

Heat one enemy for trees and shrubs

The best way a plant owner can protect trees and shrubs against heat stress and related injury is to help the plants do a better job of cooling themselves.

"The only problem with that is: Heat isn't the only problem," said Jason Griffin, director of K-State Research and Extension's John C. Pair Horticulture Center.

Temperature does affect almost every physiological and biochemical process, he said. Each plant grows best in a particular temperature range. It also has a high and a low threshold for survival.

But, heat nearly always has partners in crime, Griffin said. Moisture, wind, cloud cover and plant species can be just as important. Like heat, all four affect how well plants' cooling system works.

"Another factor this year is that many central U.S. landscape plants are unusually vulnerable to any kind of damage," Griffin said. "They're still trying to recover from 2011's heat and drought."

Still, plant owners can take measures to help ornamentals through summer's searing days.

"You can directly affect the temperature of a plant by shading it. Obviously, this is a labor-intensive step. But, I've seen people use everything from bed sheets to screening to umbrellas, in order to reduce the temperature of leaves. And, as ridiculous as this sounds ... it's worked," he said.

Misting foliage during the afternoon can also help.

"Nurseries with overhead irrigation sometimes turn on the water for 5 minutes per hour through the day's peak heat. This lowers the air temperature surrounding the plants without overwatering," Griffin said.

Monitoring soil moisture is always a critical step.

"A plant can't cool itself without adequate soil moisture," he said. "At the same time, overwatering can shut down plants' cooling system.... Not enough and too much are both bad."

At the research center Griffin directs, K-State tests everything from shade and ornamental trees to bedding and medicinal plants.

"When seasonal temperatures rise in Kansas, rain totals tend to drop," Griffin said. "Last year,

though, they'd almost disappeared by August. Plus, the Kansas wind machine got fired up, drying things out and reducing our cloud cover.

"That four-part whammy greatly reduced plants' ability to tolerate the high temperatures...."

The main way plants cope with heat is a process called transpiration, he said. Roots absorb water from the soil and send it up through their plant. Some of that water then evaporates from the leaves through tiny pores, called stomata. The evaporating water cools each leaf much like evaporating sweat cools skin.

Griffin said, however, a variety of factors can limit or disrupt the transpiration process.

- Dry soil reduces water and signals the stomata to close.
- Wind shakes branches and leaves, causing stomata to close. Plus, wind blows away the thin layer of cool air around each leaf and scatters cloud cover.
- Intense sunlight plays a role in stomata closure and sends leaves' internal temperature above the surrounding air temperature.

"Each of those factors can take part in a complete breakdown of leaf cells. We may call the result 'heat scorch,' but it's a lot more than that," Griffin said.

Excessive heat makes things worse by upsetting the normal functions of internal plant cells. One of the first processes affected is photosynthesis - the way the plants make food.

"Many plants can recover from this upset overnight," Griffin said. "That only happens ... if nighttime temperatures cool off...."

"I've seen well-established, well-acclimated plants make some amazing recoveries from extreme weather events. Hot weather that hangs on, however, can be ... insidious. Its impacts can build and then linger. So, you can't afford to let things slide when it comes to helping your most valuable trees and shrubs...."

For the longer term, he recommended that homeowners shop for plants with good heat- and drought-resistance, plus take advantage of any microclimates in their yard that could provide wind and sun protection for more sensitive plants.



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SAM DIETER
Colby Free Press

Dogs, dead get election docs

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP) - The voter registration form arrived in the mail last month with some key information already filled in: Rosie Charlston's name was complete, as was her Seattle address.

Problem is, Rosie was a black lab who died in 1998.

A group called the Voter Participation Center has touted the distribution of some 5 million registration forms in recent weeks, targeting Democratic-leaning voting blocs such as unmarried women, blacks, Latinos and young adults.

But residents and election administrators around the country also have reported a series of bizarre and questionable mailings addressed to animals, dead people, noncitizens and people already registered to vote.

Brenda Charlston wasn't the only person to get documents for her pet: A Virginia man said similar documents arrived for his dead dog, Mozart, while a woman in the state got forms for her cat.

"On a serious note, I think it's tampering with our voting system," Charlston said. "They're fishing for votes: That's how I view it."

Every presidential election cycle brings a variety of registration drives targeting people who typically are underrepresented at the polls, and Republicans have seized on sloppy or questionable

registrations as a sign of potential fraud on the part of Democrats.

It's an issue that is particularly sensitive this year. GOP political leaders have used fears of fraud to successfully push laws that could make voting more difficult by requiring voters to show identification. Democrats have fought the laws, arguing that they can disenfranchise citizens.

