



CEDAR RIVER GARDEN CENTER

2889 PALO MARSH RD PALO, IA 52324

319.851.2161

WWW.CEDARRIVERGARDENCENTER.COM

Dress for the Weather

Justin Myers

Sorry friends! I got a little excited and accidentally sent out part two prior to part one in Justin's "Dress for the Weather" series last week. Without further ado: Part One

Just like you would check the weather before you get dressed to go outside to start your day, you should "check the weather" before planting in your landscape. Does the area stay wet for long periods of time? Is it noticeably dry, no matter the amount of precipitation? Perhaps under an eave or a large shade tree.

As we all know, Iowa's weather can be unpredictable. From year to year, we can go from one extreme to the other. I have compiled a list of my favorite trees and shrubs to help put the right tree or shrub in the correct "weather" location. One list for areas that stay wet/damp for long periods and the other for time of drought.

Wet Area Trees

Wildfire Black Gum:

If you translate the botanical name of this plant *Nyssa sylvatica* it loosely translates to "Forest loving water nymph". What a perfect fit for a moisture loving tree. Wildfire is a medium size tree at maturity at 35 feet tall and 25 feet wide and has a scarlet red fall color. Zone 5.

Heritage River Birch: The name says it all river birch found in the wild near river edges and in areas with a high-water table.

Heritage Birch was found in a suburb of St. Louis it caught Earl Cully's eye and was later patented as a superior form of the original river birch. Heritage River Birch should reach a size of 45 to 50 feet tall and wide. Zone 3.

Spaeth's Alder:

It maybe an unknown or an underdog on the list but don't count it out. The Spaeth's Alder is a cross between the Japanese and Caucasian Alder's named after the German botanist Franz Späth of Berlin. Spaeth does well in wet and poor soil and get 50 feet tall and 25 feet wide. Zone 4.

Swamp White Oak:

It may not be the our state tree (Bur Oak), but it is in the same family. The Swamp White Oak has a moderate grow rate and in 1999 was named a GreatPlants® for the Great Plains Award winner. Another great thing about the Swamp White Oak is their life span, they can live up to 300 year how about that for an investment. Zone 4.

Wet Area Shrubs

Buttonbush:

Native to a large portion of North America the buttonbush is often use in wetland restoration. A few highlights of the Buttonbush are that it is very beneficial for wildlife. It is nectar rich for hummingbirds and butterflies. The seeds are eaten by our native birds. I want to shine the spotlight on two more dwarf and compact cultivars Fiber Optic Buttonbush grow to 6 feet tall and wide and Sugar Shack Buttonbush reaching 4 feet tall and wide. Zone 4.

Dogwood:

Looking for a plethora of variety? Look no farther than the trusty Dogwood. With the Dogwood you can choose from Grey, Red Twig, Yellow Twig, Silky, Variegated leaves, and Chartreuse leaves and that is just scratching the surface. A few of the

Dogwoods I prefer are Huron Dogwood grow 4 to 6 feet tall and wide. Yellow and Red Twig Dogwood for excellent winter contrast and to fill a large spot. Ivory Halo for the brilliant white and green variegated leaves. Zone 3.

Winterberry:

The Christmas feeling comes through with this native deciduous Holly. Winterberries require a male and female to cross pollinate to get those beautiful and bright berries. Winterberry grow great in poor soil and can tolerate almost bog like conditions. Male cultivars would be Mr. Poppins at 3 to 4 feet tall and wide, Jim Dandy at 5 feet tall and wide, and Southern Gentleman at 8 feet tall and wide. For the female winterberries, there are plenty to choose from. Berry Poppins and Red Sprite are the two smallest. Both of them around 3 to 4 feet tall and wide. Berry Heavy and Berry Heavy Gold make for a delightful contrast with red and gold berries. If you are looking for a larger shrub Wildfire and Sparkleberry top out around 10 to 12 feet tall and wide. Zone 3-4.

Summersweet:

In the heat of summer, draw in butterflies from all around with this candlelike flower. Summersweet does great in moist to constantly wet soil and can tolerate full sun to full shade. Summersweet comes in two colors white and pink. Vanilla Spice, Hummingbird, and Sixteen Candles bloom white, while Ruby Spice and Pink Spire bloom pink. Zone 4.



A close up of the unique Buttonbush. Photo: Morton Arboretum



Summersweet blooms come in pink or white.



Summersweet shrubs come in a multitude of sizes.



Winterberry is one of my favorite late season interests.

What is with the Whiteflies?

Wow! The Whiteflies are everywhere and creating quiet the stir. We have had multiple customers come in and just as many call explaining how terrible the "little white flying insect" is. The word on the street is they are arriving from our southern United States.

