North Dakota State University Extension

Yard & Garden Report

August 20, 2018 Vol. 6, No. 7

The Toughest Tree in the West

The Wild West was a rough, tough place for **people—and trees!**

Who was the roughest, toughest **PERSON** of the Wild West? Maybe it was Hugh Glass. He was mauled by a grizzly bear and then buried alive by "friends." Hugh dug himself out of his grave and crawled 200 miles to seek revenge. Maybe it was John Hardin, a gunslinger who killed at least 27 men, including one for snoring. Was it outlaw Belle Starr or gunslinger Wild Bill Hickok? It's hard to say.

What's the roughest, toughest **TREE** of the Wild West? That's easy to say: the Russian-olive.

Take a drive through western North Dakota and you will see this small tree in ditches, pastures and windbreaks. It's everywhere.

Can it take the **cold**? Absolutely! It's native to frigid sites like the Russian steppes and Himalayas.

Can it take our **salty, alkaline soil**? Yes. Compared to other trees, it actually *thrives* in these soils.

Can it take **drought**? No worries. Russian-olive *prefers* dry conditions over wet conditions.

How **tough** is it? Very tough. Few pests will challenge it. Its branches are full of spines, and it makes an impenetrable hedge.

Is it **carefree**? Yes. It rarely needs watering and can make its own nitrogen from the air. Prune it to keep it compact and growing vigorously.

Russian-olive is a tough tree with spectacular silver foliage. Its bronze, spiny branches provide sanctuary for birds, and its fruits make delicious jelly.

Does it belong in a landscape? Sometimes. No other tree can match Russian-olive for its silvery foliage—it stands out as an accent plant. Russian-olive may be a good choice as a border, especially in harsh soils. As a bonus, its flowers are fragrant and its fruits make delicious jelly.

Inside This Issue

Grasshopper Outbreak

The hot, dry weather in recent weeks is leading to an outbreak of grasshoppers. The pests are congregating in brushy areas and will soon be attacking gardens.

The best time to control grasshoppers is when the insects are young. Focus initial sprays along the perimeter of the garden and in moist, brushy areas where they breed.

A few grasshoppers in the garden are not a big deal. For field crops, farmers do not profit when spraying grasshoppers until the pests reach a population of 21–40 per square yard along field margins and 8–14 in the field. That's a lot of hoppers!

Grasshoppers will nibble on onion stalks and tomato fruits.

Recommended insecticides include carbaryl and pyrethroids such as permethrin and cyfluthrin. Use maximum rates. The addition of canola oil to sprays can improve control by making the treated foliage more attractive to grasshoppers.

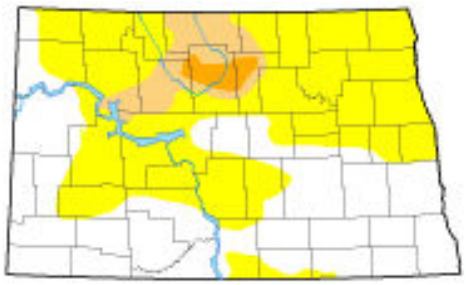
Direct applications onto the vegetables may be needed as the season progresses. Lettuce, carrot, bean, corn, and onion are their favorite vegetables. Grasshoppers are less attracted to squash. In raised beds, aluminum window screens can be used to shield plants from the pests.

Only use insecticides when needed. Most insects in your yard are beneficial and they can help to control grasshoppers naturally.

The Drought Returns

Growing conditions have taken a turn for the worse. Temperatures exceeding 100 degrees and spotty rains have created abnormally dry conditions in over half the state. Hardest hit areas are near Minot and Rugby.

Rainfed gardens have been devastated, young trees are scorched and lawns are dormant.



August 14, 2018

- Moderately dry *(crop growth slowed); 55% of state.*
- Moderate drought *(crop damage, voluntary water use restrictions); 8% of state.*
- Severe drought *(crop losses likely, water use restrictions); 2% of state.*
- Extreme drought *(major crop losses, widespread water use restrictions); 0% of state.*
- Exceptional drought *(widespread crop losses, water emergencies); 0% of state.*

Lack of rain has harmed many gardens. This corn grew less than 3 feet tall.

