



WINTER EDITION

IN THIS ISSUE

- ABOUT THE OWNER
- INTRODUCTION TO OUR SEASONAL NEWSLETTER
- WINTER TREE CARE TIPS
- ASK THE ARBORIST
- SPOTLIGHT TREE – AMERICAN HOLLY
- SPOTLIGHT SHRUB - WINTERBERRY

ABOUT THE OWNER:



Tom started his career in Commercial Arboriculture upon graduating from the WVU Division of Forestry in 1975. He had a remarkably successful 39-year career as an arborist/representative with the F.A. Bartlett Tree Expert Company. In 2014 Tom started Armstrong Arboriculture with the goal of providing the highest level of professional care for our clients. An equally important goal was to provide our employees with a career path including top of the market pay scale and excellent benefits.



Meet Armstrong Arboriculture employees (left to right) Mike Daughtery (ISA Certified Arborist/Commercial Spray Technician) Kevin Steele (ISA Certified Arborist/Commercial Spray Technician, Arborist Representative) Travis Pearson (Tree Care Crew Member) Josh Franklin (ISA Certified Arborist/Commercial Spray Technician) Jimmy Bergdorf (ISA Certified Arborist/Tree Care Foreman) Chris Hurley (Tree Care Crew Member) Tom Armstrong (Owner/ISA Certified Arborist) Devin Baker (ISA Certified Arborist/Tree Care Crew Member) Michael Thompson (ISA Certified Arborist/Tree Care Foreman) Dusty Thompson (Spray Technician) Nick Dean (ISA Certified Arborist/Commercial Spray Technician, Arborist Representative)

INTRODUCING ARMSTRONG ARBORICULTURE SEASONAL NEWSLETTER –

Armstrong Arboriculture is excited to launch our seasonal newsletter to keep you informed about tree care, and the benefits trees bring to your landscape and environment.

In each edition, you'll find seasonal tips, updates on pests and diseases that may affect your trees, and guidance on maintaining their health.

We welcome your feedback and questions through our "Ask an Arborist" section, where we address your concerns about trees and shrubs. Please submit questions to armstrongarboriculture@outlook.com. Please know if you have any immediate concerns or questions regarding your trees or shrubs, we are always available.

WINTER TREE CARE TIPS



Figure 1

Winter can be harsh on your trees and shrubs. Caring for your trees and shrubs during winter months are just as important. Many people believe snow can be enough to provide adequate water; that is not always the case. Please continue to read below to learn more about ways to protect your trees and shrubs during the winter months, so they remain healthy throughout the year.



Figure 2

Winter burn – These pictures show examples of winter burn. Read the tips below to help prevent it.

Frost Cracks – Ever been outside on a chilly winter day and heard a loud pop. Could have been the making of frost cracks in a tree.



Figure 3

WINTER TREE CARE TIPS

- 1) *Protect your trees from winter burn or desiccation – this is a damage that occurs when trees especially evergreens, lose more moisture than they can absorb during the cold months. Consider watering your trees during the winter months especially newly planted trees. Pick a warmer day of at least 40 degrees and the ground isn't frozen solid. Aim for watering in the morning, so the water has time to soak into the soil before the temps begin to drop. Consider anti-desiccants to help evergreens retain moisture – these products can be applied on a dry day when temperatures are above freezing. Signs of winter burn – browning or yellowing of the leaves, dry and or cracked soil around the base, wilting or curling of the leaves, and branch tip dieback (noticeable in the spring)*
- 2) *Salt damage – one of the most overlooked causes of winter tree damage. Salt can build up in the soil around the base of trees and shrubs, particularly those planted near roadways, driveways, or sidewalk areas. Barriers between the areas where salt is used are helpful to trees and shrubs. Consider using a less harmful alternative to salt such as kitty litter, sand, or calcium magnesium acetate near trees and shrubs. Redirect run-off, if trees are located near a roadway where run-off occurs redirecting the salty water away from the rootzone of the tree. Flush salt from the soil – deep root watering around the base of any trees that could have potential salt build up. This method can be done on a warmer day, when the ground is not frozen.*
- 3) *Prune your trees – Yes, pruning during the winter is one of the most beneficial times of the year. An Arborist can clearly see the tree's structure while leaves are gone, making it easier to prune out crossed branches or weak limbs. Pruning in the winter also lowers the chance for the spread of diseases, since most pests and pathogens are dormant during winter months.*
- 4) *Apply mulch – Mulch acts as a blanket for your trees rootzone. A 2" to 4" inch thick mulch ring can help regulate soil temperature; this will reduce the risk of damage caused to the tree roots during the freeze-thaw cycle. Avoid piling mulch on the base of the tree as this can trap moisture, and cause root rot. Organic mulch such as pine straw, shredded bark, or wood chips work best because they break down over time enriching the ground.*
- 5) *Frost Cracks – While we can bundle up in extra layers when temperatures drop or remove those layers as it warms up, trees don't have any outerwear beyond their*

