# 1994

■ **MASTER GARDENERS PROGRAM HAS OPENINGS.** Spaces are still available in the spring Master Gardeners program for home gardeners who want to learn more about their hobby. The program offers 72 hours of classroom instruction with a materials fee of $35. Classes are held from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Thursdays beginning this week and will continue for 12 weeks. On completion of the program, each student is asked to pay back 72 hours to the community, through participation in the community garden, the spring garden fair, the regional gardening seminar, the Extension Office plant clinic, the Growers' Market, the Josephine County Fair or with 4-H clubs. Applications and more information are available at the Josephine County Extension Office, 215 Ringuette St., or by calling 476-6613.

Grants Pass Daily Courier
01/11/94

■ **ORGANIC GARDENING, ANYONE?** With spring right around the corner, it's time to start thinking about getting outside and planting a garden. Seniors are invited to learn about "Organic Gardening for Health and Exercise" during an afternoon program Friday. Don Ness, the current president of the Master Gardener Association, will be sharing ways seniors can improve their nutritional heath and increase their exercise while planting an organic garden. The talk begins at 1:30 p.m. Friday at the B Street dining center, 317 N.W. B St. Admission is free. The program is being sponsored by the Josephine County Community Services Senior Health Awareness Program and Education. For more information or transportation, call 474-5440.

Grants Pass Daily Courier
03/02/94

MAR 0 3 1994

## Seminars will help gardeners gear up

MAR 0 3 1994

Gardeners and other plant people are invited to sign up to attend sessions of this year's regional gardening seminar, which will be held March 12.

The event is being sponsored by the Josephine County Master Gardeners Association, the Josephine County OSU Extension Service and Rogue Community College. Classes will cover a wide range of gardening and landscaping topics, with emphasis on dealing with the unique climate and soil concerns of the Rogue Valley.

Fees have been set at $5 per class and include hand-out materials. Registration forms are available at most local nurseries, garden supply stores and the Extension Office at 215 Ringuette St.

The following is a listing of the classes being offered:

■ **BUGS, WEEDS, GOPHERS AND SUCH.** Steve Siegel, RCC horticulture instructor and local landscape contractor, delves into the various methods of controlling bugs and weeds in the yard.

■ **TRANSFORM YOUR TIRED LANDSCAPE.** Rene M. Pare, owner of Mountain View Landscaping, shares personal experiences dealing with landcsape ideas and problems.

■ **FOCUS ON FLOWERS.** Master Gardener and landscape design consultant Rita Spencer talks about plant and bulb selection, proper garden maintenance and design tips.

■ **HOME GREENHOUSES.** Gardening columnist David James shows how to build and use a home greenhouse, including tips on growing plants from seeds.

■ **HOW A PLANT GROWS.** Steve Siegel covers the life cycle of plants, how and why they grow and how to keep them happy.

■ **LAWN AND GROUND COVER KNOW-HOW.** Learn how to select the proper cover for their yard and how to keep it healthy. George Tiger, OSU Extension horticulturist, leads the class.

■ **HOUSEPLANT HELP.** Theresa Reith, from Chet's Garden Center, discusses houseplants, including plant selection and acclimation, environmental benefits, seasonal positioning, day-to-day care and fertilizing procedures, plus basic soil mixes, potting techniques and propagating houseplants from seed, stem and leaf cuttings.

■ **SAFE SPRAYS AND OTHER HINTS.** Redwood Nursery owner Ed Morey explains proper selection and use of insecticides, herbicides and fungicides, with an emphasis on safety.

■ **GRAFTING: HANDS-ON PRACTICE.** Master Gardener Jim Smith demonstrates the basics of grafting. Class members will get to practice using willow stock.

■ **STARTING A GARDEN IN THE ROGUE VALLEY.** The fundamentals of starting a garden, including site selection, soil preparation, planting, weeding and pest control will be covered by Matser Gardener Don Ness.

