

## APRICOTS, By Rachel Croft

One of our most sought-after fruits for the home orchard is the apricot, most likely because it is so difficult to purchase a store-bought one that is worth eating. With this thought in mind, the Peninsula Chapter of the California Rare Fruit Growers invited Craig Ledbetter, Ph.D., to speak about apricots. For the past 18 years, he has worked for the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) located in Parlier, California where he has six acres of apricots under cultivation. The goals include developing new varieties, extending the fruiting season, improving flavor and color, increasing sugar content, and improving disease resistance.

The characteristics of the Hunza apricot, which is small but has a high sugar content, are being used in the propagation of some of the new varieties. Efforts are also being made to introduce a white apricot. 'Monique' might be a promising home variety as it doesn't transport well. 'New Jersey' is white and firm.

One early apricot is 'Castleton' which ripens three weeks before Blenheim. Other varieties are 'Perfection,' 'Castlebrite,' 'Helena.' (self-fruitful\*, doesn't crack, mid-late season), 'Robada,' a patented variety with attractive flesh and color, and 'Apache,' an early variety for fresh use, grown in Chile. 'Kettleman' is the newest ARS variety with appealing dark orange flesh.

80% pruning is recommended in summer, and 20% in winter to reduce disease. Spraying at leaf fall and again in late winter with copper and horticultural oil is also recommended.

For my money the favorite apricot for all uses is still 'Blenheim.' In the meantime, we'll be looking for these new varieties to be introduced to our nurseries.

\* *Self-fruitful trees do not require a similar species in their vicinity to be pollinated and set fruit.*

## REDWOOD TREES IN AN URBAN LANDSCAPE

By Courtney Behm, Guest Contributor

Here in the Bay Area we are fortunate - and not so fortunate - to have a large population of maturing coastal redwoods in our yards and parks. They are, of course, beautiful, but they are too often placed in an untenable relationship to their man-made surroundings, where their roots cause considerable damage to foundations and other cement structures, such as pools and ponds, and their trunks destroy fences and siding. So when we are considering planting redwoods in our urban landscapes, it's important to remember a few essential facts:

- Location, location, location. Redwoods grow rapidly, and their roots spread aggressively near the surface. Anticipate their mature size when planting, and place them where they are surrounded by lots of open space, far from buildings, fences, pools, etc.
- Redwoods are poor screening trees when mature. When screening is an issue, consider another type of tree that will maintain a lower crown.
- The immense height of a mature redwood will create a large shade profile that can become oppressive if the surrounding structures are deprived of sunlight.
- Redwoods need a lot of water. In their natural habitat, they get consistent moisture from coastal fog, but in a yard, they are often subjected to hot, dry conditions that interfere with healthy growth.

**UPCOMING EVENTS:** Fall Color Garden Walk with renowned arborist Barrie Coate on Saturday, October 29th, leaving at 9:30 am from 74 Atherton Avenue. Reservations are required as the number of participants is limited. This is a very special opportunity to learn from Barrie and to see some special Atherton gardens, one of which includes an exceptional collection of maples. The cost of the walk is \$30. Contact Denise Kupperman at 650-326-1693, or [denise@studio74.us](mailto:denise@studio74.us).

 **Atherton**  
**tree news**

The Atherton Tree Committee  
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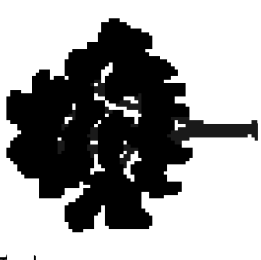
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# Atherton tree news

ATHERTON TREE COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER  
SPRING 2005

This newsletter is brought to you by the Atherton Tree Committee, funded by a grant awarded to the Tree Committee from California ReLeaf. If you have questions or topics you would like us to include in our next issue, please write to us.