bark to protect themselves from fluctuating winter temperatures. And when those temperatures rise or fall suddenly, frost cracking often results. Frost cracking is caused by the tree's inability to endure the expansion and contraction of its bark and wood that results from the expansion of water inside its wood. Trees that are mostly susceptible to frost cracking are younger unestablished trees, maples, and fruit trees. Wrapping trees with a breathable tree wrap, or burlap can help prevent frost cracking. This material would be removed in spring once temperatures stabilize.

- 6) *Heavy snow and ice – Virginia winters are very unpredictable; we can experience both snow and ice during our winters. Heavy snow building up on branches can produce added weight to limbs that can cause them to strain and break. If heavy snow is in the forecast, and it builds up on your trees, remove using a broom or rake, lightly tap the branches or limbs to allow snow to fall off. These tips and small steps can go a long way to help maintain healthy trees for years to come.*

ASK THE ARBORIST?

We are happy to include this section into our Seasonal Newsletter. We love interacting with our customers and providing any information and knowledge that we can.

Please feel free to submit questions that we will post in our seasonal newsletters to armstrongarboriculture@outlook.com.

As always, we are available for any immediate questions or concerns you may have regarding your trees and shrubs.

SPOTLIGHT TREE: THE AMERICAN HOLLY



Figure 4

Uses: The attractive evergreen foliage and bright red fruit of this tree make it very popular for landscapes. The same attributes that allow this tree to be a desirable ornamental makes it one of the most sought after greens for Christmas decoration. The firm bright red berries are consumed by white-tail deer and eighteen species of birds. The dense foliage also provides cover and nesting habitat for various songbirds.

Description: An American Holly normally grows to heights of 15' to 30' feet tall. However, there are recorded heights of mature Hollies reaching heights of up to 100' foot. Poor soil conditions in coastal areas may cause hollies to never exceed shrub size. The bark of it is smooth and grayish to grayish-brown. The dense branches of the American Holly grow nearly horizontal in a

spreading crown, which takes on a pyramidal silhouette.

The evergreen foliage is stiff and leathery in texture, with large, remotely spined teeth. The leaves are arranged alternately. They are 2 to 4 inches long satin green and smooth above, and yellowish-green

