
THORNY BUSH

Newsletter of the Huntington Rose Society; Huntington, WV

Affiliated with the American Rose Society

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Dates to Remember

Tuesday, April 17th The regular meeting of the Huntington Rose Society will be held at the Central Christian Church, 1202 Fifth Avenue, on Tuesday, April 17th beginning at 7:30 pm. The program for the evening will be "New Roses for 2017" by Gary and Monica. Hospitality will be provided by Gary and Monica and will be Romeo's Pizza.

May 4-6, 2018 The 2018 National Miniature/Miniflora Conference and Rose Show will be held in Jacksonville, FL and hosted by the Jacksonville Rose Society. For more information, contact Ray Guillebeau, 904-777-1256, kokosrose1@gmail.com.

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President's Message

Gary O. Rankin

Spring is SLOWLY making its way into West Virginia. A few days ago we had snow at our home, and this weekend temperatures will be approaching 80

degrees. I'm hoping that the warmer weather will be here to stay before too long so that the roses in the basement can go outside for a while to acclimate before getting planted. But cold weather can still show up in our area until mid-May, so be prepared.

For most of us, April is the time to remove our winter protection, starting a feeding program and do our spring pruning. Monica has articles in this issue about what to do in your rose garden during April and pruning basics. It is always good to refresh our memories on the basics.

Come join us for the April meeting and learn about some of the newer roses on the market. If you grow any of the roses, share your thoughts about whether the roses are good ones or not. See you there!

APRIL IN THE GARDEN

Monica Valentovic

April is a busy month in the garden. This is the month that we start to move from winter cover to reviving our garden and bringing life back to roses and other plants. This year, the effort may be bigger than previous years due to the varied temperature

fluxes. One day we have 20's and snow and 4 days later it is in the 70's!

However, the actions we take this month will help our roses get off to a strong start and soon roses will be in bloom in your garden. I also want to once again emphasize, that the roses may need severe pruning but they will come back. Don't be hasty removing roses that have severe damage. The roses will come back provided they have strong roots and are properly fed and you have some luck.

April is a time to put down your organic fertilizer. Mills Magic Mix is used by many growers and it provides a slow release of nutrients and amends the soil. All fertilizers can be applied in April as your plants are hungry for a good shot of Nitrogen to begin the growing season. The microbial breakdown of fertilizers and fixation of nitrogen by bacteria requires a soil temperature of 55 degrees or higher. We keep a soil thermometer in our garden and it provides a good marker of when the soil is finally warming up and the beginning of the growing season. I measured our soil temperature on **April 8 and it was 50 degrees so our garden is still too cool for bacteria to fix nitrogen.** However, we will still apply our Mills Mix as the temperature will be above 55 perhaps in another week.

Many rose growers are anxious to uncover their roses. However, once you uncover your roses and complete your Spring pruning it is important to be vigilant of the weather conditions. April already has shown us significant temperature variations between freezing temperatures to upper 60's all in a 24 hour period. You may need to cover the tender growth in the early evening to prevent frost damage. Another option is to spray all vegetation with water in the early morning prior to direct sunshine on the plants. I have read that an application of liquid seaweed may reduce freeze damage as it provides seaweed extract which will lower the freezing temperature on the leaf.

Another issue that is common in the spring is wind and wilting of new growth. New growth is tender and is more susceptible to evaporation when exposed to wind. April afternoons are often breezy and unless plants are sufficiently watered, new growth may wilt. We often lightly water new growth in the early afternoon (around 2-3 PM) to allow for plenty of time for the water to evaporate. Watering helps the plant handle windy conditions and reduce wilt of new growth. It is very important to thoroughly water new plants as they do not have a sufficient root system to feed new growth. So far we have had a very wet Spring with easily 1" of

rain each week. But if we do not have adequate rainfall, then you need to water your roses.

New growth is more tender than mature canes. It is good to lightly support new canes with a thin green plastic garden stake. This reduces the potential of breakage of new canes in April breezes.

