

# 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 National 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.



# THE MONITOR

## WELCOME

### *A Newsletter for Meridian residents*

The Monitor is a monthly newsletter mailed to all Meridian residents. Each newsletter is filled with valuable information about the community, local area activities, school information and more.

If you are involved with a school group, play group, scouts, sports activity, social group, etc. and would like to submit an article for the newsletter you can do so online at [www.PEELinc.com](http://www.PEELinc.com) or you can email it [meridian@peelinc.com](mailto:meridian@peelinc.com). Personal news for the Stork Report, Teenage Job Seekers, special celebrations, birthday announcements and military service are also welcome.

Our goal is to keep you informed!

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# Austin Newcomers Club



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](http://www.AustinNewcomers.com) and the telephone number is (512) 314-5100.

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## Recipe of the Month



### 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 sauté pan, add olive oil and sauté 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 sauté 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 is whisked in, season to taste with salt and pepper.

**To serve, top your steak with mushroom and then the Beurre Blanc. I added some minced chive for a tiny bit of taste and color.**



## SUDOKU

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The goal is to fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9. Each digit may appear only once in each row, each column, and each 3x3 box.

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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 is in 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*



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## Bullying: What To Watch *Helping Parents Understand the Signs*

Has your child suddenly had declining grades or unexplained injuries? Have they purposely been trying to avoid school? They could be the victims of bullying.

"Bullying is a widespread problem among children, especially teenagers," says Beth Nauert, M.D., a Texas pediatrician. "Bullying should always be taken very seriously by parents, educators, and the authorities."

### **BULLYING SIGNS**

Children who are bullied are repeatedly exposed to aggressive, negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and have difficulty defending themselves, says Dr. Nauert.

Some clear signs of bullying that parents should watch for include:

- unexplainable injuries,
- lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewelry,

- feeling sick or faking illness,
- changes in eating habit,
- difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares,
- not wanting to go to school,
- running away from home.

### **ACTION PLAN FOR PARENTS**

Because children who are bullied may be reluctant to talk about it, parents who suspect bullying should take immediate action to help their children, says Dr. Nauert.

"Parents need to find out from their child who is doing the bullying, whether the bullying was verbal, physical, or cyberbullying, and where and when the bullying is happening," she says. "They should then speak with their teacher, principal, school administrators, or local law enforcement."

## *October is National Bullying Prevention Month*

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# 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](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*, published by Texas A&M University Press.*

## HALLOWEEN TIPS

**PORCH LIGHTS** - a porch light on means fair game for Trick-Or-Treating. If you are not distributing candy or are done for the evening, please turn your lights off. And Trick-Or-Treaters...if you see a porch light off, be respectful and move on to the next illuminated house.

**HELLO?** - Knock or ring the bell no more than twice. If the door isn't answered within a minute despite the porch light being on, assume you've gotten one of those folks who didn't read Tip 1.

**FRIGHTENING LIMITS** - If you are the person who wants to jump out of the coffin tucked in the corner of your front porch, please make sure that the age of the 'victim' is appropriate. While pee will wash off concrete, you might ruin the night for a dressed up 2 year-old princess.

**WALKING** - Stay on sidewalks or pathways. Don't take short cuts through lawns or flowerbeds.

**Manners matter** - Saying "Trick-or-Treat" before and "Thank You" afterward is a small price for collecting free candy on Halloween.

**GAME OVER** - Don't Trick-or-Treat after 9pm. Families with children or older people may well be in bed after that.

**TRAFFICKING** - Vehicles: drive extra slow and look for kids. Chaperones/Kids: Stay off roads as much as possible.

**BLINDED BY THE LIGHT** - Glow sticks, reflectors, flashlights - all are good to make your kids visible to anyone who fails at Tip 6.

**FLAME OFF!!** - Jack-o-lanterns/candles set a spooky mood, but open flames near dangling costume sleeves and flammable accessories is dangerous. Consider battery-powered tea lights.

**THANKS...** - If you're going to give out goodies to Trick-or-Treaters, buy individually wrapped treats. Save special homemade goodies and fresh fruit as presents for the folks you know rather than strangers who are coming to your door Trick-or-Treating.

**R-E-S-P-E-C-T** - Not everyone celebrates the holiday, or celebrates it in the same way you do. We live in a community with diverse beliefs and views. Please show respect as you yourself would want to be respected.

**DON'T SCARE THE LITTLE ONES TOO BADLY!** - If you've got a really creepy costume to answer the door, or you decorate your house from sidewalk to front porch in graveyard chic - remember that what can be delightfully frightening to older kids and adults can terrify toddlers and young kids. Before jumping out of bushes, screaming when you open doors or leaping out of fake coffins at Trick-or-Treaters, take a quick glance to make sure they're of an appropriate age-group to enjoy such a scare. Save the best frights for those who can really appreciate them. You'll have more fun, and the parents of the little kids will be grateful. Having to take home a hysterical Trick-or-Treater who has been scared witless on their first time out is no fun for anyone.

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# - Kids Stuff -

Section for Kids with news, puzzles, games and more!

## HALLOWEEN

Boo! What are you going to be for Halloween? Sometimes, it can be fun to dress up as a group. Maybe your brothers, sisters, friends - or even parents - will want to join in the fun. Here are some costume ideas for groups of two or more.

- sun and moon
- winter, spring, summer, and fall
- salt and pepper shakers
- a toothbrush and a tube of toothpaste
- cop and robber
- doctor and patient
- veterinarian and animal (dog, cat, or bunny)
- fireman and fire dog (dalmatian)
- fisherman and fish
- squirrel and nut
- teacher and student
- pilgrim and Indian (or turkey!)
- prince and princess (or king and queen)
- cowboy and horse (or cowboy and cowgirl)
- dog and bone (Arf! Arf!)
- Santa and elf (or Mrs. Claus)
- macaroni and cheese
- Fopsy, Mopsy, and Cottontail (from Peter Rabbit)
- Dorothy, the Tin Man, the Scarecrow, the Lion, and Toto (from the Wizard of Oz)
- Sonny and Cher (ask your parents!)
- vampire and bat
- burger and fries
- peanut butter and jelly
- three blind mice
- three little bears
- three little pigs

And no matter what you dress up as, please be safe while you're haunting the neighborhood!



This information was provided by KidsHealth, one of the largest resources online for medically reviewed health information written for parents, kids, and teens. For more articles like this one, visit [www.KidsHealth.org](http://www.KidsHealth.org) or [www.TeensHealth.org](http://www.TeensHealth.org). ©1995-2006. The Nemours Foundation



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3000-3499	6	3,127	\$ 123	\$ 384	2007	133	5	1
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4000-4500	4	4,358	\$ 137	\$ 598	2011	17	1	3
>4500	3	5,068	\$ 151	\$ 764	2009	48	0	0
<b>Meridian Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>3,396</b>	<b>\$ 128</b>	<b>\$ 435</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>% Change Mo/Mo</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>0%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>-64%</b>

Market Report data was obtained from the Austin-Multiple Listing Service (MLS) on 09/04/2012. In some cases new construction and FSBO homes are not included in the MLS data and therefore are not represented. Data is deemed accurate but not guaranteed.

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[Carson@Amnetloans.com](mailto:Carson@Amnetloans.com) | [AMNETLOANS.com](http://AMNETLOANS.com)