

NC STATE UNIVERSITY NORTH CAROLINA COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Helping
Carolinians
Increase Their
Knowledge of
Gardening,
Manage Their
Landscape
Investment &
Protect the
Environment

JC Raulston Arboretum Plant Focus

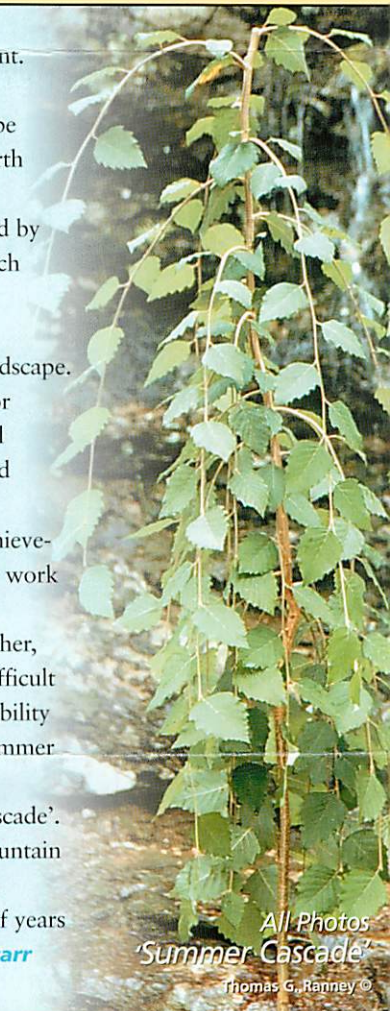
New River Birch in Weeping Form

T horticulturists are always looking for plants that are new and different. Many cultivars of plants are developed but few gain marketplace popularity. A new type of river birch, 'Summer Cascade', looks to be one of those special plants that is unique enough to make its mark in North Carolina landscapes.

'Summer Cascade' is a weeping form of river birch that was discovered by John and Danny Allen at Shiloh Nursery in Harmony, N.C. The river birch is one of our landscape mainstays with its handsome peeling bark, and a weeping form promises something really special. Because of their unique growth habit, weeping plants are often used as specimen plants in the landscape. River birch, like many native plants, is very dependable and has few major pest problems. 'Summer Cascade' is considered to be a fast grower. It will form a mounded shrub or small tree if left untrained or it can be provided with trunk support and trained into a tree form.

The development of this tree is a good example of how significant achievements can be realized when a private business and a land-grant university work together. Shiloh Nursery worked with Dr. Tom Ranney, an N.C. State researcher at the Mountain Horticultural Crops Research Station in Fletcher, to determine how easily the plant could be propagated. Plants that are difficult for nurserymen to propagate are likely to be limited in commercial availability regardless of how many features they possess. Dr. Ranney found that 'Summer Cascade' can be rooted easily from stem cuttings.

A number of North Carolina nurseries are now growing 'Summer Cascade'. Specimens can be seen at the JC Raulston Arboretum in Raleigh, the Mountain Horticultural Crops Research Station in Fletcher and the North Carolina Arboretum in Asheville. Widespread availability is expected in a couple of years so Carolina gardeners can enjoy this exciting new introduction. **Kevin Starr**



All Photos
'Summer Cascade'
Thomas G. Ranney ©

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2 2004
All-America
Selections



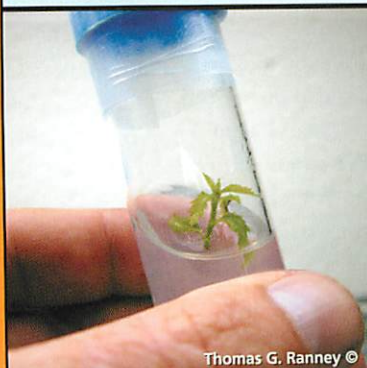
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TOP AWARDS RECEIVED FROM:

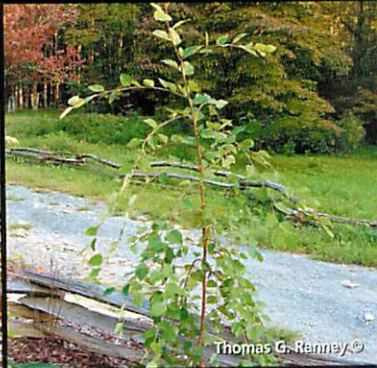
- Garden Writers Association
- International Association of Business Communicators
- National Association of County Agricultural Agents
- Southern Extension Forest Resource Specialists
- N.C. Association of County Agricultural Agents
- Mecklenburg County Priority Awards



Thomas G. Ranney ©



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All-America Selections ©

Hollyhock 'Queeny Purple'



All-America Selections ©

Celosia 'Fresh Look Yellow'



All-America Selections ©

Petunia F1 'Limbo Violet'



All-America Selections ©

Winter Squash F1 'Sunshine'

2004 All-America Selections for Your Garden

As you plan your garden this year, take note of the eight plants that comprise the 2004 All-America Selections (AAS).

Flower Award Winners

Two *Celosia plumosa* cultivars were selected as AAS winners this year. 'Fresh Look Red' is in the starring role with a coveted Gold Medal for its consistent performance with minimal maintenance and pest-free growth. Thriving in the summer heat and humidity with drought or rainy conditions, 'Fresh Look Red' performs well in gardens or patio containers. When grown in full sun, 'Fresh Look Red' matures at 12 to 18 inches tall and spreads 12 to 20 inches. The central plume can be 8 to 10 inches tall and 5 inches wide.

Also a winner, 'Fresh Look Yellow' offers season-long garden color with minimal care. The golden yellow plumes are produced in abundance, at times covering the plant. 'Fresh Look Yellow' grows numerous side shoots which cover mature blooms, eliminating the need for deadheading.

Gypsophila 'Gypsy Deep Rose' is an annual with dainty, rose-like blooms in a dark rose color. This new variety showed several improvements over comparisons. The flower form is double and semi-double. The plant produces a higher number of blooms over a longer flowering season. 'Gypsy Deep Rose' forms an enchanting mounded plant with a height of 8 to 10 inches, spreading 12 to 14 inches.

A hollyhock named 'Queeny Purple' is unique in that it is the shortest hollyhock and the first purple available as a single color and not part of a mixture. The frilly edged blooms are a "powder puff" type having a cushion center. 'Queeny Purple' will reach a mature height of 20 to 30 inches, perfect for smaller space gardens.

Petunia F1, 'Limbo Violet', differs from all other single grandiflora petunias. It has a unique combination of large flowers on a compact plant. The plants become mounds which, at times, are completely covered with blossoms. The ultimate plant size is only 6 to 7 inches tall, spreading 10 to 12 inches.

Vegetable Award Winners

'Amy' is one of the new melons exhibiting improved qualities such as earliness and higher yield when grown next to similar "canary" type melons. It is bright golden yellow with smooth skin that is without netting or sutures. 'Amy' plants will produce melons in 70 to 80 days from transplanting.

'Sunshine' is a new winter squash with vibrant orange-red skin, hence the name. The short vines need 6 to 8 feet in full sun. The 3- to 4-pound fruit is a flattened globe shape. The bright orange

flesh is sweet, nutty, creamy smooth and completely stringless when baked, steamed or microwaved. Expect mature squash in about 95 to 100 days harvested in the fall prior to frost.

Watermelons can't be beat on a hot summer day. The cultivar 'Sweet Beauty' was praised by AAS judges for its consistently sweet flavor. 'Sweet Beauty' melons are 5 to 7 pounds, an oblong shape with dark green skin and medium green stripes. 'Sweet Beauty' is a single-serving size. Learn more at www.all-americaselections.org. **Karen Neill**

Winning Roses

Three roses have made the grade to become the 2004 All-American Rose Selections. These plants are the best of the best in beauty, fragrance, disease resistance and maintenance.

Day Breaker is a floribunda rose with a bushy, upright growth habit and flowers that blend from yellow to pink to apricot. The blooms are about 4

inches in diameter with 30 to 35 petals that grow in continuous blooming clusters.

