Seasonal Report

$5.00

WACHTEL TREE SCIENCE INC.

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Planting for the Birds

by Matthew Siesco, ISA Certified Arborist WI-0959A

One of the many benefits of the home landscape is the diverse wildlife it attracts. Over many conversations with clients, birds are the most popular visitor to their landscapes. With proper planning, it's possible to create an inviting environment not only for the birds, but for the ecosystem that supports and attracts them.

Just like humans, birds will be drawn to the best food and the nicest house they can find. When planning to plant trees, we can consider which species will attract birds and offer a safe and inviting habitat to nest in.

When considering which trees provide attractive food for the birds, it's important to consider availability through all 4 seasons of the year. This is especially important in Winter when food sources are scarce. While tree fruit is the obvious attraction to birds, the insects that trees attract also play a major role in their diet, especially when no fruit is available.

Examples of bird-friendly plantings are serviceberry for summer fruit, silky dogwoods for autumn/winter, crabapples for their over-wintering apples, and bur oaks which support insect/arachnid populations and provide edible fruit throughout the year.

If a bird is satisfied with the food source in a landscape, it may decide to nest there as well. Safety and comfort play a role in their likelihood to stay around. Dense evergreens such as Junipers or Spruce make excellent bird habitat that offer protection from predators like hawks plus provide a year-round food source. Birds also love deciduous trees with a dense canopy for protection like musclewood, blackhaw viburnums, or hawthorns.

Matching plant size to a planting location is key once you've found the right tree. Whether you like birdwatching indoors or out, trees should ideally be placed where you can view them without disturbing or scaring birds away. If you have a favorite bird feeder location already, you can consider planting a deciduous tree nearby for the birds to rest and hide between flights to the feeder. Adding a water feature nearby will help fulfill all their basic survival needs and keep them coming back. Some species to consider for a bird rest stop are swamp white oak, ironwood, or Miyabe maple.

Creating your own wildlife sanctuary is a rewarding experience with the proper planning. Contact your Wachtel Tree Science ISA Certified Arborist to assess your yard to create an ideal plan for attracting birds into your yard year-round.



Photo: Paul Scharfenberger

Cedar waxwing amongst crabapples

ACCREDITED TREE CARE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION ETHICS QUALITY CONFIDENCE

WI-002

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How Often Should Trees Be Pruned?

by Keith Glaznap, ISA Certified Arborist WI-0678A

The phrase, 'early and often', is one that we have all heard and it can be applied to many things. It turns out that it can, and should, be applied to pruning your trees.

As homeowners, my wife and I knew when we purchased our home that regular maintenance would be necessary to help reduce the chance of larger issues developing over time. For example, we must periodically paint our wood trim to keep the wood from being exposed to moisture, thus reducing costly maintenance or replacement needs in the future.

Regarding trees, it is also important to perform regular maintenance on them. Pruning trees on a consistent cycle can help avoid irreversible defects in structure or tree failure over time.

Given that tree structure and growth rates differ from one species to another, the type and frequency of pruning required will be different from tree to tree. **As an example, Autumn Blaze maple is a popular fast-growing species. It perfectly fits the home maintenance analogy above. If it is pruned every couple of years, the risk of tree failure in the future can be dramatically reduced.** On the other hand, if the tree is never pruned, it could experience multiple branch failures throughout its life or even split completely in half at some point. Complete failures are becoming more common with unpruned Autumn Blaze maples as they mature in the landscape.



You can gain lifelong advantages when pruning young shade trees.

Age also has an impact on how often a given tree needs to be pruned. Young trees, even newly planted trees, may need to be pruned once every two or three years. The pruning would likely be light and focus more on correcting structural issues. Middle-aged trees might need pruning once every five years. Finally, fully mature trees might only need pruning once every five to ten years, with the primary focus being dead limbs.

If you are someone who has not had your trees pruned before, all is not lost. It's true that you may not be able to eliminate every structural issue present in trees that have been growing in your yard for several years. That said, you can at least identify any issues and begin working to improve the structure from that point. Cables and braces may also be installed in certain situations to help further reduce the risk of tree failure by adding support to weak trunk unions or overextended limbs.

Our Certified Arborists are well-equipped to understand the pruning needs of your trees regardless of their species or age. If you think that your trees may be due for pruning contact your **Wachtel Tree Science Certified Arborist** for an assessment today!

One Gall, Two Gall, Red Gall, Blue Gall

by Luke Volbrecht, ISA Certified Arborist WI-1112A

Like something out of a children's story book, galls come in many different shapes and sizes. Galls are also a common type of damage affecting tree leaves, needles, and/or twigs. Their size and shape can range from pointy to round and small or large. The color of a gall can be a simple brown, a bright red, or even blue. This leaf damage can be quite visible and easy to search for too!

Galls are often caused by very tiny mites, psyllids, or wasps, often less than a few millimeters in size. Damage by mites or other insects occurs very early in spring, just as a young leaf or twig is developing. As the tissue continues to grow and expand, the gall also grows, and the affected areas can develop small bumps or larger, round, ball-like structures throughout the growing season. For some galls, the abnormal growth is a reaction to feeding damage, much like scar tissue. In other cases, the insect lays an egg between the leaf surfaces and a gall will form to become a home for that insect's next generation. Despite the creepy-crawly feeling this may create, **most galls are nearly harmless to a tree's health.** Treatments are often not needed, and the galls are primarily a cosmetic issue.