Plant Health Care

Vegetables

Poor Pollination

Dry weather or silk-destroying insects can reduce pollination and fertilization of kernels. Plant corn in groups of short rows instead of long individual rows to concentrate pollen within plot.

Harvesting Potatoes

Mature potatoes are harvested when leaves dry and die. Use a spading fork and avoid bruising the tubers. Cure for 2 weeks at 45–60°F. Brush off soil (don't wash) and store in a cool (40–45°F), moist (90% RH), dark location.

Harvesting Onions

Harvest when tops have fallen over and shriveled. Keep in the garden for a couple days to dry. Shake off loose dirt and cure bulbs in a warm (80°F), airy spot until necks are withered (2–4 weeks). Store in a cool, dry place.

Colorado Potato Beetle

Beetles attack the potato family, including eggplant, pepper and tomato. Pick and throw in pail of soapy water. Spinosad, neem or pyrethroid sprays are most effective when pests are young.

Cercospora on Beet

Tan spots with burgundy halos appear on leaves. Avoid overhead watering. Remove crop debris in fall. Do not plant beets, spinach or chard in this spot next spring.

Black Nightshade

Solanum nigrum berries are toxic, especially when immature and green. Flowers are small, white and resemble pepper flowers. Its fruits turn black. Never eat mysterious fruits.

Flea Beetle

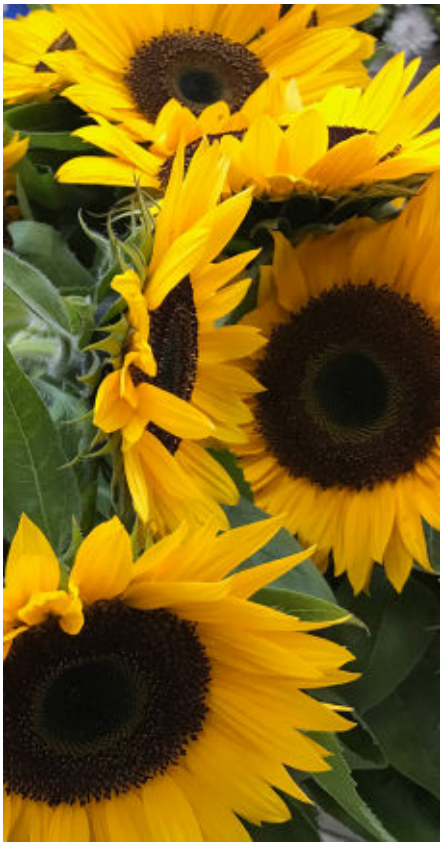
Tiny (1/8-inch) pests create shotholes in radish, kale and mustards. Young seedlings are very sensitive. Consider spraying pyrethrin, neem, soap or carbaryl if 10–30% defoliation.

Sap Beetle

Found on corn ear tips, tomatoes, melons and overripe fruits. Harvest regularly. Do not discard fruits on soil. Spray only at last resort; use a chemical with brief residual (pyrethrin, neem).

Plant Health Care

Flowers



Harvesting Annuals

Cut in morning after dew dries. Place in a pail of water or shallow basket. Keep clean. Once indoors, put in a container of water. Make final cuts. Keep cool.

Trees and Shrubs

Wooly Apple Aphid

Cottony masses suck sap out of roots and branches. Attacks apple, pear, cotoneaster, mountainash and relatives. Knock down with jet sprays of water. Insecticides are rarely needed; systemics (acephate, imidacloprid) work best.

Canker on Chokecherry

This deeply embedded pocket of fungus will stop the flow of water and nutrients, causing branches to die back. Prune out, going at least 6–8 inches below the discolored area. Cankers on trunks often lead to tree removal.

Cedar Apple Rust

Rust comes from junipers. In March, prune apples to increase air movement in canopy. Apply fungicides every 10–14 days; begin when blooms show pink and continue for 30 days after petal fall.

