

The week ahead

TUESDAY HEALTHY LIVING

QUICK CARE:
You're in pain; should you head to the emergency room or an urgent-care clinic?

WEDNESDAY TASTE

WINE PANEL:
Our professional tasters choose wines in two price ranges to give as gifts

FRIDAY HOME

ICY HOT:
Mercury glass makes a bold, wintry statement for the holidays

Today on dallasnews.com

Cookie contest

Vote: Choose your favorite Cookie Man! See the finalists and text us your pick, or make your choice online. Voting ends at 11:55 p.m. Dec. 1.

dallasnews.com/food



Winning recipes

Online: Get recipes from 11 years of Holiday Cookie Contest winners.

dallasnews.com/cookierecipes

Big Feed No. 2

Archive: Now that Thanksgiving is over, it's time to start planning for Christmas. Check out our recipe database.

dallasnews.com/holidayrecipes

HOME

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Squirrel repellent is killing my myrtle

Squirrels have stripped most of the bark off of my wax myrtle. The tree service I hired put a black, paintlike product on the tree trunk to repel squirrels. Now, the tree is dying. Do you have any advice?

L.G., Coppell

Photos would be helpful. The black stuff applied to your tree can be more damaging than squirrels.

If squirrels attack any more of your trees, apply my Tree Goop to the wounds and use my Sick Tree Treatment. (See Resources to obtain instructions.) Having a healthy plant is important. If the tree was in stress, that may have attracted the squirrels.

ORGANIC ANSWERS



HOWARD GARRETT
home@dallasnews.com

berry, native sycamore, poplar, cottonwood, Siberian elm, silver maple and honeylocust.

I have collected acorns from my 7-year-old bur oak. I heard something about dropping acorns into a bucket of water to determine which ones to plant.

M.M., Burleson

The acorns that float should be thrown into the compost pile. They have been destroyed by weevils, disease or physical damage and will not germinate.

Soak the acorns that sink in Garrett Juice and plant them sideways in organic potting soil so that half of the acorn is above ground. Keep the soil moist until the acorn germinates. After that, water only when the soil surface is dry. (See Resources for instructions to make Garrett Juice.)

My son returned from Iraq and thinks he brought back biting mites that are infesting his house. He has set off insect bombs and sprayed and mopped with orange oil, but nothing helps. Do you know about this mite and how to get rid of it?

R.J., Canton

I'm not familiar with such a bug, but here are a few suggestions. First, don't use bug bombs. They are toxic, coat the entire house with chemicals and don't work.

Wash all clothing and bedding. Add a cup of hydrogen peroxide and a capful of orange oil to each wash load. Spray the house with orange oil mixed with a

product called Plant Wash or a mild liquid detergent. Use 1 ounce of Plant Wash or liquid detergent and 2 ounces of orange oil per gallon of water. Spray surfaces well and then wipe them dry with a cloth. This will help get rid of pests and clean residue left by the bug bombs. (If you cannot find Plant Wash in stores, the manufacturer's Web site is www.soilmender.com.)

I have a wooden beam on a ceiling that was fumigated. I later noticed sawdust on the floor. What product can I use to spray for pests?

C.A., Dallas

I'm afraid to hear the name of the fumigation chemical that was used. Chemicals that don't work are common.

Nontoxic products that work are orange oil and d-Limonene. One of these can be injected into insect holes and sealed in with putty. It can be painted on raw wood surfaces, but it will damage varnish and paint. To avoid damage to surfaces, use it at a dilution rate of 2 ounces per gallon of water. For use on raw wood, or as an injection into insect holes, dilute it at a rate of 4 to 8 ounces per gallon of water.

RESOURCES

ONLINE: www.dirtdoctor.com for free organic-program handouts

RADIO: KSKY-AM (660), Saturday 11 a.m.-noon and Sunday 8-11 a.m. www.ksky.com.

MAIL: P.O. Box 140650, Dallas, TX 75214



I have a lacebark elm that looked good all summer. However, this fall it grew long sprouts above the other branches. These shorter branches almost look as if they belong to a different type of tree. I used your Sick Tree Treatment last year and had the tree's root flare exposed.

C.K., Dallas

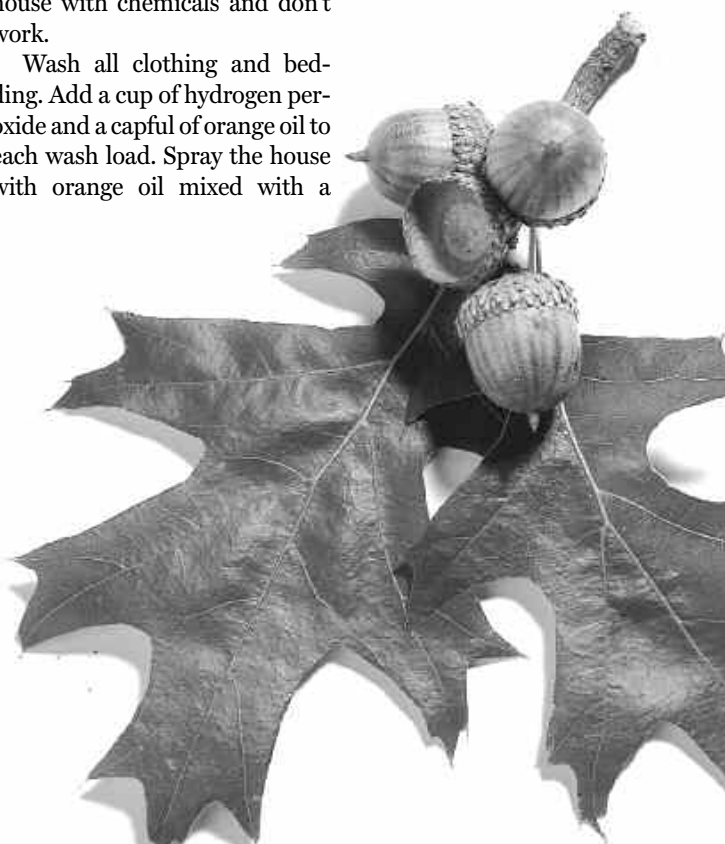
I think what you're seeing is unusual growth caused by this year's crazy weather. Your tree probably will be fine next year, depending on the weather.

What is an easy-to-maintain, fast-growing tree?

E.M., Venus

There are several choices. The best would include Mexican sycamore (not a native sycamore), Texas red oak, bur oak, Texas ash and trident maple.

Other trees may be faster-growing, but they are worthless and should not be planted. These bad trees include fruitless mul-



PASS IT ON

Pass It On is a free service for readers who want to donate unwanted items. To submit, e-mail home@dallasnews.com. Offerings are accepted up to one week before publication. Requests for items are not accepted.

OFFERINGS

Wood play gym. Includes fort with roof, blue Fiberglas slide, baby seat with chains and teeter-totter. You haul. Roy, Dallas, 214-240-7402.

Cal-Spa brand spa (8-foot-by-8-foot). You haul. Bob, DeSoto, 214-952-9393.

Sigrid Mureen

NORTH HAVEN Gardens

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Holiday Weekend

December 1 & 2
Arts & Crafts Show
Both days!
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Sunday, December 2
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