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ASHFORD PARK NURSERIES

Town Office
802 Grant Building

Nurseries
Peachtree Road

ATLANTA, GA.

DIRECTIONS

FOR THE

PLANTING AND CARE OF ORNAMENTAL PLANTS

RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE LIFE OF PLANTS

In accordance with the custom of other nurseries we do not guarantee the life of plants. To do so would make it necessary to increase the prices to cover possible loss and the careful planter would be paying for the losses of the careless one. We could not replace one loss without replacing all, hence our strict rule of replacing none.

We endeavor to grow, dig and ship plants so that they will not only live, but thrive with as little check to their growth as is possible. Occasionally a plant will die even with the best

care and attention and without apparent reason. This happens with us on our own grounds where they have expert handling.

You have the privilege of returning, when delivered by our trucks, any plants that are unsatisfactory, but when accepted our responsibility ceases.

Claims for damages on railroads due to delay in handling or other causes must be made directly to them by the consignee. We cannot handle this for you although we hold ourselves in readiness to render any assistance possible.

PLANTING DIRECTIONS

Time to Plant

Plants which drop their leaves in winter are best transplanted only when the leaves are off. Usually this is from November to March with us. Evergreens are never quite dormant and are usually moved with a ball of earth on the roots. This allows them to be transplanted a little earlier and later than deciduous plants. Fall planting is better than Spring for nearly everything in this climate. Oak trees are slow to become dormant in the fall and should not be transplanted early. Spring planting is considered best for them.

Size to Plant

The best size for planting depends on so many things that no rule can be given. Usually

our customers are best satisfied when they purchase moderately large sizes for general planting. For important situations it pays to get plants large enough to give the effect desired at once. We have large specimens of all kinds most often desired in large sizes, including Retinisporas, 12 and 15 feet high, Water Oaks 25 feet high, etc. Most of these will transplant as safely as smaller sizes.

Distance Apart to Plant

Shrubs may be planted as close together as is desired, provided that those of the same kind are planted together in good sized masses. Mass planting does not allow the stronger to crowd out the weaker, and also makes for better design. Usually in shrubbery borders the plants are set about as far apart as they are

high. Four to five foot plants, four to five feet apart, etc. Tall, narrow growing types are planted closer together. Under favorable conditions plantings made this close will give a solid mass of foliage the second summer.

Soil Preparation

Most of the plants described in this booklet need a good garden soil to do their best. On an average their soil requirements are about the same as those of the average field crop or garden plant. Around most new homes in the city the soil is not as good as this. The top soil has been graded or washed away. It must be improved if the plants are to thrive.

The best way to improve any poor soil is to add humus, decaying organic matter. The red clay that we have all through the Piedmont belt makes an excellent soil if deeply broken up and mixed with plenty of old, well-rotted manure. Liberal quantities should be used. You are endeavoring to permanently change the composition of the soil, not merely adding a little plant food.

Mixing sand and clay gives a substance resembling concrete suitable for roads, but not for plants.

The soil may be entirely changed, the poor thrown out and good brought in. This is the ideal way where good soil can be obtained. It takes more time and labor.

Chemical fertilizers give only a temporary effect and do not help in dry weather.

Dynamiting the holes often helps, particularly for trees.

If the plants are to go close together it will be best to prepare a bed for them, as you would for salvia or cannas, but deeper. This can be done before planting time.

If the plants are to go far apart it is easier to dig a separate hole for each one. If the soil is unusually good the holes need be no larger than is necessary to get the plants in without crowding the roots. Ordinarily the holes for shrubs are dug at least two feet across and eight to twelve inches deep. They should have a flat bottom and vertical sides. A forkful or two of old manure is thrown in and mixed thoroughly and deeply into the bottom. The holes are then ready for the plants.

Unpacking

When the plants come it is best, but not necessary, to open them at once. Unless the planting is to be completed within a few hours they should be heeled in. Dig a light trench, place the roots in it and cover them with earth. This takes very little time as they can be placed close together. Wind and sun must not strike the roots. Cold will not hurt them.

If anything seems wrong notify us at once. Damage due to the fault of the railroad or express company should be complained of direct to them and not to us. We are not responsible for the plants after they leave our hands.

Planting

In setting out plants they must go in the ground as deep as they grew in the nursery

and no deeper. Spread the roots out naturally. Do not let them be jammed together. Dig the hole larger if necessary.