Pause on Fertilizing

Stop fertilizing trees and shrubs, including roses. We do not want to stimulate new growth, which will be succulent and subject to injury over winter. Allow plants to harden off.

Lawns

Crabgrass

Thrives in hot sites. Note its finger-like seed stalks. Dies from frost. Prevent seedlings from emerging next year by using fertilizer with "crabgrass control" (usually pendimethalin) herbicide.

Sow Grass Seed

Now through mid-September is the best time to overseed. The ground is warm and seed germinates quickly. Rake soil and scatter seed. Rake to cover seed. Keep moist for 3 weeks.

Rust

Caused by infertile soil and overnight dews. Fertilize and irrigate (irrigate mornings only). Collect clippings if feasible. Fungicides are rarely needed. Goes away in 2–3 weeks.

Weather Almanac for August 12–18, 2018

	TEMPERATURE[1] August 12– 18				RAINFALL[1,4] Aug 12–18		2018		GROWING DEGREE DAYS[1,5] Aug 12–18		2018	
Site	Avg	Norm	Max	Min	Total	Norm	Total	Norm	Total	Norm	Total	Norm
Bottineau	68	68	103	39	0.01	0.45	8.14	11.05	96	107	1742	1575
Bowman	70	69	103	47	0.17	0.23	9.87	9.64	107	118	1686	1611
Carrington	69	69	100	44	0.01	0.52	8.63	12.43	103	112	1881	1704
Crosby	71	67	105	43	0.00	0.34	7.50	9.71	110	101	1743	1452
Dickinson	73	69	104	50	0.10	0.35	9.79	10.80	118	112	1839	1596
Fargo	73	70	93	50	0.23	0.54	10.79	12.19	124	119	2136	1830
Grafton	70	67	97	45	0.00	0.70	10.13	11.90	107	103	1856	1585
Grand Forks	68	68	92	42	0.02	0.68	10.57	11.98	104	107	1949	1632
Hazen	70	71	105	44	0.00	0.39	6.60	10.93	105	122	1811	1759
Hillsboro	69	69	93	42	0.00	0.54	9.03	12.42	105	115	1947	1729
Jamestown	68	69	95	44	0.00	0.44	13.12	11.70	99	112	1837	1698
Langdon	68	65	99	45	0.00	0.58	7.35	12.35	96	91	1663	1356
Mandan	71	69	102	48	1.70	0.49	11.74	11.76	110	117	1923	1691
Minot	72	68	103	43	0.00	0.46	7.12	11.05	116	107	1854	1547
Mott	72	70	104	49	0.00	0.37	7.96	10.18	112	117	1801	1667
Rugby	70	67	102	41	0.00	0.47	8.29	12.32	106	104	1797	1574
Wahpeton	71	71	95	50	0.73	0.55	11.61	12.67	110	124	2062	1902
Watford City	75	69	107	50	0.03	0.33	8.14	9.52	123	111	1844	1622
Williston	74	72	108	48	0.08	0.38	9.27	9.20	123	126	1857	1818
Wishek	70	68	97	47	0.24	0.50	10.99	10.66	110	105	1805	1534

DAYLENGTH (Aug 20, McClusky, center of ND)[2]

Sunrise: 6:44 AM

Sunset: 8:47 PM

Daylength: 14h 3m

Change since Aug 13: –21m

LONG-TERM OUTLOOKS[3]

Aug 25–29: Temp.: Above Normal; Precip.: Above Normal

Aug 27–Sep 2: Temp.: Above Normal; Precip.: Above Normal

[1,2,3] Sources: North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network, www.sunrisesunset.com, and National Weather Service, respectively.
[4,5] Rain data begin April 1. GDDs for garden vegetables are not available. GDD data in this table are for corn, which responds to temperature as most vegetables grown in gardens. Data begin May 1 with base minimum and maximum temperatures of 50 and 86°F., respectively.

Credits

Sources:

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Herman, D.E. and V.C. Quam. 2006. Trees and shrubs for Northern Great Plains landscapes. NDSU Extension.

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