■ **SUCCESS WITH FRUIT TREES.** Orchardist John Hoffman discusses variety and rootstck selection, fertilization, spray schedules, and thinning and harvesting of fruit trees.

■ **PLANTING FOR SHADY SPACES.** Andy Sudkamp, horticulturist with Chet's Garden Center, introduces a wide variety of plants that thrive in full or partial shade.

■ **GRAPE GROWING FOR THIS REGION.** Master Gardener Max Cain has suggestions for the selection, growing and care of grape varieties suitable for this part of southern Oregon. Cuttings of several different grape varieties will be available.

■ **IMPROVING SOILS AND MANAGING WATER.** Master Gardener Lin Perkins tells how local soils are formed, some of their inherent problems and how to deal with them. Proper watering methods will emphasize rooting depth, soil texture, allowable moisture depletion and daily consumptive use.

■ **ORNAMENTAL TREES — SELECTION AND CARE.** Oregon State Master Gardener of the Year Helen Bell helps you choose the right tree for your site. Fall and spring planting, soil types, pH, mulching, drainage and exposure will be covered.

■ **VEGGIES FOR OUR CLIMATE.** Master Gardener Cynthia Hewitt helps students plan a successful vegetable garden, including selection of varieties best adapted to this area.

MAR 0 3 1994

Grants Pass Daily Courier
03/03/94

APR 2 1 1994

## Master Gardeners host fair

More than 100 commercial and non-profit exhibits will be bursting with up-to-date gardening information and services at the annual Master Gardeners Association Spring Garden Fair this weekend.

Held at the OSU Extension Office, 215 Ringuette Ave. in Grants Pass, the fair will open its doors from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday.

Admission is free.

Plant sales, a children's garden corner, educational displays, demonstrations, a master gardeners information booth and door prizes will augment the two-day garden lovers' event.

For more information, call 476-6613.

APR 2 1 1994

04/21/94

■ **WEEDS, FLOWERS ON AGENDA.** Master gardener Cecil Pierce will discuss "Weeds and Wild Flowers" during an afternoon program Thursday. His talk will begin at 2 p.m. at the Oregon State Extension activity building, 215 Ringuette St. in Grants Pass. Refreshments and coffee will be served.

Grants Pass Daily Courier
05/23/94

# Drought drains trees of their vitality

## In dry times, don't forget the big fellas

By Edith Decker
of the Daily Courier

Helen Bell bends the branch of a ponderosa pine that's a bit taller than she is and lets it fly. It *boings* up just a little. A couple of reddish brown needles careen toward the petunias. A few more just fall at her feet.

"It's still got some life in it," she tells neighbor Barb Woodruff. "But . . ."

Bell, as a well-mannered master gardener, tries to avoid the words "dead" and "hopeless" but it doesn't take a genius to see that this ponderosa has gone to pine heaven.

While most gardeners worry about their perennials and maybe consider their bushes when drought concerns arise, the long-term sufferers in long-term droughts are the long-term residents of the yard, farm or ranch: the trees.

For humans, it's just another hot summer after a fairly dry winter. For trees, it's the ninth year of drought — and counting.

As the tree problems arise more frequently at the master gardeners' plant clinic, Bell and other landscapers such as Steve Siegel, owner of Three Rivers Landscaping, find themselves giving a lot of advice about saving parched trees.

As Siegel explains, trees have both shallow and deep roots. During winter, when soil is saturated, the shallow roots give the tree what it needs to survive. In summer, the deep roots provide.

During periods of extended drought, the shallow roots die and dry up. So, in winter, the shallow roots are gone and the deep roots can't keep the tree alive by themselves.

In the Rogue Valley, the wet winter of two years ago actually did more harm than good for some trees, Siegel says. Those trees without shallow roots because of the drought were suddenly inundated and literally drowned over the winter.

"It's like giving a starving person a big meal," Siegel says.

