Hope you are enjoying cooler weather and the end of the smoke! I was short on time this month. I have listed a few timely articles that are posted on the Master Gardeners of Lake Tahoe website for you to check as far as monthly tips go.

FALL INTO LAWN CARE

KEEP YOUR HOUSE FIREWISE

WHAT TO DO ABOUT WOODPECKERS

We hope you will join us for the final GYO workshop. Also, protect yourself from wildfire smoke with the tips below. Enjoy David Long's articles on garlic varieties that do well in Tahoe and his ode to the Lodgepole Pine. Karen Price fills you in on sheet mulching, an efficient way to change your landscape!

Next month we will have winterizing tips, tool care techniques, and more!

FALL WORKSHOP!

Wednesday, October 12, 6 p.m. ZOOM with the Grow Your Own Team and learn about growing **Microgreens** indoors. The class is FREE, but there is a $10 charge for plants. Sign up **HERE**. The pick up date for greens and garlic will be Saturday, October 15 at three locations. Check back with Slow Food for the details!

With the recent Mosquito Fire smoke affecting Lake Tahoe last month, please check this information from UC ANR!

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
Agriculture and Natural Resources

Fact Sheet: Protecting Oneself from Wildfire Smoke

Wildfire Smoke

Wildfire smoke contains water vapor, fine particles, and many different chemicals, all of which can lead to negative health impacts. Smoke inhalation leads to pollutants being able to enter the lungs.

Image: Santiago Canyon fire

At Risk Groups

Most people are able to recover quickly from smoke exposure, without long term health impacts. Some groups are at a higher risk level for negative health impacts.

- Adults Over 65
- Pregnant People
- People with Lung Conditions
- People with Heart Conditions
- People with Social Vulnerabilities

Dangers of Exposure

Short-term Symptoms

- Burning Eyes
- Runny Nose
- Chest Pain
- Fatigue
- Coughing
- Wheezing
- Difficulty Breathing
- Rapid Heartbeat

Long-term Symptoms

- Reduced Lung Function
- Chronic Bronchitis
- Worsening of Asthma
- Heart Failure

Reducing Smoke Exposure

Monitor Air Quality: The Air Quality Index (AQI) reports information air pollutants, including particulate matter (PM2.5 or PM10) and ozone. Monitoring the AQI is a good method for knowing when there may be harmful levels of smoke in the air. Visit www.airnow.gov or www2.purpleair.com to view the current air quality in your area.

Stay Indoors: Only when indoor air quality is better than outdoor air quality and the risk of overheating is avoidable.

- Pets should also be kept indoors when possible, as they may experience similar side effects from smoke exposure.

Sheet Mulching!! Time to Trim Down the Turf

Karen Price, UC Master Gardener

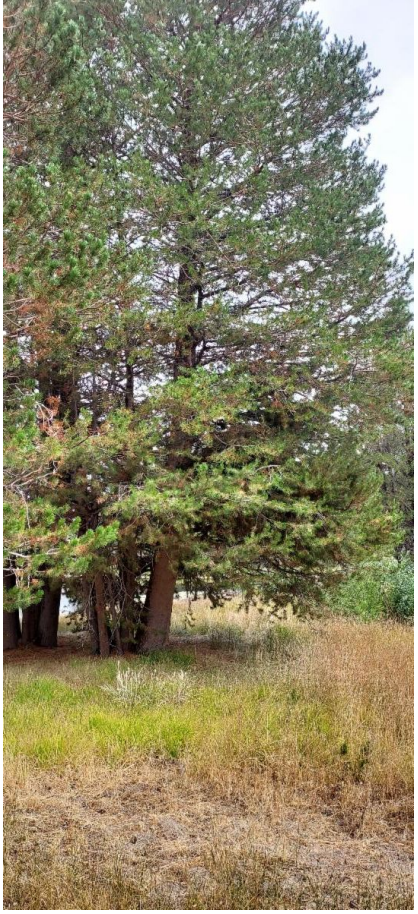
After rebuilding our home following the Angora Fire 14 years ago, my husband and I decided to plant sod on three sides of our home. Neighbors on both sides of us chose similarly. I think that we all wanted to see instant green, when around us were only charred Jeffrey Pines and blackened soil and ash.

For many reasons, especially involving water conservation, it is time to rethink what our yard should be. Jen Cressy (in STPUD hat) came out recently to measure the area that we will first convert to native landscaping. She explained STUPD's Turf Buy Back Rebate Program. Jen advised us to do part of the yard this fall and save another area for spring. She shared ideas about what we might plant after the lawn is removed. One of the most exciting parts was her description of the sheet mulching technique. We can't wait to get started. Voles have begun the work ahead of us, and if we do this correctly, we shouldn't have weeds! So cool! For those who might like to explore this, the step-by-step instructions are included. And the link to the program explanation and requirements:

https://stpud.us/asset/8985/

The other good news: $1.50/square foot rebate; up to 2000 square feet. That's up to $3000 to help with new and beautiful native landscaping!

Plant Feature for October



Lodgepole Pine (*Pinus contorta*)
David Long, UC Master Gardener

The lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta* var. *murrayana*) is one of the more common conifers in the Tahoe Basin. Easily recognized by its two needle leaf bundles, the only area pine having that characteristic. Commonly referred to locally as a Tamarack Pine – a synonym for the Sierra form of the tree – it is found from Lake level to well over 9,000 ft. Frequently found in dense thickets, and in areas with a high groundwater table or other year-round moisture source. The lodgepole is shorter at maturity than the Sugar pine and Ponderosa/Jeffery, rarely over 80 tall, but still taller than the Pinyon Pine. Needles are 1-2.5 inches in length. Bark is fine scaled and usually greyish in color sometimes with an orange hue. Cones are 2-4 inches tall and may be found in clusters of two or more and can persist on the tree for multiple seasons. The cones of the Sierra form of lodgepole are not fire adapted (serotinous) as opposed to the Rocky Mountain variety (*latifolia*). With light weight seeds that are wind dispersed and high seed germination rates, the Tamarack pine often reseeds burned areas quickly, and at high densities giving rise to stands of similar aged trees. The tree has a shallow root system and is susceptible to wind fall. Dense stands of the tree also lend to attack from bark beetle, with generally high mortality rates.

The lodgepole pine is an important tree for wildlife with some 50 birds and 30 mammals identified as using the tree for either food, cover or habitat. The wood is noted as being straight grained with tight knots making it usable for commercial lumber applications. The dense stands cause trees to grow slowly and straight making it valuable to indigenous peoples for use as its name implies. Widely planted in Europe and New Zealand for lumber and erosion control, its high seed germination rate led some entities to list it as an invasive species.

The lodgepole pine was “discovered” and first described by Scottish botanist David Douglas using the coastal variety for the description. The twisted and gnarled variety (var. *contorta*) is only found along the coast and is referred to as the beach pine. Interesting sidebar: Douglas died on a subsequent expedition to the Hawaiian Islands in 1834 under very murky circumstances at 36 years of age.

References:

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Click HERE to download Dave Long's article about the best garlic varieties for the Lake Tahoe area!

What would you like to read about?

Let us know! Call or email us at the address below. We will research and write what you need to know about!

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