

# Cross Pollination



## Inside this issue:

*Eastern White Pine :  
Pinus strobus L.* 1

*Events* 2

*Com Grow with Us* 2

*Flowering Rosemary Any-  
one?* 3

*The Opportunist* 3

*Gardening with David* 4

*Pruning Chart* 5



## Eastern White Pine: *Pinus strobus L.*

### *AKA ‘The Scotsdale Pine’: excerpt by Sandy Gillians*

*Pinus strobus* L. is commonly known as Eastern White Pine but has many names including Cork Pine, Weymouth Pine, Soft Pine, Yellow Pine, Pumpkin Pine, and Tree of Peace. There is one particular specimen of *Pinus strobus*, an uncommon individual that I’m fond of, called the “Scotsdale Pine”.

The Scotsdale Pine is growing in a mixed hardwood forest 5 metres off the Bruce Trail (“Bennett Side Trail”), on an Ontario Heritage Trust property appropriately known as Scotsdale Farm. In summer, this veteran is easy to miss unless you happen to look up as it is encased by a dense stand of skinny deciduous sap-

lings making the tree invisible from the trail.

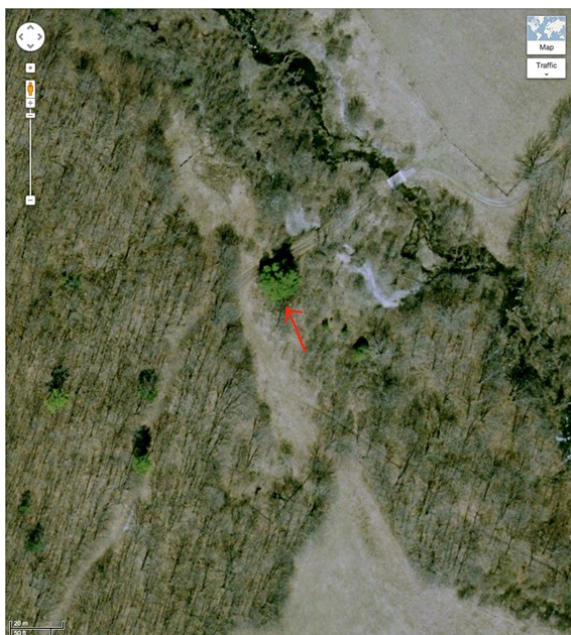
### *The Land of the Tall Pines: 1818 – 1877*

The property on which the Scotsdale Pine stands is located in Halton Region, in an area that was once known as the Township of Esquesing, which was purchased from the Mississauga Indians in 1818. The cleared land and the Scotsdale Pine’s location near a stream would have provided perfect conditions for a *Pinus strobus* seedling, one that thrives in full sun and prefers moist sandy loam. Early growth of *Pinus strobus* is slow, and it can take 5

years to reach 30cm; when the tree is 10 to 20 years old its growth takes off and then it can grow as much as 137cm a year.

### *Farms to Forests: 1650-1818*

This area had been populated with Iroquois villages and cleared for agriculture from about 1300AD. However, by the time the Royal Navy arrived in 1774 in search of ships masts and the land was sold to the British by the Mississauga Indians in 1818, there had been no permanent settlement here since at least the 1650s.



An aerial shot illustrates how big the Scotsdale Pine is compared to other trees in the area, including a few scattered specimens of *Pinus strobus* nearby.

## Events

### 1. Humber Arboretum

Open – Bugs & Blooms" and "Spring into the Arb" – Sat. May 25 – 10:00 am 3:00 pm

Tour: "Some Like it Hot" Wed. July 24 – 7:00 – 8:00 pm

205 Humber College Blvd, Toronto, Ontario

FREE Admission

Registrations via phone: 4166755009, or email

arboretum@humber.ca

### 2. Alaska Cruise

#### International MG Conference

Flowers, Fjords & Friends Sept 7—14, 2013

[Www.uaex.edu/imgc2013/](http://www.uaex.edu/imgc2013/)

### 2. Niagara Parks Botanical Gardens and School of Horticulture

MGOI Summer Workshops July 13 & 14

[http://www.mgoi.ca/Summer\\_Worshop.](http://www.mgoi.ca/Summer_Worshop.php)

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## *First Nations Agriculture: 1200AD – 1650AD*

There are three archaeological sites on Scotsdale Farm, all of them Iroquois villages dating back to the 1550s. These Iroquois-speaking First Nations people - the "Neutrals" - were farmers or at least their women were. Cultivation techniques involved clearing coarser-textured, well-drained soils for crops such as corn, tobacco, beans, and squash. After 8 to 12 years the soil would become depleted of nutrients, and the entire village would move to a new location. Villages could contain as many as 2000 individuals, and as many as 158,000 acres could be under cultivation throughout southern Ontario at one time.