Bell and Siegel agree about fixing the problem: pay attention to the trees; look for wilt; and water when you see it.

The most obvious way to spot problems, both say, is that the tree's leaves wilt or turn brown. In cases of drought problems, as opposed to disease or other difficulties, a tree generally browns from the outside in, says Bell.

The tips or new growth go brown or die first. The margins of the leaves will brown before the veins do. In the case of conifers, the needles turn color from from the top down, she notes.

Evergreens present a difficulty, because they don't wilt. The thing to do, Siegel says, is note how the surrounding broadleaf trees are doing.

"If they're watering some, they should be watering all," he says.

Another indication is the presence of insects.

"Plants put out a substance that attracts insects when they're under stress," Bell says, noting that borers, aphids and ants are usually the first to arrive — sort of the arboreal vultures of the insect kingdom.

All this sounds so hopeless, but there are things the tree-owner can do to save an arid friend.

Water deeply, the experts say. The soil should be wet for three feet down so shallow roots can take up the water.

It's not usually necessary in winter, but in any season, if the tree is wilting, water it well.

Mulching also helps. Bell and Siegel recommend organic mulches of some kind at least three inches deep around the base of trees. It helps keep the base of the tree from becoming dry and keeps competing weeds away from the scarce water.

Don't put black plastic around the base of the tree. It keeps the water away from the roots — and some trees and shrubs need air through the surrounding ground as well. Those include azaleas, dogwoods and rhododendrons.

Be especially vigilant about new trees.

"It takes time for roots to get established and this winter was dry — really dry," Bell says. "On a new tree, water regularly for two or three seasons to help it establish roots."

Another way to help new trees Siegel notes is by spraying them with antitranspirant, available at most nurseries. That keeps the water in and still allows for growth.

"It's expensive," he notes — but so is buying new trees every year.

Also, prune infected branches and burn or dispose of them so diseases and insects won't just move back to the live tree.

And finally, Bell says, just accept that these big cycles of weather are part of the natural order and there's nothing we, as lowly human gardeners, can do about it.

"It's bigger than we are."

ANDY CRIPE/Daily Courier

**Helen Bell examines an ailing ponderosa pine suffering from the effects of drought.**

### Abstinent trees

Here's a list of trees that tend to be drought tolerant. All trees, however, must be watered regularly during their first year in the ground.

- Silver and Norway maples
- Birch
- Most pines
- Elms
- Gingko
- Linden
- Koelreuteria
- Eastern redbud
- White and purple flowering locusts. (Note: a pest is currently devastating honey locusts, so it might be best to avoid it for now.)
- Empress trees
- Natives like madrones

Grants Pass Daily Courier
06/30/94

■ **COOL-SEASON CROPS/ IT'S TIME, SAYS EXTENSION SERVICE.** It may not feel like it temperature-wise, but Don Ness, president of the Josephine County Master Gardeners, says it's time to start planting your winter garden. He'll give a talk on the subject at 7 p.m. Wednesday at the OSU Extension Office, 215 Ringuette Street. The program is open to the public and refreshments will be served.

Grants Pass Daily Courier
07/16/94

■ **PLANT DOC TO SPEAK.** The Plant Doctor, Dariel Felthausen, will speak to Master Gardeners and the public on "Houseplants and Plant Pathology." Her talk begins at 7 p.m. Wednesday at the Oregon State University Extension office, 215 Ringuette St. in Grants Pass. Admission is free and refreshments will be served.

Grants Pass Daily Courier
08/20/94

■ Yellowjackets turn particularly aggressive at summer's end when nests are home to hundreds and sometimes thousands of the wasps.

They live in papery nests underground, as shown in the illustration, or in nests suspended under eaves or other spots.

Yellow jackets inject venom along with the stinger. That hurts, and for some people, stings can be life-threatening.

Source: Common Sense Pest Control and Oregon State University Extension Service.

