

# JUNGLE TAMING

## MONTHLY HORTICULTURAL NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 2

February, 2012

*Monthly Horticultural Newsletter* is distributed free of charge to you each month by Jungle Taming, LLC, an upscale yard restoration landscaping company proudly serving the Columbia, SC area. Visit [www.JungleTaming.com](http://www.JungleTaming.com) for more information.

To subscribe to *Monthly Horticultural Tasks*, submit your request to [annieb1@mindspring.com](mailto:annieb1@mindspring.com).

To include Horticultural Tasks in YOUR newsletter, contact Anne Reynolds at (803) 429-3031 or [annieb1@mindspring.com](mailto:annieb1@mindspring.com).

### Amy's February Horticultural Tasks

Written by Amy Bledsoe

#### Annuals

Sick of winter? Start planning for color in your yard. Even those with physical limitations can have a garden by using colorful planting containers. Window boxes, hanging baskets, and pots placed near the entrance welcome visitors to the home. Limit use of annuals to those that can be planted easily in a small amount of time, and use perennials that return each year to provide the bulk of the color.



#### Turf

Relax. Enjoy the break from the heat and mowing. Have you had a soil sample taken yet? Don't procrastinate any longer!

#### Perennials

Cut back ornamental grasses now and plan for new plantings of ornamental grass in the spring. Consider these wonderful choices:

- **Pampas grass** is great for making a statement in a larger space but does have sharp blades of grass that can cut.
- **Muhly grass** is a smaller option that has soft leaves. Sweet grass baskets sold to Charleston tourists are made from this grass. When in bloom at the end of the summer, the pink plumes resemble floating cotton candy.
- Other great choices are all in the Miscanthus family of grasses such as 'Adagio', 'Gracillimus', 'Yaku Jima', and 'Morning Light'.
- Choices for dwarf grasses include 'Little Kitten', 'Hameln', and 'Mouldry'.



There are many more choices - you can't beat the low maintenance and drought tolerance of these ornamental grasses.

#### Roses



February is a perfect time for planting roses! Instead of buying cut roses for your loved one on Valentine's Day, buy a rose bush to be enjoyed over a lifetime.

#### Shrubs

One of the best winter blooming shrubs is the Flowering Quince. For a small space try 'Texas Scarlet'. These shrubs do have barbs, so consider placement carefully. This prickly bush can prevent trespassers and provide fruit for making quince jelly!



## **Tree Pruning**

Pruning can improve a tree's structure or health, accommodate for human needs (spacing and accessibility), increase light penetration, and provide a view.

### **When to prune?**

Prune when trees are dormant (no leaves) to minimize the risk of pest problems associated with wound entry, and to allow trees to take advantage of the full growing season to begin closing and compartmentalizing wounds. Most *routine* pruning and removal of weak, diseased, undesirable or dead limbs can be accomplished at any time with little negative effect on the tree.

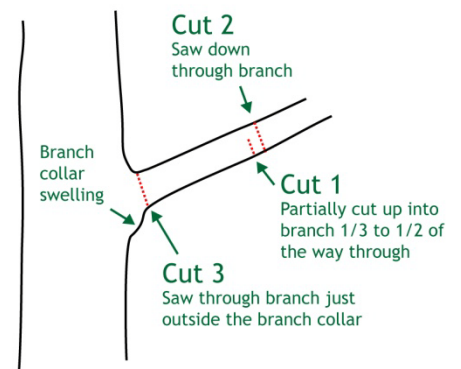


### **Pruning Cuts**

In most cases, the preferred place to make a pruning cut is back to the parent branch or trunk, just to the outside of the branch collar or shoulder. There are times when it is necessary to reduce the length of a limb by cutting it back to a lateral branch. However, trees do not respond well to this type of pruning cut because they cannot readily compartmentalize the wound; when possible avoid this type of cut.

Large or heavy limbs should be removed using three cuts:

1. The first cut undercuts the limb one or two feet out from the parent branch or trunk. A properly made undercut eliminates the chance of the branch "peeling" or tearing bark as it is removed.
2. The second cut is the top cut, which is usually made slightly farther out on the limb than the undercut. (When cutting large limbs with a chain saw, often the top cut is made directly above the bottom cut to avoid the saw bar getting caught in the kerf). This allows the limb to drop smoothly when the weight is released.
3. The third cut is to remove the stub. When removing a dead branch, the final cut should be made just outside the collar of living tissue. If the collar has grown along a branch stub, only the dead stub should be removed.



### **Pruning Mature Trees**

A number of factors must be considered when pruning mature trees. These include the tree site, time of year, species, size, growth habit, vitality, and tree maturity. The amount of live tissue that should be removed depends on the tree size, species, and age, as well as the pruning objectives. As a general rule, mature trees are less tolerant of severe pruning than juvenile trees. Also, smaller cuts close faster and are more easily compartmentalized than large cuts.

Never remove more than one-fourth of a tree's leaf-bearing canopy. Removing even a single, large-diameter limb can create a wound the tree may not be able to close. The older and larger a tree becomes, the less energy it has in reserve to close wounds and defend against decay or insect attack. Further, the energy-producing capacity in relation to mass decreases as a tree matures. The pruning of large, mature trees is usually limited to the removal of dead branches or to reduce the severity of structural defects.



Topping or heading back a tree is not a recommended pruning practice.

Tree painting of the wound is not a recommended practice.

Any pruning that needs to be done near power lines should be done by the power company's tree crews. Call for assistance at (800)251-7234 then #, 4, and 0.

Use a professional tree service for pruning or tree removal that involves major climbing or trees near buildings.

**Amy Bledsoe**, who has a degree in horticulture, is a Certified Nursery Professional, Pesticide Applicator, Environmental Landscaper, Arborist, and Landscape Technician, and has been in the horticultural industry for several years as a garden center employee, lecturer, consultant, and designer. She was the recipient of the 2002 Horticulture Student of the Year award from the SC Nursery and Landscape Association. She is currently the landscape designer for the City of Columbia, and is a member of the SC Nursery and Landscape Association and the Greater Columbia Landscape Association. She has consulted on gardening articles for Columbia Metropolitan magazine and The State newspaper, appeared on ETV's "Making It Grow," and has also been a radio guest on "The Andy Thomas Show" to answer questions on gardening.

**Jungle Taming, LLC** is an upscale yard and garden restoration company that specializes in pruning, cultivating and uncovering hidden beauty from overgrown landscapes. Call Jungle Taming for fence line cleaning, ivy and weed removal, bed improvement, trimming and cleaning shrubs, tree trimming, debris removal, herbicide application and much, much more.

Owner Bill Kunze, certified in Landscape Management, has over 15 years of hands-on experience in the Midlands area. For more information, contact Jungle Taming at (803) 463-2655 or email [info@JungleTaming.com](mailto:info@JungleTaming.com). Or visit the website: [www.JungleTaming.com](http://www.JungleTaming.com).