Those little boogers are commonly called Whiteflies. Whiteflies are pesky and if present in a greenhouse setting can cause serious damage. When they are found outside the damage is less extreme.

In many situations, natural enemies will provide adequate control throughout the season(University of California IPM). Whiteflies cannot survive our cold lowa temperatures thus not requiring management for next year's plants.

While they are viewed as a pest, unfortunately there is little that

can be done. Chemical treatments may reduce the population, but never fully eradicate them due to their rapid reproduction rates. A

Whitefly goes from egg to adult in 25 days.

Whiteflies can be difficult to control with insecticides. Most less-toxic products such as insecticidal soaps, neem oil, or petroleum-based oils control only those whiteflies that are directly contacted.

Therefore, plants must be thoroughly covered with the spray solution, and repeat applications may be necessary. If you still feel the need to attempt to protect your plants, including late season cole crops, try spraying the leaves with a strong stream of water, or mixing 1 qt water with 1 teaspoon vegetable oil and 1 teaspoon soap. In both of those cases, you will need to treat the underside of the leaves where the fly resides. Again, this spray doesn't fully eliminate, but can help reduce the population. You can try these methods at least 3 times at an average of 5 days apart.

Boston Marrow Squash



This heirloom squash has a strong presence dating back to the 1830's. The original seed was furnished to a Buffalo, New York gardener by a tribe of Native Americans who visited the area in the spring of 1831. The seed was then distributed to select

members of the Massachusetts Horticultural Society by a Mr. Ives in the Spring of 1833[2] and quickly became available as a commercial variety shortly thereafter

(https://www.victoryseeds.com/squash_boston-marrow.html).

One may think with fruit ranging from 10-50 lbs it wouldn't be a productive plant, but that is not the case here! This strong producer was very prolific this season for veggie staff member Paula. She had a few that weighed right around 35lbs. Due to the size, Paula's husband used a sawzall to cut through it, but the abundance of squash harvested from each fruit was well worth it!

Boston Marrow is prized for being a pie squash due to the super creamy and almost custard like insides. The resulting pie was more airy and less dense than a traditional pumpkin pie.

You guessed it, Paula used this squash for her shared Customer Appreciation Day pies! It was so delicious many of you asked for the recipe. Here you go:

Boston Marrow Pumpkin Pie

3 eggs

1/2 cup sugar

1/2 cup packed brown sugar

1/2 tsp. salt

1 tsp. allspice

1 tsp cinnamon

2 cups Boston Marrow puree

1/2 cup evaporated milk

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees.
2. In

a
medium
bowl,
whisk
eggs
until
combined.
Slowly
add
white
sugar,
brown
sugar,
salt,
allspice,
and
cinnamon.

3. Add
Boston
Marrow
puree
and
combine.
4. Mix
in
warmed
evaporated
milk.
5. Pour
filling
into
pie
crust.
6. Bake
45-
50
minutes
until
center
is
firm
and

knife
comes
out
clean.

Boston Marrow is highly adaptable to our shorter growing season and the fruits can be stored for many months. Be sure to give this plant room to grow! We would suggest an outer edge where it can spread out over the lawn if need be.



Did You Hear the Terrible News?

A repeat winter is on its way! The question is to cone or not to cone?

Unfortunately for us, there are multiple sources saying our 2019 winter will be similar to that of 2018. This makes me think snow, wind, and snow!

As a garden center, we are hesitant to suggest a cone for a rose unless you are working with the Hybrid Teas or floribunda families. Hybrid Teas and Floribunda roses do not like the extreme shifts between day and nighttime temps or the extremely drying winter winds. Most other roses now sold commercially are actually a hardier shrub that don't require extra attention.

So the question is cone or no cone?

A few reasons we wouldn't suggest coning: We fear the excessive pruning you may have to do to fit your shrub into the cone. Roses

should not have exposed "wounds" going into the coldest part of the year. A rose should be pruned in the spring once the threat of extreme cold has passed.

We would also suggest to watch out for trapped moisture and disease possibilities if there is no ventilation. A good quality rose cone should have ventilation holes that can be pushed through or a removable cap to help aid with moisture control.

If you still prefer the peace of mind of a cone, multiple sources are now suggesting a cone may need additional insulation. Because of this, we would suggest filling the cone with leaves or mulch. By doing this you are preventing the extreme shift in temperatures to the exposed root. The leaves would act as an extra buffer.

I am a glass half full kind of lady, so here is one positive I could think of for the traditional rose cone. The cones would prevent the blustery winds from blowing your leaves to your neighbors house.

A cage or chicken wire would do the same. I am sure there is nothing worse than running around your yard in late December to gather more leaves to protect your plant's rootball from yet another record low night. Perhaps a cone would be a great way to contain the mess.



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