GILLIAN GARCIA/ Daily Courier

# Yellowjackets are losing their tempers

By Michele LaBounty
of the Daily Courier

When a yellowjacket is sticking a stinger in tender flesh, it's tough to think of the wasps as valuable scavengers.

But the bug with a black body and yellow and white markings munches not only on people, but on caterpillars and other pests. That places it in the beneficial category for many entomologists.

At this time of year, though, thinking of the benefits of yellowjackets is like heresy for people hiking, sipping beverages outdoors or picnicking. Yellowjackets are getting ferocious as hot and dry weather digs in and the wasp's life cycle heats up.

Tales of stinging yellowjackets are rampant. Firefighters battling the Hull Mountain Fire felt the stingers and so have many others.

"They've been stinging people left and right," says Lorraine Elam, plant clinic coordinator at Oregon State University's Extension Service in Grants Pass.

"I was stung once this year and it wasn't funny," Elam said.

Stings are nothing to joke about. When a yellowjacket inserts a stinger, it also injects venom from a poison sack in its abdomen. Roughly 2 million people in the United States are hypersensitive to the toxin, according to "Common Sense Pest Control," a handy book available at the Extension Office.

And those barbed stingers can be used as a weapon more than once in unsuspecting flesh — unlike honey bees, which get just one chance to use their stingers.

Late summer and into September are particularly nasty times for yellowjacket encounters.

Making matters worse are yellowjackets' ways of sometimes stinging without provocation.

The life of these heavy-bodied wasps is winding down, and activity in the nests becomes more frantic this time of year. Their gray, papery nests are not only underground, but also hanging from eaves and under sheltered spots.

TIMOTHY BULLARD/Daily Courier

**Wasp traps might ease your problem, or they might attract more yellowjackets.**

By the end of summer, the nests may contain hundreds or thousands of workers, says Jack DeAngelis, an OSU entomologist.

Yellowjackets are social insects living in colonies where the queen is boss. The queen, and other new queens raised since spring, are the only survivors of winter, which they wait out in a sheltered area. Male workers die.

As the colony declines in late summer, the workers pull larvae from cells and throw them away or feed them to other young. This is the time the wasps are more likely to sting away from the nest, according to insect experts.

A few tips can help people avoid being stung.

✔ Don't wear perfume or other scents, including hairspray, suntan lotion, deodorants and shaving lotion.

✔ Don't wear brightly colored or patterned clothing.

✔ Don't go barefoot, especially in grass.

✔ Don't swat at or squash yellowjackets. Squashing them releases a chemical alarm that signals other yellowjackets in the area to attack.

✔ Don't drink soft drinks from open containers. A lid and a straw will help keep wasps away.

✔ Don't carry sweets or meat snacks in open containers.

✔ Don't sit down on a wet towel or clothes. Yellowjackets might be drinking the moisture.

Not eating outdoors in the summer is one recommendation that's nearly impossible for people to comply with. So for them, experts recommend strategically placing a decoy nearby, or a trap available at most garden and other stores.

Yellowjackets are meat eaters, but will eat plants and fruit juices. They particularly like rotten fruit, something to keep in mind when setting a decoy.

The Josephine County Health Department offers some advice to people who are stung. Gwen Bowman, public health administrator, says a paste of unseasoned Adolph's Meat Tenderizer or fresh lemon juice helps ease the pain of a sting. Ice helps, too, slowing the swelling and the speed of venom absorption.

The department will offer a class in September for $15 for those who want to obtain a certificate to administer epinephrine to family or friends allergic to the yellowjacket stings.

For information on that class, call 474-5325.

Grants Pass Daily Courier
09/03/94

■ **MASTER GARDENER WILL OFFER SOME TIPS FOR HEALTHY TREES.** Helen Bell, the 1992 state master gardener of the year, answers the question "What's Bugging Your Trees?" at an evening program next week. The free talk begins at 7 p.m. Wednesday at the Oregon State University Extension building, 215 Ringuette. Refreshments will be served.