When the Neutrals disappeared from the area of Scotsdale Farm due to small pox and warfare for regions, their deserted fields and villages would have reverted to a forest in which *Pinus strobus* L. was king.

## *A Walk Through Time*

If you ever have a chance to walk by the Scotsdale Pine on the Bennett Side Trail, take a moment to stop, look, and walk back through time with this tree. In 1840, when the Scotsdale Pine germinated and grew, it persisted through a frenzied period of logging; and 170 years later it stands in a protected place where it will watch and tell the story of the people who walk by for, we hope, another 330 years.

## *Come Grow With Us*

## *Canada's First Master Gardener Conference*

*By Linda Brentnall*

There may have been snow on the ground, at Deerhurst in April, but everything was Spring-like from the warm, sunny smiles of the MGs to the flower covered stage. We have a lot to be proud of after our first international conference. The speakers were enthusiastic, experienced and entertaining from the opening speech on Friday night by Paul Zammit, Director of Horticulture to Martin Galloway, host of Bugs: The Secret World of Gardens, to our very own Cathy Kavassalis giving her passionate talk on trees.

And the conference offered something for everyone, from multiple breakout sessions to a large and varied silent auction, to a judging competition on scarecrows, to a roaring fire with hot chocolate and marshmallows overlooking the lake on a crisp Spring night.

For those of you that would like to see what you missed, or look for yourself on film take a look at the video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkUfApHFSnU&feature=youtu.be>



# ***Flowering Rosemary Anyone?***

***By Karen Walsh***

Karen wanted to share pictures of her flowering Rosemary, which is quite spectacular. This particular plant is about 5 or 6 years old. It lives in the garden in summer and fall, and moves into the green house in winter. Obviously it quite likes it's winter retreat, as this is the first time it has bloomed.



Rosemary blooming in the green house in April, 2013.



## ***The Opportunist***

***A poem by Christine Says***

A heron swooped down for a snack,  
To my pond just out the back.  
It ate the goldfish every one,  
Then flew away from whence he'd come.

The water silent, empty too,  
Of fish with gold and silver hue.  
Now in the belly of the bird,  
Not to be seen or to be heard.

Come this spring restock with fish,  
But not to feed a tasty dish.  
To heron or his greedy mates,  
No fish of mine upon their plates.



## Gardening with David

By David Marshall

# Pruning

**PRUNING**, it's a perfectly normal word which strikes fear into the hearts of many otherwise rational gardeners, but it needn't be so.

A bonsai instructor once told me that bonsai was easy. You simply cut away, (i.e. prune) what is not bonsai, and what is left is bonsai. Pruning is similar. You just prune out what is dead, diseased, broken, in the wrong place, or weak and straggly, and you end up with a well pruned plant.

The problem is knowing what, where, when, and how to cut.

### You will need:

*Pruning Shears* (Secateurs if you are a Brit) The bypass type are better than the anvil type, which often do not give a clean cut when they start to wear. I suggest a normal size one plus a small one such as the Lee Valley pocket pruner (AB580 \$8.50) which you can keep with you as you walk around the garden.

*Loppers* for branches over half to three quarters of an inch. One with telescoping handles too if you have to reach high.

*Pruning saw* for the big stuff. The Japanese style with no tooth offset which cut on the pull stroke are best

Perhaps a *pole pruner* and a *pole saw* if you have to reach high.

### Why do we prune?

1. For safety: To remove dead or broken branches or to remove branches which interfere with the passage of people or vehicles, or which impede sight lines
2. For health: To control disease, reduce congestion, or to remove weak growth.

