

# ASK THE EXPERT

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## Plants to transplant in spring and fall

**Problem:** Which landscape plants transplant easily in the spring and fall? Is there an ideal season for transplanting? (Michigan)

**Solution:** The following information should be helpful. However, many landscapers may perform their landscaping in the fall as it may fit their work schedule. Generally, we may be better off to plant in the spring in the northern U.S. Fall transplanted plants may be more susceptible to low temperature injury.

Woody plant	Ease <sup>1</sup>	Season <sup>2</sup>
Fir.....	1-2	Early spring
Maple.....	1-2	
Buckeye, horsechestnut.....	2	
Alder.....	1	
Downy shadblow.....	2-3	
Birch.....	2-3	Early spring
Am. hornbeam.....	4	Early spring
Hickory, pecan.....	3-4	Early spring
Catalpa.....	1	
Hackberry.....	1	
Katsura-tree.....	2	
American redbud.....	2	
Fringetree.....	2	Early spring
American yellowwood.....	2	Early spring
Flowering dogwood.....	3	Early spring
Hawthorn.....	1-2	
Russian Olive.....	2	
Beech.....	2-3	Early spring
Ash.....	2	
Ginkgo.....	2	Early spring
Common honeylocust.....	1	
Kentucky coffeetree.....	2	
American holly.....	2-3	Early spring
Walnut, butternut.....	3-4	Early spring
Goldenraintree.....	2	Early spring
Laburnum.....	2	Early spring
Larch.....	2	Early spring
American sweetgum.....	2-3	Early spring
Tuliptree.....	2	Early spring
Osage orange.....	1-2	
Magnolia.....	3	Early spring
Apple, crabapple.....	1-2	
Tupelo, black gum.....	3-4	Early spring
American hophornbeam.....	4	Early spring
Sourwood.....	2-3	Early spring
Corktree.....	1	
Spruce.....	1-2	
Pine.....	1-2	
Planetree, sycamore.....	1	
Poplar.....	1	Early spring
Cherry, plum.....	2-3	Early spring
Golden larch.....	2	Early spring
Callery pear.....	1	
Common pear.....	1	
White oak.....	3-4	Early spring
Scarlet oak.....	2	Early spring
Shingle oak.....	2	Early spring
Pin oak.....	1	
Sumac.....	1	
Willow.....	1	Early spring

1 Rated according to ability to regenerate new root system and tolerance to stress following transplant. 1= transplants most readily; 4= most difficult to transplant.

2 Early spring signifies both early spring or late winter before growth starts. No season listed indicates plant can be transplanted with care almost any time.

Source: E.B. Himelick, *Tree and Shrub Transplanting manual*, ISA, 1991

## Managing fire ants

**Problem:** What's the best way to manage fire ants? (Texas)

**Solution:** The queen must be eliminated before the colony dies.

The entire colony communicates through the passing of chemicals in food. Foraging ants—10-20 percent of the total colony, can only ingest liquid food. The foragers pick up "baits" and bring them to young larval ants that digest the solids to liquids for the forager/worker ants and the queen. Proteins secreted by the larvae stimulate egg production from the queen. Thus, fast-acting poisons kill the foragers, protecting the ants and queen inside the mound. Solid toxic foods are fed directly to the larvae, killing them and thus reducing their effect on the queen.

Quick-killing materials such as Dursban will only reduce the visible worker population until the queen can produce more workers. Unfortunately, this visible reduction pleases clients but will not eliminate the colony.

The best strategy for control is a broadcast bait treatment followed within three to seven days with a mound treatment. Spring and fall are the best times for this approach. The colonies actually migrate upward and downward (two to six feet) in the soil, depending on moisture and heat. The ants are closer to the surface right after a rain and during the cooler parts of the day. Do not disturb the mound when treating, as this signals the workers to relocate the queen and other ants.

You can use products such as Dursban, Orthene, Amdro or Award. Reports indicate that, if used properly, Amdro and Award will provide long-lasting results. Both these products are slow-acting, bait-containing materials. This is why it takes one to four weeks with Amdro and three to five weeks with Award baits.

(\*ED. NOTE: refer to the February, 1993 LM for more on fire ant control.)

## Controlling golden oak scale

**Problem:** How can we manage golden oak scale? (Ontario, Canada)

**Solution:** Use horticultural oil as a dormant treatment in the spring. Oil will suffocate and kill the egg mass. Insecticides such as Sevin, Orthene or Dursban can be used later against crawlers. The crawler emergence may vary from region to region. In a normal year in northeast Ohio, we treat crawlers around mid-May.

Try looking for these from mid-May to the end of May. If the crawlers are found, begin your treatments. Provide two to three more treatments about 10 days apart. This approach should help manage the golden oak scale problem on oaks.

In addition, consider providing proper fertilizing and watering as needed to help improve plant health.

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**Mail questions to "Ask the Expert," LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT, 7500 Old Oak Blvd., Cleveland, OH 44130. Please allow two to three months for an answer to appear in the magazine.**