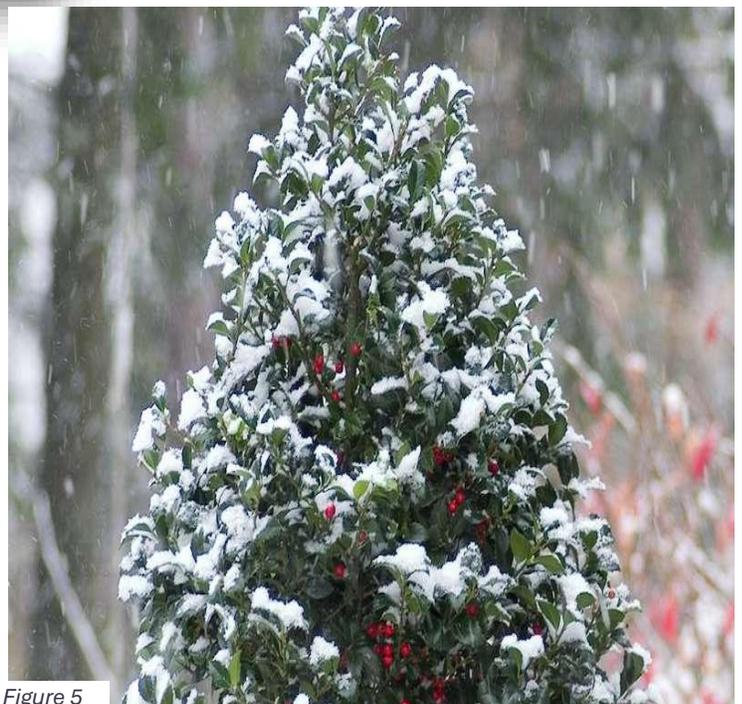


Figure 5

below. Small, greenish-white flowers bloom from April to June. Newly established plants will not flower for four to seven years; prior to flowering there is no practical means of determining the gender of the plant. Bright red, rarely orange or yellow, globular fruit matures from September to October but may be retained on the plant into the following spring.



Figure 6

sand dunes, it is not very salt spray tolerant.

Adaptation and Distribution:

American Holly grows from Massachusetts to Florida, west to Texas and Missouri, and is adapted to a wide range of site conditions. It grows best on well drained, sandy soils, but will tolerate those which are somewhat poorly drained. This small tree has good shade tolerance but does well in direct sun. Although this species is often found growing on coastal

Establishment: Utilize standard tree and shrub planting procedures to establish containerized or balled and burlapped plants. Bare rooted transplants usually have marginal success. When establishing American holly, it is important to plant males as well as females if berry production is desired. Establish American Holly only where surrounding vegetation or physical barriers protect the plants from harsh winds. Holly plants prefer partial shade, with some full sun exposure during the day.

Figure 7



SPOTLIGHT PLANT: WINTERBERRY



Figure 8



Figure 9

Uses: The attractive bright red fruit of winterberry is eaten by small mammals and more than forty-eight species of birds. The leaves and stems of winterberry are not preferred source of browse, but whitetail deer, and rabbits do utilize this plant. The bright red fruit of

this shrub makes it very popular for landscaping. It is recommended for planting in shady moist areas, even though its growth and form are best under open grown conditions.

Description: Winterberry is an erect moderate sized shrub, growing to heights of 5 to 15 feet tall. The smooth bark of winterberry is gray to blackish, with knobby lenticels. The dense branches of this shrub grow in a zigzag pattern with an upright spreading crown. The twigs are slender with gray to gray-brown color and small buds.

The simple, smooth, obovate to oblong-ovate foliage is sharply double toothed, with medium fine texture. The deciduous leaves are arranged alternately along the stems. Each leaf is 1 ½ to 4 inches long, with dark green summer color turning yellow in fall, then drop off by mid-October.

Small inconspicuous, auxiliary, greenish to yellowish white flowers bloom from April to July, after leaves have emerged. Like most other holly genus, winterberry is dioecious. Three years after planting, pistillate flowers begin to emerge in small clusters plants and staminate flowers develop on male plants with up to twelve flowers in a cluster; only now can plant gender be determined. Scarlet red to orange, and the globular fruit matures by late summer, often remaining on the plant into mid-winter. The berry-like fruit is about ¼ inch in diameter, occurring singly or in pairs, each containing three to five small nutlets.

Adaptation and Distribution: Winterberry is found throughout the eastern United States.

Establishment: Planting units of Winterberry are propagated by seed, rooted stem divisions, and stem cuttings alike. The germination is usually hindered by hard seed coats and embryo dormancy. Utilize standard tree and shrub planting procedures to plant bare rooted transplants, containerized, or balled and burlapped stock.



Figure 10

SOURCES REFERENCED

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Figure 2 -

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