In filling in earth about the roots it is safest not to use manure in contact with them. Use damp, but not wet, crumbly earth, and see that it sifts between the roots. Leave no air pockets. It often helps to shake the plant. Tamp the earth as firmly as possible with the foot or stick. This tamping is most important.

Water just before the last two inches of soil are put in. It is not necessary to water deciduous plants in fall and early winter planting. Evergreens at any time, and deciduous plants in the spring need watering after planting.

The last two inches of soil should be added later and left loose. Old manure may be put on as a mulch, but do not bank it against the stems of the plants.

Balled Plants

Evergreens and a few deciduous plants are shipped with a ball of earth still on the roots. If desired they can be set around where they are to go and the effect judged before any holes are dug.

This ball of earth should not be broken. Do not remove the wrapping until the plant is adjusted in the hole just as you want it. Most planters merely loosen the burlap at the top and lay it down in the hole or cut it away with a knife, but do not attempt to pull it out from under the plant. Do not allow a wad of burlap to come between the ball and the dirt you are putting in. Tamp the earth you fill with as firmly as possible and water and finish as with the other plants.

Hedges

For hedges dig a trench at least 18 inches wide and 12 inches deep and prepare it with manure as described for the holes in planting shrubbery. Amoor River Privet, the plant so much used for hedges, is usually set nine inches apart in a single row. To get a fine dense hedge cut it nearly to the ground after planting. When growth starts shear frequently and allow the hedge to increase only a few inches each time. Do not allow the top to get broader than the base or it will shut off the light and the base will be open.

After Planting

Pruning after planting helps. It restores the balance between root and top. Many planters prefer to cut back shrubs severely after transplanting, sacrificing height to induce a fresh, vigorous growth. With plants grown as we grow them it is seldom necessary to do more than remove any undesirable branches entirely and cut back the others slightly, if at all. Much depends on the kind of plant and the effect desired. Some broad-leaved evergreens need to be defoliated.

Watering for the first year during dry weather is a great help. See "Watering," under "Care of Plants." It is well to leave a slight ridge around the plant, particularly on sloping ground, so that the water will not all run off.

CARE OF ORNAMENTAL PLANTS

For the first two or three years after planting trees and shrubs require as much care as garden plants, but no more. Afterward many kinds will more or less take care of themselves, although you must give them a little attention to make them grow just as you want them to. This does not mean any great labor or expense, nor does it require a college education, only intelligent attention.

Cultivation

Cultivate a large circle around each plant or make a bed around the group. Keep the grass and weeds away and a mulch on the ground. This is absolutely necessary the first few years.

Watering

Watering is not usually necessary, but it helps to get newly set out plants through the first summer and helps any plant in dry weather. Plants described in this booklet as needing particularly good soil, plenty of moisture, etc., will not flourish under ordinary conditions unless they are watered during drouth. When you water see that the soil is wet down to the depth of the roots. Set the hose down at the side of the plant and let it run. The ordinary sprinkling wets the ground for only a quarter of an inch and does not help the plant. Twice a week is often enough.

Pruning

Do not prune unless you have some good reason to prune and unless you know exactly what you are doing.

Some good reasons are:

To remove all dead, weak or unsightly growth. This helps appearances and may check the spread of disease. In many spring flowering plants, particularly *Deutzia*, *Weigelia*, *Philadelphus*, *Climbing roses*, and some *Spirea*, the branches that have borne flowers in the spring will not be as vigorous as the new growth. They can be cut out immediately after flowering. The new growth will be encouraged and you will have better foliage in the summer and better flowers the next spring.

To remove branches that are in the way as the lower hanging limbs of trees. It is best to remove these entirely rather than to shorten them.

To keep the plant within bounds. If a shrub is getting too big, do not shear it as you would a hedge. The result will be very stiff and ugly. Cut out the longer branches entirely and leave the shorter untouched to give the natural effect. Some shrubs, such as *abelia*, can be cut back in spring nearly to the ground and made to start over. In a few weeks they are handsomer than ever. Others, like Japanese privet and crape myrtle, can be cut back to short stubs of last year's growth. They will soon throw out long, vigorous new branches.

To improve flowers or fruit. *Hydrangeas*,

buddleia, *callicarpa*, summer flowering *spireas*, hybrid tea roses, and to some extent crape myrtle and *wistaria*, will have much finer flowers or fruit if they are pruned back in spring to a few buds on last season's growth, much on the same principle as grapes are pruned. Some plants will have more or less repeated bloom if the old flowers are cut off as soon as their beauty is gone. Among these are *buddleia*, summer flowering *spirea*, *ceanothus*, etc.