Julie Anderson, auditor in Pierce County, Wash., estimates that about two dozen residents have contacted the county about registration forms for dead relatives.

Senior Progress Center

Monday there will be a Skip Bo game to enjoy with friends at the Senior Progress Center.

Activities for the week: **Monday:** 10:30 a.m. Skip Bo game. **Tuesday:** 10 a.m. exercise; 10:30 a.m. domino game. **Wednesday:** cookie day. **Thursday:** 10 a.m. exercise; 10:30 a.m. pinochle game. **Friday:** 10 a.m. exercise; 10:30 a.m. Wii game.

Menus for the week: **Monday:** meat loaf, mashed potatoes, gravy, country-style tomatoes, mixed fruit. **Tuesday:** barbecue pork sandwich, tater triangles, macaroni salad with vegetables, cantaloupe. **Wednesday:** lasagna, corn, gelatin with carrots and crushed pineapple, garlic bread, pudding. **Thursday:** hamburger steak, mushroom gravy, winter mix vegetables, peaches, birthday cake. **Friday:** chef salad, citrus slices,

cafe crackers, cook's choice complement.

The Thomas County Nutrition Center invites anyone 60 and older to lunch Monday through Friday at the senior center. Home delivery is available. A contribution of \$3 per meal is suggested for seniors, \$5.25 for others.

Make reservations at (785) 460-2901 by noon the day before.

Red Barn

Thursday and Friday are city-wide cleanup days in Rexford.

Activities: **Monday:** 2 p.m. Barnswallows. **Wednesday:** 10 a.m. ladies' Bible study. **Thursday:** 2 p.m. "Come On Down;" 6:30 p.m. spuds 'n splits. **Friday:** 9:30 a.m. Koffee Klatch; 2:30 p.m. Stitch & Chatter."

Reward offered for dino

MISSOULA, Mont. (AP) - The folks at Hi-Noon Petroleum in Montana have a new way to turn a dinosaur into gasoline.

They're offering a \$250 gas card for information leading to the safe return of Dino, a 12-foot-long fiberglass Sinclair dinosaur that disappeared June 21 from the Crossroads Travel Center west of Missoula.

"We just wonder what happened to him," Hi-Noon marketing manager Earl Allen said Friday. "It's a little odd for him to just walk away."

The 6-foot tall green dinosaur sat on a hill overlooking Interstate 90 for at least five years, Allen

said, with occasional appearances in University of Montana Homecoming parades.

"That was his home for a number of years," Allen said.

Allen said taking the prehistoric icon would have been a bit of a project.

"It's not like you can just throw him in the back of a pickup," he said.

Anyone with information on Dino's whereabouts is asked to call Hi-Noon.

Public Notice

NOTICE OF HEARING ON ADOPTION OF NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PLAN FOR SUMMERS TOWNSHIP

You are hereby advised pursuant to the provisions of KSA 12-17, 117, a public hearing will be held at 1267 Hwy 25, Colby, Thomas County, Kansas, on the 19th day of July, 2012 at 8:00 o'clock a.m. to consider whether SUMMERS Township, Thomas County, Kansas, should adopt a "Neighborhood Revitalization Plan" for all of the area and territory lying within the corporate limits of such township in Thomas County, Kansas.

The proposed Revitalization Plan is available for public review and consideration at the office of Thomas County Economic Development Alliance, 350 S. Range, Ste. 12, Colby Kansas during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

SUMMERS TOWNSHIP
THOMAS COUNTY, KANSAS

BY: Trustee - Craig Reed
ATTEST:
Clerk of SUMMERS TOWNSHIP

(Published in the Colby Free Press on Friday, July 6, 13, 2012)

Public Notice

The Governing Body of

Brewster Recreation Commission

will meet on July 23, 2012 at 7:00 p.m. at 202 Third Street, Brewster, KS for the purpose of hearing and answering objections of taxpayers relating to the proposed use of funds.

Detail budget information is available at Brewster USD 314 and will be available at this meeting.

BUDGET SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURES

The Proposed Budget Expenditures (below) are the maximum expenditure limits for the budget year.

Fund	Prior Year Actual 2010/2011	Current Year Estimated 2011/2012	Proposed Budget Year 2012-2013
General	17,315	20,400	29,886
Totals	17,315	20,400	29,886

Lease Purchases:	2010	2011	2012
July 1,	0	0	0

Wayne Luckert
Recreation Commission Secretary

(Published in the Colby Free Press on Friday, July 13, 2012)

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