

Branching Out

2001

AT SHADY LANE

OUR PHILOSOPHY

IS TO TREAT

NATURE WITH

A RESPECTFUL

AND HOLISTIC

APPROACH. OUR

COMMITMENT

TO YOU IS TO

PROVIDE

KNOWLEDGEABLE,

THOROUGH AND

PROFESSIONAL

SERVICE.

As I take pen to paper, my heart tells me that spring is just around the corner although my senses disagree; the snow refuses to melt. I have returned from my annual trek to a southern island; this brief interlude from reality is a necessary reprieve for the body and soul to re-unite. I look forward to the arrival of my favourite season.

In February, our employees attended the International Society of Arboriculture Education conference in Muskoka. There were numerous seminars ranging from recent advances in safety regulations to tree biology. We also had the opportunity to share knowledge and friendship with other arborists. Mark Graves received a Special Achievement Award for his work and dedication as Chair of the ISA Canadian Research Trust Fund which supports tree research. His involvement emphasizes the benefit of tree research for the

community at large.

A recent Ontario Shade Tree Council Seminar focused on the movement across Canada for the reduction in the use of pesticides in the management of the urban forest. The city of Toronto presented their vision on the reduction of pesticide dependence. This strategy follows from the bylaws passed in Halifax and Ottawa where toxic chemical reduction has been initiated. It appears that we may be returning to the century-old practice of non-chemical intervention. I feel certain that native plant material will play a larger role in the urban landscape as these plants are less susceptible to insect and disease.

In view of this movement, it is apparent that Plant Health Care will become the most important aspect in the management of your garden.



Shady Lane Expert Tree Care has developed a Plant Monitor Program utilizing environmentally sensitive strategies for the urban landscape. I encourage you to remain proactive vs. reactive in your approach to gardening.

Sincerely,

Lewis Arnold

Lewis Arnold
President

TREE CARE ART



The birds are frantically building nests for their young, squirrels and chipmunks are bouncing along the tree branches. Butterflies flit across the garden wall and brightly coloured crocuses and tulips have found their way through the snow. Your garden is alive with the sights, sounds and smell of spring!

It's difficult to put a price tag on the pleasure of a healthy, well-kept garden. As you enter your garden for the first time this spring, you are certain to notice areas that require attention. The attention you give now will pay dividends throughout the entire season as your trees provide shade in the summer and a plenitude of autumn colours.

Maintaining beautiful trees and shrubs in the urban forest is a necessary process. Pruning is an essential aspect of plant health care that can be done at any time of the year. In the past, it was believed that some species (maple, birch, walnut) were harmed if pruned when the sap is flowing. Current research indicates that "bleeding" does not harm a tree; however, the appearance of the sap on the tree trunk can be unsightly.

One of the most important times to prune a tree is when it is young, about two years

after it has been planted. At this time, a tree is pruned to set the structure for future growth; deadwood and crossing limbs are removed. This will enable the tree to grow and reach maturity safely and beautifully. The continual process of pruning as the tree matures allows the proper structure to be maintained.

Proper pruning is a tree health treatment. The removal of dead or dying branches discourages the



spread of decay or insect infestations. Crown thinning is the selective removal of branches to increase light penetration onto the ground below for grass and other vegetation. It is an effective way of increasing air flow which leaves a tree less susceptible to insect and disease.

Conversely, improper pruning is unsightly and leaves a tree weakened. Topping trees causes shock, weak limb structure, rapid new growth and starvation from the loss of leaves. Another harmful practice is "lion's tailing"; this is the removal of branches on the inside of the tree only which leaves all new growth at the branch ends. The weight is distributed unevenly with the result that the tree is left susceptible to breakage and wind. Proper pruning improves the appearance of a tree; in fact, a tree properly pruned may not look like it has been pruned at all.

The trees and shrubs in your garden reflect your caring attitude and their maintenance exemplifies this point. When pruning is scheduled regularly and trees are pruned properly, safety will be maintained and the tree revitalized.



SHADY LANE EXPERT TREE CARE IS COMMITTED TO PROVIDING ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY, HIGH QUALITY TREE CARE TO THE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE - OUR CLIENTS!

The negative effects of pesticides on the environment and human health has been gaining increasing attention in the media. The concern is based on the perception that the use of pesticides is increasing steadily. The Ontario College of Family Physicians states that Canadian children face 'undeniable risks' from exposure to pesticides. Community groups have become active in promoting "natural gardening" without the use of pesticides. It is our opinion that pesticides will play a decreasing role in the care of your garden.

The term pesticide is confusing in its definition and role in the urban forest. A strict definition is listed in the Pesticides Act, but basically a pesticide is any product that destroys a pest or plant life. This umbrella term includes insecticide, herbicide and fungicide and may be applied to a wide range of household products. Several Canadian cities have already taken initiative to lessen the use of pesticides on municipal and private lands. The City of Ottawa has banned the use of herbicides in parks and has reduced its pesticide applications by over 95%. The City of Halifax passed a bylaw banning the use of pesticides around public areas. Furthermore, the bylaw severely regulates the use of pesticides on private property.