Grants Pass Daily Courier
09/03/94

# Landscaping? Gotta have a plan

**By Edith Decker**
Of the Daily Courier

Remember all that stuff you were saying all year as you were working around the yard?

Stuff like: "Ya know, Mabel, a rose on a trellis would look great right here."

Or "Bob, someday we ought to try a rock garden in that area next to the oak where nothing will grow."

Quick. Before you forget it all. Write it down and start planning and mapping for next year. Most yards just develop year to year without any long-term goals. But the experts know that a great-looking landscape begins with a pencil (and a big erasure) and a lot of graph paper.

"I had a 10-year plan and it's been 15 years and I'm still working on it," says Helen Bell with a laugh and shake of the head.

But at least Bell, a master gardener with the Josephine County Extension Service, has a plan.

Besides the checklist included on this page, here are some tips she has for mapping our your ideas.

Measure all the stuff that's existing in the yard. Drives, walks, buildings, whatever. It's a pain, but it will save a lot of time and money in the long run.

At this point, if you're serious, you might consider purchasing one of the many garden planning computer programs, says Bell.

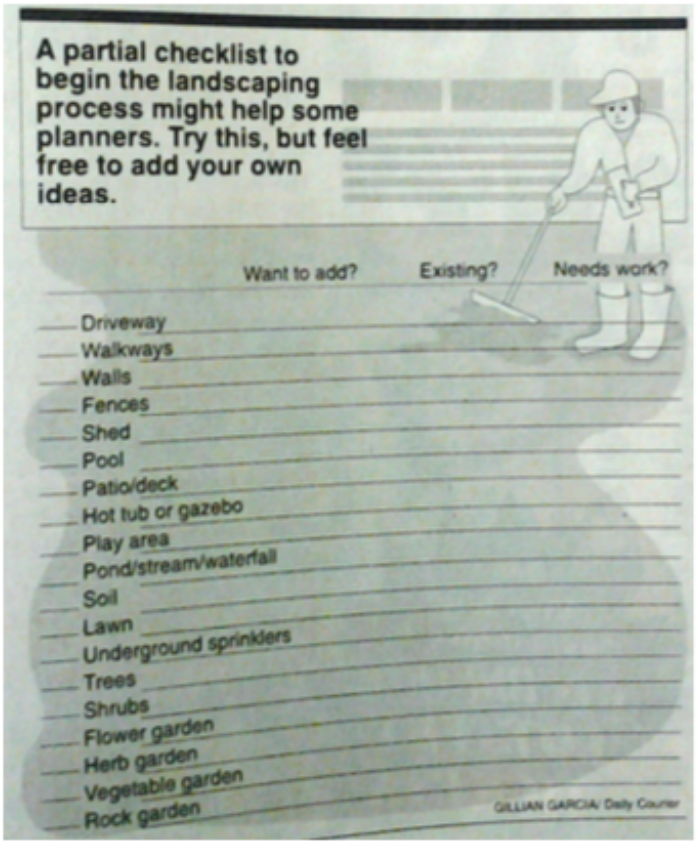
Before you start, consider what you've got in the way of topography. Add any big bumps, cliffs, ponds or sand traps to your map.

If you don't have a compost area or a site for clippings, determine one. You can hide it with fencing later.

Find your directions: north and south because where you put plants will depend on what sort of exposure they'll need.

Now dream a little.

Get some inspiration from other people's landscaping, from books on gardens, from catalogs of plants and roaming the nurseries for neat looking items.




Now come down to earth.

Around here, that means "Plan for drought." Bell says. "Our climate is so peculiar – well, it IS the climate, like the sign says."

So some of those great Japanese flowering trees may be out – but find out what might be similar that would survive here.

Bell recommends the "Sunset Western Garden Book" to find the plants you might want to try. The main considerations as far as choosing them and grouping them are their water needs, color, height and shape.

