

Tree/Shrub Problems May Be Weather Related

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The weather during the 80's has been unusual to say the least. Extreme cold early in the decade ... followed by floods, record heat and drought ... has returned with record lows this past winter to finish out the decade.

These extremes in weather have not been kind to our plantings. Many of the problems we have seen the last couple of summers are the result of the stresses the plants have been forced to endure.

Branches, injured by cold or by heat, become susceptible to fungus diseases that cause cankers and dieback. Since these diseases are slow to develop, this damage might not show up for a year or two. Euonymous, willow, mountain ash and tall hedge are often injured this way.

Plants suffering from drought stress, invite invasion by boring insects that infest trunks and limbs. Ash, crabapple, maple, and some pines seem to be attractive to these insects. Sawdust falling from holes in the bark and general decline of the plants are evidence of borer invasion.

Drought damage also leads to the canker disease that is so damaging to spruce trees. The cytospora fungus invades the bark of wilted branches by killing them one at a time. Trees eventually become so unsightly that they are detrimental instead of assets in the landscape.

Excess soil moisture is harmful too. Japanese Yews, maples, oaks and many flowering shrubs can't tolerate soggy soils. If planted in poorly drained areas, roots of these plants suffocate and the plants die. Once the problems begin, many of these weather damaged plants will continue to decline. The weather damage, followed by insects or diseases, results in additional stress, invasion by more secondary pests, and ultimately loss of the plants.

Prevention is the best way to avoid these troubles. Select plants that can stand our weather and soil conditions. Provide good drainage so roots don't drown. During droughty weather, provide a good soaking every two or three weeks. Wrap thin-barked trees to protect from winter damage. Control insects or diseases that damage leaves weakening the plants.

Once damage begins, spraying with insecticides or fungicides is largely ineffective in controlling stress related problems, Fizzell concludes.

"Springtime Treat"

Spring delights, the way to go,

As Winter wanes with the melting snow.

Anxiously We await Our Springtime Treat,

When All awaken from Winter's sleep.

Sleeping Beauties and Violets always amaze,

With colors that soften Winter's haze.

What a treat watching Spring implore,

With Heavenly magic, We so adore.

Born anew in Springtime's Fire,

To Awesome heights We can aspire.

Kenneth R. Zanzig

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Because space is limited, please call me as soon as possible to get a complete itinerary and a registration form. I will also be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Travel Experience Sue Reed, Travel Conslt.
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**From
one professional
to another...**