Hackberry galls

One exception to this is the damage from **spruce gall adelgids.** The spikey cone-like structures that form are found on spruce trees. When populations of this insect build-up, they can quickly disfigure the spruce's appearance and reduce the aesthetic value of that tree. Treatments are available to help deter spruce gall adelgid feeding.

If you find galls on your trees, do not fret! First, take a picture or two of the leaf/twig and gall, then contact your Wachtel Tree Science Certified Arborist to review and provide recommendations if needed. The pictures can sometimes help allow for a quick digital diagnosis and recommendation. Pictures can also be very helpful during late season identification as well. Good luck hunting for galls over summer and fall!

Being Your Tree's Advocate

by Maria Panasuk, ISA Certified Arborist WI-1479A

Nature cannot speak for or represent itself, so it becomes our duty to support them to the best of our ability. Your tree's representation starts with you! You can best advocate for your tree by knowing a few basics about them.

To begin, you can gather a lot of information by knowing the *family* and *genus* of your tree. Understanding if it is a maple, ash, oak or hickory is important! This knowledge is instrumental in knowing what insect or disease issues the tree may encounter. The tree type influences the growth form, fall color, timing of leaf out, sunlight needs, and more! Being aware of what a healthy version of your tree should look like will tip you off to anything unusual going on with yours. Certain *families* of trees are more likely to have structural or root problems. For example, any tree, if improperly planted, can develop girdling roots. However, maples and lindens tend to develop girdling roots more often, even if properly planted. Knowing that your tree is predisposed to a problem like this, you can keep an eye on the root flare and spot a potential issue before it becomes irreversible.



Healthy ash tree that has been cared for by proactive homeowners

Learning the species of tree you have can lead you to a better understanding of potential health issues. For example, the rapid growth of an Autumn Blaze maple will need more frequent pruning to avoid structural defects that can lead to branch failure in the future. It is important that these trees be pruned every 2 to 3 years to avoid those defects as much as possible. Other maple species do not require this much attention and should be pruned every 3 to 5 years instead.

With conifers like spruces, knowing the species is especially important. A blue spruce is far more susceptible to a variety of diseases that need consistent treatment, whereas Serbian spruce or Black Hills spruce are more resistant to the needle diseases and often perform well without treatment.

Being your tree's advocate also comes into play during times of drought or extreme heat. It is especially important to keep a close eye on your trees and support them with proper mulching and watering to ensure they stay healthy in times of stress. Younger, less established trees will require more care during dry, hot seasons.

Trees are complex! And with so many varieties, it's difficult to be an expert. By utilizing their passion and our experience, we can protect

Empowering Future Arborists of a Growing Green Movement

by Ben Reince, ISA Certified Arborist WI-0610A

Our world faces big environmental challenges, and that's why focusing on a greener future is so important. We arborists are like nature's protectors, taking care of trees. We understand the significance of hiring and cultivating the next generation of arborists, including interns. Together, we want to make our world more beautiful and sustainable for the years to come.

At Wachtel Tree Science, we believe in helping people grow their passion. Our internship programs give hands-on experience and a strong connection to nature. Interns work alongside experienced arborists, learning about tree care, to protect the environment through science-based tree care.

Our experienced arborists are like teachers, passing down their knowledge to interns. Despite having experience, we are always learning and innovating our practices. Our interns bring fresh ideas and new ways of thinking to help us find better solutions to protect your trees.



Past and present Wachtel Tree Science summer interns

Interns become ambassadors for the environment, spreading the word about taking care of nature. Their passion becomes contagious and inspires others to learn and care for their own trees or the trees in their communities.

Interns get to see firsthand how trees can withstand challenges and keep growing. Seeing how trees fight off challenges, such as disease, insects, and nature, they also become familiar with just about every aspect of commercial tree care which will help them find their path within the green industry. We give our interns a wide range of responsibilities during the summer to ensure they gain the best possible experience, which they can proudly share with their fellow students when they return to school.

At Wachtel Tree Science, we know our interns to make a difference. By utilizing their passion and our experience, we can protect your trees together to make our world a better place for everyone.

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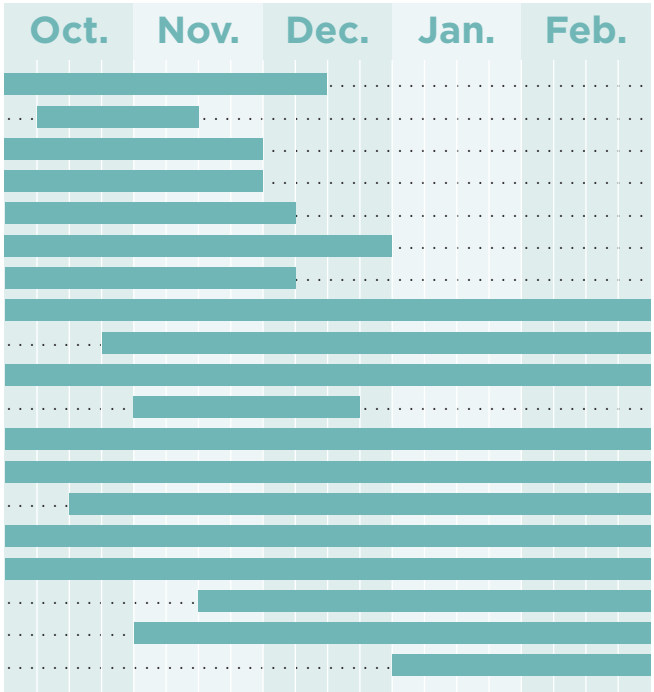
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2023 Fall & Winter



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