Start with the "foundation plantings." Those are the long-term items like trees, shrubs and hardy perennials. Remember, they grow. You may not be around in 100 years to see how immense that maple is, but someone may be cursing you from a future century if you plant it in a bad spot.

She recommends getting a soil test early on. It'll save you a lot of dead plants later. Before you get going on the lawn or flower beds, you'll want to know what has to be added to the soil to bring it up to snuff.

Now decide where you want to put everything. Try a number of different possibilities, quick sketches you can revise to your heart's content – and don't forget the solid stuff you might want to add like a small pond, gazebo, boulder, fountain, whatever.

The three big placement tips are: don't crowd, put plants where they won't die, and place precious plants where they have the most protection. That is, keep your prize Japanese maple away from the fence since the roots will be under the neighbor's yard and out of your care.

If you're really starting from scratch, you might consider a theme garden in a particular style. A Japanese garden, English style or something formal and European might be favorites. Try it. While finding help with other than a garden-variety garden can be rough – you'd be surprised how many experts in specific areas the Rogue Valley has to offer, Bell says.

"It's just a matter of finding them."

For specific cultivation loves, Bell says books from Timber Press are among the best. To get a catalog write them at: "Timber Press, The Haseltine Building, 133 S. W. Second Ave., Suite 43, Portland. 97204-3527.

Now this is important: Once you've determined which of the sketches you like best, run it by an expert or two. Call the master gardeners at 476-6613 or try a knowledgeable nursery person. They'll see things that you might not – like the oak tree's acorns hitting bottom in the pond you've planned.

Don't give up on ideas just because you don't think you can get them done in one season. Like Bell, try a 5-year or 10-year plan; it sounds Communist, but you'll get over it.

Here's what Bell suggests: Work on the existing stuff first. You can do some of that this winter. When the rainy season starts, think about working on the irrigation system (Talk to an expert about designing one.)

In spring or late fall, after the irrigation is settled, work on the lawn and plants. Finally add the architectural details, including edging, patios, stepping stones, rock gardens.

Grants Pass Daily Courier
09/29/94

# Master Gardeners made, not born; here's your chance

It's time to sign up for the 1995 Oregon State University Extension Service Master Gardener Program, scheduled to start mid-January.

The program is designed to provide home gardeners with basic instruction in horticulture and then to use those gardeners as trainees to help Extension staff members answer gardening questions from the public.

The course of study will include vegetable management, landscaping, plant disease, insects, management of soil and water, lawn and turf maintenance, fruit, nut and berry cultivation and growing herbs.

The classes will run from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. one day per week for 12 weeks.

Classes meet at the Josephine County 4-H Activity Building at 215 Ringuette St. in Grants Pass.

Except for a $35 materials fee, there is no charge for the training, which is provided in exchange for the volunteer educational activities.

These activities begin after the training period is completed.

Each participant agrees to spend a pre-determined number of hours staffing plant clinics, where the public brings in horticultural questions and plant specimens to be examined for plant problem diagnosis.

In addition to the plant clinic hours, there are a number of ways to pay back training time.

Volunteers will be asked to plan and care for a demonstration garden, organize and lead 4-H clubs, talk to garden clubs and schools or lend a hand with a spring garden fair.

Enrollment in the program is limited so applications should be submitted as soon as possible. The deadline is Jan. 2.

For more information, contact George Tiger, OSU extension home gardening agent, by calling 476-6613.

Grants Pass Daily Courier
11/17/94

■ **SINGERS ENTERTAIN GARDENERS, PUBLIC.** Sing For Fun, a local singing group, will entertain Master Gardeners and the public at 7 p.m. Wednesday at the Oregon State University Extension Activities Building, 215 Ringuette St., by the fairgrounds. Guests should bring desserts to share. Coffee and tea will be provided.

Grants Pass Daily Courier
12/17/94