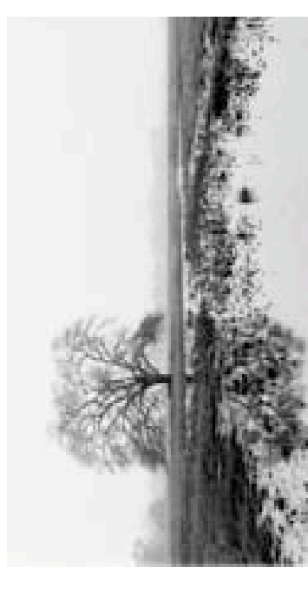
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## LENORE W. HOROWITZ

An Atherton resident since 1986, Lenore has followed her passions for gardening, photography and teaching while raising her family on Selby Lane. With a doctorate in English literature, she has taught at Menlo School while spending as much time as she can out in her garden, camera in hand. She loves photographing the natural world—the spectacular European poppies that bloom in her garden each spring (as many as 45 colors) and most recently the California oaks on the Stanford hills. With permission from the Stanford Linear Accelerator, she has photographed the trees on the SLAC campus for more than a year, during all seasons, culminating in an exhibition of her images and poetry at SLAC (open to the public during business hours). Several images and poems are on display at the Atherton Town Hall and also in Stanford University Medical Center's main entry corridor. A new exhibit is planned for January 2006 at Palo Alto Research Center (PARC).

What makes her work unique is the combination of visual image with poetry. On her website, [www.women-candoit.com](http://www.women-candoit.com), you can see some of her collections of images and poems, including "Trees on the Wing," "A Mother's Poems," "Garden Poems," "Island Poems," and "Healing Poems."



No trespassing,  
the sign says,  
and the gate looks unfriendly,  
though trees behind  
beckon brightly on green hills  
shadowing their arching arms  
on velvet grass.  
So will someone come,  
I ask,  
to arrest us?  
snatch camera from our hands,  
lock us up,  
handcuffed,  
for shooting wildly  
at the cows?  
Or will they be amused

**SIGNS**

at people pointing long black things  
at trees that look today  
the same as yesterday,  
and nothing is amiss,  
cows graze the daily green,  
birds come and go  
on leafless boughs?  
No trespassing,  
the sign answers  
keep out --  
but the trees call,  
put up their signs of spring  
to keep those fenceposts  
out,  
let wonderers  
wander  
in.

*The Atherton Tree News is proud to say we print our newsletter on recycled paper.*

## PLANTING WINTER AND SPRING BULBS

Daffodils, tulips, iris, and crocus are some of the earliest blooming flowers to appear during the year, as their bulbs are planted in the fall and early winter.

### Tips for planting bulbs

- Bulbs grow best in full sun or partial shade but blooms will continue to grow when mid-day sun is avoided.
- Adequate drainage is essential. If drainage is a problem, mix 2 -3 inches of shredded pine bark, compost, or best pea gravel in the bottom of the planting area. Raised beds or drainage tiles are also solutions to consider.
- Permanent bulb plantings should be fertilized by mixing a slow-release fertilizer or bone meal and applying to the root area in combination with 1 to 2 pounds of 10-10-10 per 100 sq feet.
- Purchase bulbs during September or October and wait to plant them in November or December. Store in a cool place - your refrigerator, if possible.
- Bulbs generally require 12 to 16 weeks before producing flowers.
- Normal rainfall may provide adequate moisture. Water as necessary if conditions are dry.
- For a good design effect, plant a large number of the same type.
- Leaves should remain on the plant for approximately 4-6 weeks before trimming. Leaves will turn brown, which indicates that adequate energy has built up.
- Overcrowding or bulbs that remain in water for extended periods of time may result in fewer buds.
- Maintain reasonable space between planting and check for over watering.
- Bulbs prefer dry summer conditions and are therefore ideal to plant at the dripline of oak trees.

## ATHERTON'S TREE AWARDS

Do you have a special tree on your property? The Atherton Tree Committee is seeking nominations for the 2005 Tree Award Program. Eligible candidates are any species of tree that meets one or more of the following criteria; outstanding specimen, unique in size, age, species or historical significance, or a grove of mature trees native to our region. Nomination forms are available at the Town Administrative Offices, the Permit Center, and on the Web at [www.ci.atherton.ca.us](http://www.ci.atherton.ca.us). Deadline for submitting nominations is October 15, 2005. With the judging being held in late October, a tree with spectacular fall color would be a great tree to nominate for this special award.



### ASK THE ARBORIST

by Kathy Anderson



**My Ash tree lost all of its leaves last spring. It put out new leaves but has looked terrible all summer. What can I do to prevent this from happening again next year?**

Your Ash tree was infected by anthracnose, an infection caused by any of several fungi, depending on the species of tree attacked. Syamore, Ash, Dogwood and Chinese elm are particularly susceptible to this disease. Infections are more severe when prolonged spring rains occur after new growth is produced, as we experienced this year. Infected leaves fall prematurely and throughout the growing season, and sometimes trees are completely defoliated. Once symptoms develop or become severe, anthracnose cannot be effectively controlled during the current season. Rake and dispose of fallen leaves and twigs during the growing season and in the fall. Prune during winter to increase air circulation in the canopy and remove the previous seasons infected twigs and branches. To stimulate growth of trees severely affected by anthracnose, fertilize after the leaves open and spring rains have stopped. Foliar sprays were not effective this past spring due to the constant rains. Dry spring weather could mean disease management is not necessary, but a wet spring may result in disease outbreak that may warrant control. As an alternative to foliar sprays on a highly valued tree, trunk injections in the fall with a systemic fungicide, Alamo, will protect next year's leaves.