Honey Perfume, another floribunda, displays bright, 4-inch, apricot flowers in large, open clusters with a spicy fragrance. This upright plant is

extremely disease resistant. Its exceptional color and dark green, glossy foliage make it a true winner.

The third selection, **Memorial Day**, is a hybrid tea rose with large pink flowers and lavender accents on a bushy, upright plant. More than 50 petals make up its 5-inch bloom with long cutting stems and dark green foliage.

A hot weather lover with an excellent fragrance and superior disease resistance, this rose is certainly a worthy addition to any garden. Learn more about these and other roses at www.rose.org. **Donna Teasley**



2004 AARS ©



2004 AARS ©



2004 AARS ©

gardentalk

"There are two seasonal diversions that can ease the bite of any winter. One is the January thaw. The other is the seed catalogues."

— Hal Borland



Will a preemergent herbicide kill all my weeds?

When it comes to successful gardening, there isn't an easy answer to a yes or no question. There are many factors to take into account before giving an answer. When it comes to preemergent herbicides, it is true that their job is to control weeds. However, they only control weeds that have not yet germinated. Any weed that is already established will not be affected by a preemergent herbicide application. (A post-emergent herbicide can kill existing weeds if used according to instructions for the type of weeds you are trying to control.)

Preemergent herbicides kill certain weeds such as crabgrass, henbit and chickweed. It is important to know the life cycle

of weeds before applying herbicide. Make sure you apply before you expect these weeds to germinate.

When successfully applied to a landscape planting, perennial or annual flower bed, or the lawn, the product will make its way into the upper portions of the soil. It does not move into the root zone of plants. It serves as a barrier, keeping unwanted weeds from germinating and surviving past the seedling stage.

Make sure you identify which weeds you are trying to control. Then read the label to make sure you can safely apply the product to the area you are trying to control. Contact your Cooperative Extension Center for more details. *Ben Dungan*

ENVIRO-TIP

Pruning 4-Ds Can Reduce Chemical Controls

Pruning can be one of the ways to handle a plant pest problem without resorting to chemical controls, making it an environmentally friendly control method. What is the best way to prune to maintain your plants' health? To best answer that question,

it's best to know the plant you need to prune. Prune some plants at the wrong time of year and you will end up with a plant that won't bloom. However, most plants will tolerate pruning just about anytime of the year provided you don't remove more than one-third of the plant's foliage.

A good rule of thumb for gardeners to follow is the "4-Ds of Pruning." This rule works every time without question. There is no magical moment, no waiting, just prompt, quick, decisive action.

4-Ds of Pruning

Prune immediately whenever you see:

1. Dead
2. Diseased
3. Dying or
4. Damaged plant parts

This simple rule is an important one in preventing further losses of the plant. In these 4-Ds, it is necessary to prune beyond the extent of the damaged plant parts.

If we were to add another "D" that must be considered, it would be for desired characteristics such as enhanced flowering, higher yields and fruit quality, and desirable shape or form. This type of pruning requires that you know about the growing habits of the plant before you tackle this "D".

To learn more about pruning landscape plants, check with your county Cooperative Extension Center.

