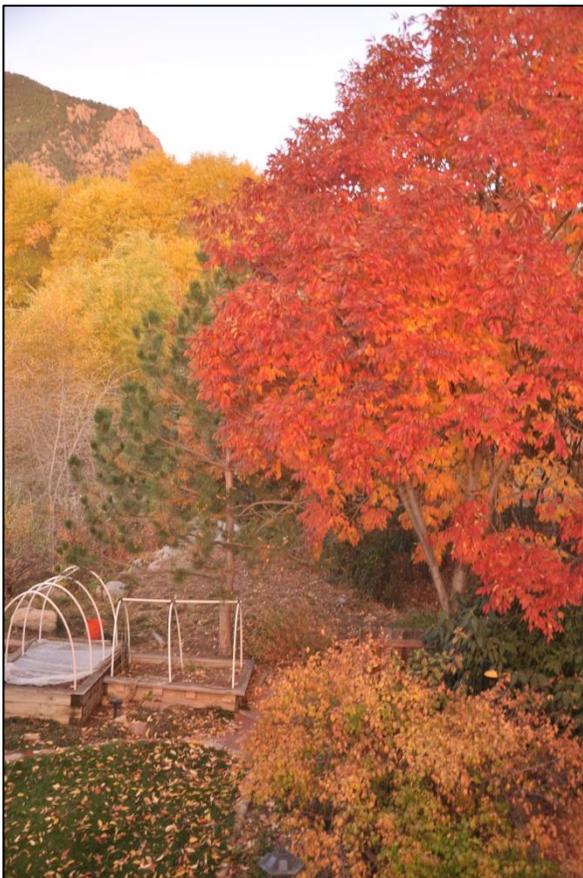


## Year Round Gardening

### November Tree Check-up

Fredricka Bogardus, Colorado Master Gardener

Once the leaves and needles are raked up, it is tempting to stop thinking about tree health. In fact, this is a great time of the year to do a few things for your trees. Here is a short list of tasks that should be completed over the next couple of months.



**Pruning:** Deciduous trees are best pruned during their dormant period. Take a look at all trees for signs of diseased, damaged, broken branches. Remove these branches whenever you observe them. Look for branches with brown leaves that persist on the stem, on the most recent growth.

There are two phases of treatment both of which you can take care during the late fall and winter.

The first step is to prune off the diseased branches. If you are doing this during the growing season you must use a good deal of precaution, cleaning the pruning blade between each cut. During the dormant season the bacteria are wintering over in the cankers you will find in the diseased branches. Cross contamination is not as likely because the bacteria are not active. Just remove the effected branches below the damage (look for the cankers and remove below those).

The second treatment step is to contact an arborist and schedule a bactericide spray during the bloom season. A good arborist will show up at just the right time to apply the antibiotic, when the tree is in bloom. The antibiotic will kill the bacteria, the rain will wash them away. For more information on fire blight management consult the Cornell University fact sheet on this disease at <http://www.nysipm.cornell.edu/factsheets/treefruit/diseases/fb/fb.asp>.

**Sunscald or southwest injury on young trees:** Southwest injury is bark damage which frequently occurs on the southwest side of young trees. It is a problem in Colorado because we often have warm afternoons in the winter, followed by very cold nights. The afternoon sun heats up the cells under the bark and they become more active during the warm afternoon. When the temperature falls rapidly at night the cells are exposed to damage. Symptoms include split, and eventually missing patches of bark. Trees planted in proximity to reflective surfaces can suffer the same problem on different orientations toward the sun.

This is a situation in which an ounce of prevention really is worth a pound of cure. Susceptible trees can be wrapped with paper tape. Simply wrap the trunk of young trees with the tape. The tape should come off in April. My way of remembering the timing is on by Thanksgiving and off by Easter.

**Winter water** If we have another dry winter, water trees at least once a month.. Do it on days when the temperature is above 40°F. Try to apply water slowly, as early as possible in the day. If the ground is covered with snow you do not need to water.

Year Round Gardening will be on break for a few months. See you next spring.

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