However, Halifax has approved the use of a number of products in the pesticide by-law: soaps, oils, pheromone traps, BT, biological control organisms, tree injections, sticky media, etc. We take pride that we have been using these products in our Plant Health Care Program for over a decade.

It is obvious from these recent policies that human health takes precedence over plant aesthetics.

In the late 1980s, Shady



Lane Expert Tree Care initiated a Plant Monitor Program (PM) to implement a less toxic method for managing insects and diseases. **Plant Monitor is a proactive approach that acknowledges client concerns but also recognizes the needs and requirements of the trees and shrubs on the property.** As part of the Plant Health Care (PHC) program the focus is directed to the growing environment of the plant. The major components of PHC include soil management, fertilization, aeration, soil analysis, monitoring of moisture level, and mulching. Pruning and cabling are also an integral part.

Over the years, we have lessened our use of pesticides through the management strategies employed in the

PHC program. By emphasizing preventive care, frequent inspections, early detection of problems, and informed decisions, dependency on toxic products has been decreased. One of the key factors is to balance the homeowner's aesthetic expectations with the plant material's damage thresholds. What may be a grave concern to a client may not be stressful to a plant.

Pesticide use is often based on a question of tolerance to the insect, weed or disease. Living with a few blemishes or rolled leaves may not be worth the introduction of a pesticide onto your property.

It must be understood that every insect is not a pest and not every pest requires treatment. Our Plant Monitor technicians consider all the PHC strategies available before deciding on a preferred treatment. If suppressing a pest is necessary, then a range of environmentally sensitive treatments can be considered: hand picking, spot spraying using the least toxic substance, insect traps, tree injections, sticky media, etc. For homeowners who prefer a further reduction in pesticides, Shady Lane can design a program tailored to your expectations. A certified arborist from Shady Lane Expert Tree Care can provide you with a Plant Health Care Program to meet your needs.

LESS IS BETTER



Q. What is the right time to plant a tree?

A. A sign in our office reads:

"The best time to plant a tree was ten years ago.
The second best time is today".

Q. Should I be concerned that my evergreen sheds needles?

A. All evergreens will shed their needles in the fall as a natural part of the aging process. The needles that are shed are from the interior or inside of the tree. If the loss occurs on the outer ends of the branches, then there is a problem and appropriate measures need to be taken. Common causes are: drought, winter injury, salt damage, insect and disease damage and herbicide damage. If you have a concern, call the office for a consultation.

Q. What non-toxic products can be used for insect control?

A. All products have the potential to be harmful, therefore non-toxic substances do not exist. The degree of toxicity ranges from high to low. Insecticidal soaps, horticultural oils and biological controls are deemed to be the least toxic and can be very effective if applied correctly and at the right time. A majority of commonly used pesticide products available to consumers are considered more toxic. A word of caution: organic does not mean non-toxic.

Q. How can I create a garden with little or no use of pesticides on the trees and shrubs?

A. Planting a diverse selection of native trees, shrubs and flowers will lessen if not eliminate the need for chemical applications. When selecting an ornamental plant, research the plant's resistance to insect and disease. Recycle all leaves and debris in the garden to return nutrients to the soil which will provide a richer growing environment. Add bird baths and feeders to attract birds which are natural predators of insects. Sit back and ENJOY!

STAFF PROFILE

Imagine going to work in a beautiful garden instead of a confined office. Love of trees and nature are two of the most significant reasons for becoming an arborist. But as you are aware, climbing trees can be a risky venture. It appears that arboriculture attracts outdoor adventurers as our staff enjoy sports like a snow boarding, ice fishing and golfing. A camping trip to Algonquin is completed with climbing large old trees. Setting and maintaining high standards for training and education is a priority at Shady Lane Expert Tree Care. This spring, Allan, Adam and Doug completed the Arborist Apprenticeship Tree Care Program at Humber College. Congratulations! Jonathan, Keith and Mike are finishing their first year and will return next year to graduate. Apprenticeship is a hands-on training program where individuals work during the spring, summer and fall months and take the formal classroom instruction during the winter months. The end result is a competent employee with a thorough knowledge of the arboricultural industry, working with a team of colleagues who put safety first. Completion of the apprenticeship program allows an individual to write the provincial and international exams to become a Certified Arborist which assures our clients that we are dedicated to provide staff who are qualified, proficient professionals.

Plant Health Care Update

In the spring of 2000, cankerworm infested significant areas throughout the Greater Toronto Area.

These insects caused severe defoliation on many mature deciduous trees, predominantly in the Oak stands.

One effective alternative to spraying is trunk banding. In some instances, it may be the only viable control option; for example, large mature trees whose crowns overlap numerous properties or whose height makes spray drift/chemical trespassing unmanageable. Banding destroys female wingless crawling insects like gypsy moth and cankerworm by interrupting their lifecycle and breeding habits.

With the impetus towards using alternative control methods in managing the urban forest, banding provides one example of effective cultural insect control methods used in our Plant Health Care Program.

Contact Heather or Judy in the office to arrange an appointment with a Certified Arborist to set up a Plant Health Care Program for your trees and shrubs.

Visit our website for further information on other biological and cultural methods.

www.shadylanetreecare.com

Plant A Tree for Earth Day