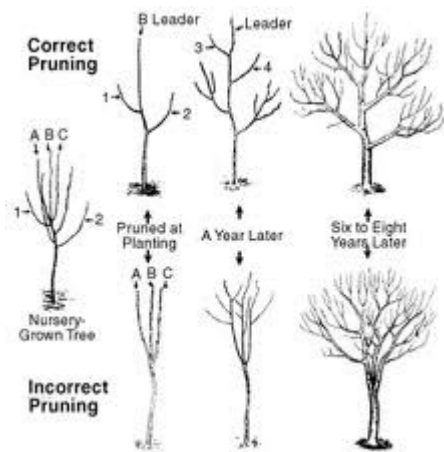
3. For appearance: To reduce size or change shape.

4. To encourage flowering or fruiting.

### When do we prune?

Often not at all, except for light maintenance pruning, but if you need to prune for any of the reasons above, it is usually done in the late dormant period, from late February to early April because the branch structure is visible and cuts will heal quickly.

But there are exceptions, mainly for flowering plants which bloom before the end of June. This means that the flower buds are already formed on wood which grew last year, and to prune now would cut them off. Some examples of early flowering plants are



Pruning Apple Trees

magnolias, weigelas, serviceberries (amelanchiers) rhododendrons, forsythias, flowering cherries and almonds, flowering dogwoods (cornus), and some fruit bushes. These are pruned immediately after flowering or fruiting so that they can spend the summer making new growth for next year.

Other flowering shrubs such as butterfly bush, rose of Sharon, roses, most spireas, hydrangeas and viburnums, which flower after June, are flowering on the current year's growth, and so are pruned before growth starts.

### What do we cut?

First remove any dead or broken branches and ones which are rubbing or pointing the wrong way. Then walk round the shrub and decide what size and shape you want it to be. Avoid just clipping with hedge shears, and remember that you cannot keep a naturally large shrub small indefinitely. If the shrub has been neglected and is overgrown, it may take two or three years to tame it. Don't try to do it all at once.

If it is a multi-stemmed shrub such as forsythia or mock orange, remove some of the oldest wood at the base to make room for new growth. Shorten overly long branches back to a side branch, and selectively remove some of the smaller branches to thin out the interior.

Trees and shrubs grown for fruit are a bit different. For maximum production they need pruning every year. What to cut depends on the age at which the wood bears fruit, and you should get a good book. My favourite is "*The Pruning Book*" by Lee Reich, \$21.95 at Lee Valley. You can find the most important points on the following page.

You shouldn't climb much above the ground to prune unless you are experienced, in which case you do not need my advice. Hire a professional if necessary. As some of you are aware, I know all about falling off ladders!

Happy pruning.

# David's Pruning Chart

## Tree :

## Timing:

## Notes:

Apples and Pears

Prune late Feb to early April

These mostly fruit on short, long lived spurs growing on the older branches. Keep the top of the tree low for easier picking and keep the centre thinned out. Branches growing vertically or downwards do not bear much fruit, so cut them out, and aim for branches growing up at 45 degrees. Shorten longer branches and cut out water sprouts growing vertically at the top of the tree.

Plums

Prune late Feb to early April

Most varieties are similar to apples. Look out for black knot which appears as a corky black growth on branches. Cut out the branch below the growth, and disinfect your tools with diluted bleach after each cut.

Apricots

These are susceptible to a number of bark diseases, so delay pruning until early April.

Fruit is borne on one to three year old wood, so maintain a balance if each, and prune enough old wood to stimulate new growth.

Peaches

These are also susceptible to bark diseases, so prune early April.

They fruit on one year old wood, which grows vigorously, so you will have to prune out a lot of twigs, and shorten others.

Cherries

Prune late Feb to early April

These require little pruning other than what is needed to keep the size down.

Blackberries and Raspberries

Prune late Feb to early April

These fruit on one year old canes which do not fruit again, so cut out the base canes which have fruited, to encourage new ones, which will fruit the next year. Pinch the tips of canes at four or five feet to encourage branching.

Everbearing raspberries will fruit at the top of canes in summer and lower down the canes in fall, so cut out the tops after they have fruited, and the lower parts later.

Currants

Prune after fruiting every 3 years

Red, black, and white varieties all fruit mostly on two and three year old wood, so prune out three year old wood after fruiting to encourage new wood to grow.