David Barkley



Golden Rain Tree

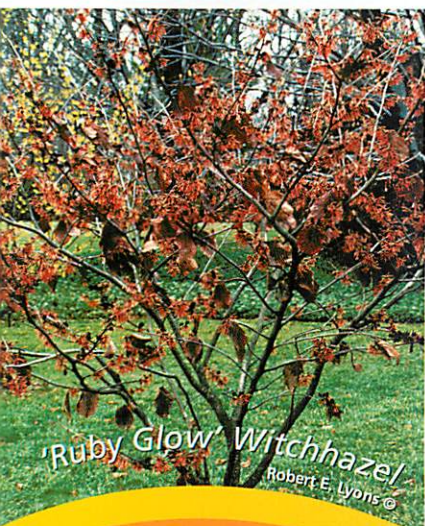
Robert E. Lyons ©

Announcing Extension's



- ▶ **Saturday, January 24**
 - 8:30 a.m. to Noon
 - Citizens Center, Lincolnton
 - Details: (704) 736-8452 (Lincoln County); (704) 922-0301 (Gaston County)
 - ▶ **Wednesday, March 3**
 - 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.
 - Southern Spring Home & Garden Show, Charlotte Merchandise Mart
 - Details: (704) 376-6594
 - ▶ **Saturday, March 13**
 - 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
 - Hickory Metro Convention Center, 1960 13th Avenue Drive SE, Hickory
 - Details (828) 465-8240
 - ▶ **Saturday, March 20**
 - 9 a.m. to Noon
 - Pease Auditorium, Central Piedmont Community College, Charlotte
 - Details: (704) 336-2561
 - ▶ **Saturday, March 27**
 - 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., various times
 - Southern Ideal Home Show, Greensboro Coliseum
 - Details: (336) 375-5876
- Nash County will offer a Successful Gardener workshop series, which will be at the Nash County Agriculture Center.
- ▶ **Tuesday, Jan. 27**
 - ▶ **Saturday, Feb. 28**
 - ▶ **Thursday, March 25**
 - ▶ **Saturday, April 24**

For details, call (252) 459-9810.



Garden Spot

The Southern Spring Home and Garden Show

in Charlotte kicks off spring every year with its beautiful gardens, outdoor living marketplace, taste and travel pavilion and much more! This year's show will be March 3 through 7 at the Charlotte Merchandise Mart.

N.C. Cooperative Extension horticulture experts and Master Gardeners will host the Extension and Master Gardener Horticulture Information Center. Be sure to stop by to get your gardening questions answered and to pick up research-based gardening information. Also plan to attend *Extension's Successful Gardener* seminars on March 3.

Other Southern Shows events will include *Extension's Successful Gardener* seminars and the Extension and Master Gardener Horticulture Information Centers. Upcoming shows are the Southern Ideal Home Shows in Greensboro, March 26-28, and in Raleigh, April 16-18. For details, visit www.southernshows.com.

Emily Revels



Tune in to "In the Garden with Bryce Lane" every Saturday at noon on UNC-TV stations. The show features a "Plant of the Week" from Extension's *Successful Gardener* newsletter.

*Successful Gardener*SM newsletter is provided to you compliments of:



Gardening in January & February

Lawns

- Fertilize cool-season lawns in February with 1 pound of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet of lawn area. Divide 100 by the first number on the fertilizer bag to determine how many pounds to apply per 1,000 square feet.
- Apply broadleaf herbicides as labeled to manage henbit, chickweed and wild onions or garlic. Apply on a warm, calm day.
- Preemergence weed management programs should begin in late February to prevent summer annual weeds.

Ornamentals

- Black spot, botrytis and powdery mildew still love your roses. *Camellia japonica* flower blight could ravage your camellia blooms. Sanitation is the key to disease management. Rake and destroy fallen leaves and blooms. Mulch with well-composted material.
- Landscape with container, balled-and-burlapped and bare root plants as soil conditions allow.

- Fertilize established woody plants according to soil test recommendations in late February.
- Prune deciduous summer-flowering trees and shrubs and broadleaf evergreens. Overgrown shrubs in need of renewal may be pruned to 8 to 12 inches tall in late February.

Edibles

- Plant asparagus crowns, cabbage, carrots, lettuce, onions, peas, radishes, rutabagas, turnips, spinach and other cool-season veggies according to the best dates in your region.
- Apply dormant oil to fruit trees to manage scale, mites and other insects.

Read Extension pest management publications now.

- Prune fruit trees according to guidelines in Extension publication AG-29: Training and Pruning Fruit Trees. *Mike Wilder*



Extension's *Successful Gardener*SM program provides timely, research-based horticultural information. The newsletter is part of the statewide horticulture program which includes Extension's *Successful Gardener*SM Regional Seminar Series and county workshops. We publish 10 issues per year. Comments concerning *Successful Gardener*SM may be sent to:

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All Agents of N.C. Cooperative Extension

Ask for Extension's *Successful Gardener*SM newsletter at one of your local garden centers each month!

For a list of garden centers where you can find *Successful Gardener*SM, please call (704)336-2561 or visit Cooperative Extension on the web at <http://www.successfulgardener.org>

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