To help the plant grow in its natural form. Sometimes a plant will grow a little one-sided and can be improved by cutting back some branches.

To make the plant grow in some unnatural form, as a hedge or other topiary work. Some conifers, particularly the *retinisporas*, can be sheared like a hedge. It keeps them very dense. This is the only kind of pruning that should be done with hedge shears. Hedges should be trimmed so that the sides are exactly vertical, and the base not cut off from the light by the overhanging of the top.

The following are important points to remember:

Use pruners, not pruning shears, unless you wish to shear the plant into a stiff formal specimen.

Prune so that the scar will heal over quickly. In pruning limbs from trees cut close to the trunk and keep the scar painted until the bark grows over it. In pruning shrubs it is better, but not necessary, to make a diagonal cut close above a bud.

Most spring and early summer flowering shrubs bloom on the wood made the previous year and if this wood is removed by winter pruning they will have no flowers in the spring. These should be pruned just after blooming.

Most summer flowering shrubs, including summer flowering *spirea*, *buddleia*, crape myrtle, *althea*, *callicarpa*, *hydrangea*, *symphoricarpos*, etc., bloom on new wood made in the same season. These can be pruned in winter. The flowers or berries of these are often improved by pruning.

Training

Beside pruning there are various other methods that will suggest themselves to help a plant in the way it should go. Vines usually need something to climb on and can often be made to grow where you want them by simply putting them there.

A branch of a conifer or shrub can often be tied so as to fill up an unpleasant gap.

If a leader of a water oak or *Deodar cedar* is destroyed it is well to tie one of the side shoots to a vertical stake so that it will replace the leader.

Snow and sleet will sometimes weigh down the branches of *arborvitae* and other plants. Shake it off, and if they do not become natural in a few days tie them up in place either to a stake or to each other.

Insects and Disease

The control of most insect pests and plant diseases is not as difficult as is sometimes thought. It is not necessary to be an entomologist and know the names of the insects. You need only notice how they work.

Chewing insects, those that eat the leaves, should have a poison, such as arsenate of lead or arsenate of lime sprayed on the leaves.

Sucking insects, those that do not eat the leaf, but suck the sap from it, cannot be poisoned, but must be suffocated by a "contact insecticide." A strong solution of ordinary soap, 1 oz. to 1½ quarts of water sprayed on them will serve. There are a number of commercial preparations—"Black Leaf Forty," "Schnarr's Mixture,"—and others that are good.

Scale insects, such as San Jose Scale, are sucking insects that are protected by a scale. They usually need something so strong that it would injure the leaves if used in summer. Spray for them in the winter with kerosene emulsion, strong lime sulphur, or Scalecide, a commercial preparation easier to handle.

Borers in the wood are more difficult. Some can be gotten out with a bent wire. Carbon bisulphide forced in the holes will often get them. Fortunately there are very few borers that attack vigorous, healthy branches.

Plant diseases are also more difficult than insects. In order to prevent the disease entering the leaves the latter must be covered with a film of some fungicide. Lime sulphur or Bordeaux mixture are the usual commercial sprays for orchards, but they are difficult to

use and mark the foliage. Ammoniacal copper carbonate is better for ornamentals. Potassium sulphide, 1 oz. to 4 gals. of water, is most used for mildew on roses. For rose mildew and other diseases that appear early spray as the leaves are opening, and again after they are full grown.

Directions for these spray materials are usually on the package. They may be purchased at drug stores and seed stores.

Small spray outfits may also be had at the same places.

For further directions see "Spray Callender" Bulletin 53, Georgia State Board of Entomology.

Besides spraying other methods of control will suggest themselves, such as hand picking, burning, cutting out infested branches, etc.

Winter Protection

Only a few of the plants we carry will need any winter protection in ordinary winters at Atlanta. We do not give them any ourselves.

Most of the winter damage is a result not of extreme cold but of sudden cold after a warm spell or of the sun striking the leaves after a cold night. Plants are often hardy in sheltered positions when they would be injured in exposed places. There are some plants that are hardy in a colder climate than ours, but are injured by the sudden changes in the spring.

It is not necessary to use an unsightly covering for slightly tender plants all winter. Provide a neat box to put over the plant at critical times. Remove it not on a sunny morning but on the first moderate night.

Visitors are welcome at the Nurseries on Peachtree Road every day except Sunday.

Catalog and Price List Free upon request.

Competent advice on Landscape Design without charge to our customers.