## AMERICA'S NATIONAL TREE, THE OAK

With Congressional passage and presidential signing of an historic bill, America now has an official National Tree – the oak. The oak was selected during a four-month-long open voting process hosted by the Arbor Day Foundation. Oak was the people's clear choice, finishing with 101,000 votes, compared to 81,000 for the runner-up, the redwood. Others in the top five were the dogwood, maple, and pine. Advocates of the oak praised its diversity, with more than 60 species growing in the United States. Throughout America's history, oaks have been prized for their shade, beauty and lumber. The National Arbor Day Foundation is a non-profit educational organization that inspires people to plant, nurture, and celebrate trees.

**Tree Facts:** 6-24" – depth from the soil top where most tree roots are located.  
1 / 16" – diameter of typical tree feeder roots. These roots constitute the major portion of the root system's surface area.

Source: Colorado State University Cooperative Extension Service

## OAK: THE FRAME OF CIVILIZATION

*"The story of the oak is at the root of everything we know. The oak tree is everywhere in the temperate zones of the world; knowing how to use it has made an astonishing difference to human history."*

William Bryant Logan

In his book, "OAK: The Frame of Civilization," ISA Certified Arborist and award-winning author William Bryant Logan takes us on a fascinating journey through the relationship between humans and oaks. From the great art works of the European Middle Ages to the ink with which Bach wrote his cantatas to the first boat that reached the New World to the tall ships that established our first navy, to our present-day use of oaks for shade, shelter, and furnishings, Logan introduces us to the ways in which the oak's vibrant presence has influenced both our history and our modern world.

Logan combines science, philosophy, spirituality and history with a quirky curiosity about why the natural world works the way it does. He tells us the life story of the tree that has long been a symbol of loyalty and strength, generosity and renewal, and reveals remarkable studies into the lessons that the oak still has to teach us about community. This is a well-written, fascinating book that will offer great enjoyment to tree enthusiasts and the general public alike. It is available in bookstores everywhere.

OAK: The Frame of Civilization; ISBN 0-393-04773-3; published by W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.



## PLANTING OAKS

Many people are reluctant to plant our native oak species because they consider them to be slow growing. That is a myth! If you have ever watched a Coast Live Oak grow from a seedling, you know they are not slow growers. A boxed native oak will grow just as fast as any other species of tree of the same box size. At a time when we are losing many of the big old oaks due to old age, construction impacts and poor landscaping practices, the trees that are being planted are smaller ornamentals which do not provide the benefits that a larger crowning majestic oak will. The Valley White Oak is one of the largest North American oaks. In Atherton, there is a fair amount of natural regeneration of the Live Oak, but fewer Valley Oak seedlings are found. If you are planning to plant a tree on your property, consider planting a native oak. The stately oaks are what make Atherton properties so desirable. In addition to the Coast Live Oak (*Quercus agrifolia*) and the Valley White Oak (*Quercus lobata*), oaks suitable to our region include: Blue Oak (*Quercus douglasii*), Black Oak (*Quercus kelloggii*) and Interior Live Oak (*Quercus wislizenii*).

There are many species of oak native to the mid-west and eastern parts of the country that will perform well in our area and are good choices for a large crowning tree. Many of these under-utilized species have good fall color and can take more water than our California native oaks. Some oak species that tolerate turf and poor drainage include: Swamp Oak (*Quercus bicolor*), Bur Oak (*Quercus microfarad*), Pin Oak (*Quercus palustris*), and Willow Oak (*Quercus phellos*). Non-native evergreen species include: Cork Oak (*Quercus suber*); Holly Oak (*Quercus ilex*) and Southern Live Oak (*Quercus virginiana*). Other choices that will perform well here and have good fall color include: Red Oak (*Quercus rubra*); Scarlet Oak (*Quercus coccinea*), and Shumard Red Oak (*Quercus shumardii*).