which are unique among mammals. This joint permits relative motion between the anterior and posterior part of the skull's braincase, helping to absorb the G-force created as the hare strikes its powerful hind legs with impact against the ground.

In our area of Texas you can find the Swamp Rabbit (*Sylvilagus aquaticus*), the Eastern Cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*), and the Black-tailed Jackrabbit (*Lepus californicus*). Living in the eastern third of our state and one of the largest cottontails in its range, the Swamp Rabbit inhabits poorly drained river bottoms and marshes. Its upper parts are grayish-brown heavily lined

with black with a white underside and cinnamon-colored front legs and tops of hind feet. At home in the water, this rabbit's dense fur helps to waterproof its skin, and unlike other rabbits it will cross streams and rivers on its own. Also unlike other rabbits, its young have fur at birth but their eyes and ears are closed.

Eastern Cottontails are the most common rabbit in the eastern three-fourths of Texas and are moderately large with rusty-brown fur, relatively short ears, and large hind feet. These cottontails commonly frequent brush-dotted pastures and are active largely in the twilight hours and at night, when they venture out to meadows or lawns to forage. They often live at the edges of town and feed in gardens and flower beds, and are common along country roads lined with dense vegetation. Eastern Cottontails are prolific breeders, and can have as many as four or five litters throughout the year.

The Black-tailed Jackrabbit, also known as the Desert Hare, reaches a length of about two feet and weighs from three to six pounds. Its distinctive long ears and powerful rear legs distinguish it as a hare. With dorsal fur that is dark buff peppered with black and an underside of creamy white, its black markings are found on the tips of its ears and the top of its short tail. In warmer climates like ours, this jackrabbit breeds year round and the average litter size is four, but it can range from two to seven depending on the food supply. Since it does not hibernate or migrate, it uses the same square half-mile to mile habitat of oak-juniper woodland as its territory.

Now that you know the subtle (and sometimes confusing) differences between these closely related mammals, you too can try your hand at splitting hares!



Swamp Rabbit



Eastern Cottontail



Black-tailed Jackrabbit

*Send your nature-related questions to 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*, published by Texas A&M University Press.*

Grilled New York Strip

with Sautéed Mushrooms & Beurre Blanc

by the Four Points Foodie

Was in the mood for a yummy sauce ... you know the kind you lick off your fingers? This Beurre Blanc really compliments the simplicity of a salt and peppered grilled steak along with some sautéed mushrooms. I paired it with a simple salad and this was our amazing dinner tonight.



Steak Ingredients:

- Your choice steaks, room temp and seasoned with salt and pepper only
- 1 lb sliced baby portobello mushrooms
- 1 T olive oil

Preheat your grill. In a medium sautee pan, add olive oil and sautee mushrooms on medium heat until dark and caramelized. Remove from heat and hold.

Grill your steaks the way you like them, then remove from heat and let them rest, covered with foil, for 10 minutes.

Beurre Blanc Ingredients:

- 1 medium shallot, minced
- 8 oz white wine
- 3 T heavy cream
- 12 T cold butter, cubed
- salt and pepper to taste

In a saute pan, reduce the shallots and wine until about 2 T remain. Add the heavy cream and cook until it bubbles, then remove from heat. Slowly whisk in the nobs of butter, a few at a time, until incorporated. As you whisk a few in, the sauce gets thicker and thicker. Once all the butter in whisked in, season to taste with salt and pepper.

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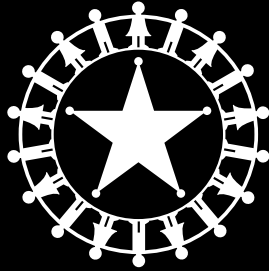


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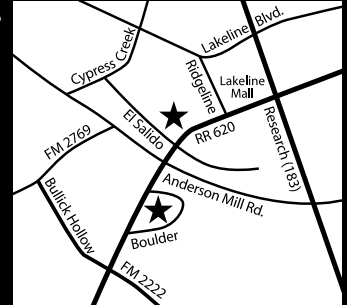
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