

LETTERS

Catalpa caterpillars

In reference to Mr. Douglas J. Chapman's article on "The Forgotten Trees" which appeared in the November issue I would like to make the following comments.

I agree that the Catalpa (*Catalpa speciosa*) is a forgotten tree in the landscape but it can be quite interesting. However, I had never pictured it in a landscape plan.

Growing up in the South, I saw it quite frequently, mostly out in the county on farms just as a misplaced tree. However, the tree serves another purpose in an unusual way.

The Catalpa Sphinx moth caterpillar (*Ceratomia catalpae*) enjoys the green leaves during the early summer months. These creatures, I have been told make excellent fish bait for farm ponds, creeks and streams. Some people actually harvest them for sale. To my knowledge they do not attack anything else.

Anyone considering this tree for a place in the landscape should remember that they do have a disadvantage or maybe you could call it an advantage.

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Nursery research

The nursery industry shows its traditional positive response to overcome problems noted in the field. During the past several years, we have discussed tree types and cultivars used in the landscape to improve the quality of the landscape while reducing maintenance costs. Not only at Dow Gardens have we been evaluating trees with maintenance considerations but also the Ohio Research and Development Center; Lester Nichols, Penn State (crab apple varieties); new propagation techniques worked on at Rutgers; Bill Collins, Amfac Cole Nursery; and Frank Santamore of the National Arboriculture, to mention a few. The results of good communication between institutions, the nursery industry, arborists, and universities are appearing in the trade. Although space is limited, I would like to highlight three areas of cooperation and response. Further, I would like to stress that these are only examples—many others exist.

In 1979 we discussed "Results of Crab Apple Varieties Showing Resistance to Apple Scab and Fireblight in

Central Michigan." But even before our work, Dr. Lester Nichols at Penn State had been looking at a similar response for his area and L.C. Chadwick and E.M. Smith at Ohio State did a similar work for their area. The result is becoming evident. One of several specific examples I would like to mention is Frank Schmidt and Son Nursery, Boring, Oregon—recent offering of crab apple. (Note that the crab apples available, e.g. "Mary Potter," "Professor Sprenger," and "Snowdrift," to mention a few, are all varieties reported highly resistant to apple scab and/or fireblight.) Another example is Simpson Nursery, Vincennes, Indiana—development of disease resistant cultivars, e.g. "Centurian," "Indian Summer," and "Sentinel."

Graft incompatibility with Red Maple was first noted by Dr. Harold Davidson at Michigan State University. In the ensuing years, others noted graft problems with "Bloodgood" London Planetree, "Sovereign" Pin Oak, and "Autumn Purple" White Ash. It had been postulated that propagation by cuttage and/or tissue culture would eliminate this provenance-induced incompatibility, i.e. the grafted varieties native to one part of the country grafted on a seedling root stock native to a different area, with the result—incompatibility or, to quote Dr. Davidson, "incongeniality." The first reported propagation of *Acer rubrum* cultivars by cuttage was by Orton at Rutgers in 1978 at I.P.P.S. I reported research from Dow Gardens on "Propagation of *Acer campestre*, *A. platanoides*, *A. rubrum*, and *A. ginnala* by Cuttings" in 1979 at I.P.P.S. Further, in 1981, reports at the International Plant Propagators Annual Meeting included a paper given by Joerg Leiss, Sheridan Nurseries, Ontario, discussing, "Propagation of *Syringa reticulata* by Cuttage," and work by Chapman and Hoover on "Propagation of Shade Trees by Softwood Cuttings." It is exciting to now see cultivars of *Acer rubrum* propagated by cuttage being offered by some nurseries, e.g. William Moller of Gresham, Oregon.

Provenance is a key consideration that must be part of introducing new cultivars. It is particularly important that regional cultivars be introduced. Several examples of nurseries offering regional cultivars are Weston Nurseries, Hopkinton, Massachusetts and Frank Schmidt and Son Nursery of Oregon. These nurseries are trying to

either develop and/or propagate locally-adapted cultivars for their region (Weston—*Pinus rigida* "Sherman Eddy," *P. strobus* "White Mountain," and *Chamaecyparis thyoides* "Hopkinton"), or using cultivars developed by other institutions, e.g. the University of Minnesota—"Northwood's variety of *Acer rubrum*, being offered by Frank Schmidt and Son Nursery. Responses of this type by the nursery industry show clearly the desire of many plantmen to offer for sale the highest quality of plant material available. Finally, if a problem is noted, develop a positive response which results in a more beautiful-healthy landscape.

Douglas Chapman
Horticulturist, Dow Gardens

Gypsy moth wind-down

I read with interest the article entitled "Gypsy Moth Invasion Runs Arborists Ragged" in the September, 1981 issue of *Weeds Trees & Turf*. I thought it presented an excellent representation of the situation as it is.

It occurred to me that a follow-up article that might be of interest to your readers in the near future could deal with preparing arborists to wind down from gypsy moth problems. Many of us who were in the business in the 40s and 50s (when previous outbreaks of gypsy moth placed a severe burden on our companies) know how important it was for us to learn how to shift gears quickly when the problem began to dissipate; and to find other uses for our equipment in order to receive a reasonable return on our capital investment.

Some unique situations have developed in the past few years that are different from some of the problems we faced in past years. In the old days, many of us could shift into the area of Dutch Elm disease control using DDT with our equipment. This is no longer possible. Spray personnel with certain characteristics making them eminently suitable for work in the spray department but not for other work in the arborist field have to be handled in a manner that maintains production. There are many points that could be covered that would assist arborists in shifting into a more realistic concept of insect control for the future.

I hope you agree with me and that such an article will be published when time permits.

Henry F. Davis Lowden, Inc.