Once roses are uncovered it is time to start preventing methods to reduce disease. If you have not yet done so, clean out all old leaves and canes from your rose beds. The removal of plant debris will lessen the spread of fungal disease. April is the best time to begin preventive measures of spraying roses as soon as the leaves start to come out. Once you begin to spray keep up a regular program every 7-10 days until the end of October. Be sure to wear protective gear of nitrile gloves, mask and goggles.

Although April chores of removing mulch, pruning, spraying and weeding are not too exciting. Remember that this effort will be rewarded later on in the summer. Good luck in your garden.

Spring Pruning Monica Valentovic

It will soon be time to begin Spring pruning of the roses. The weather has been quite variable so far, but new

growth is starting to develop within the garden. Rose gardens in protected areas are showing very little dieback. Our garden on the other hand, has black canes above the mulch. This winter was very cold in January and so far April has been cool. But Spring may be arrive in the next few days with a forecast of highs in the 70's. We will probably prune our roses the last week of April but some gardens may open their roses earlier.

Why Prune Roses in Spring? We prune roses in the Spring for several reasons. First, roses are pruned to remove dead or damaged canes. Dead or severally damaged canes can act as a reservoir for diseases and insects that can further damage the healthy portion of the plant. Dead canes also need to be removed to allow more air circulation and to provide room for new basal shoots. Secondly, roses need to be pruned to remove any growth that is weak. Weak canes will not promote vigorous or healthy growth. For example, if a rose bush has 3 canes that are 1/2" in diameter or larger and one cane that is less than 1/4" in diameter, the smallest cane should be pruned. Third, for most roses pruning helps to shape the plant to promote air flow through the center of the bush. By maintaining a good air flow, the occurrence of diseases such as blackspot can be reduced. And lastly, pruning

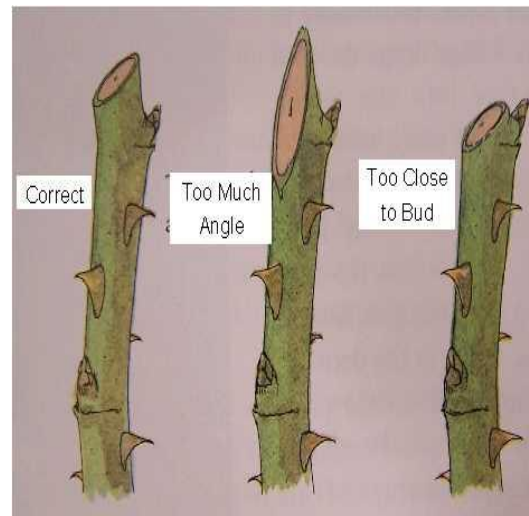
stimulates the growth of new canes and helps to stimulate the regeneration of the bush. It is difficult to decide which canes to prune, but remember, that you are setting the tone for the number of canes that will begin growth for you plant with this Spring pruning. Also remember that you do no justice to your plant to prune conservatively. If you prune a cane before white pith is present, you will have a weaker shoot that will die in June or July. So prune carefully but thoroughly.

Are all Roses Pruned the Same Way? -

Hybrid teas, grandifloras, and floribundas are essentially pruned in the same manner. This technique requires individual cuts to be made to remove unwanted weak growth, small forks in main canes, suckers, and dead or damaged cane material.

Cuts should be made until white pith is revealed within the cane. For proper cutting of a cane, make your cut at a 45 degree angle approximately 1/4" above an outwardly facing bud eye. This distance allows the bud eye to develop properly and produce a cane that will grow away from the center of the bush (for maximum air flow). The cut on the bud eye side of the cane should also be higher than the cut to the inside of the cane. The cut is made at a 45 degree angle in order to reduce accumulation of water at

the site that will promote disease growth.



After the pruning cut is made, some people cover the cut with some type of sealing material to prevent sawflies or carpenter bees from boring into the cane and laying eggs. The larva produced from these insect eggs are called cane borers, and they will eat the pith of the cane and cause severe damage to the cane. There are many types of sealing compounds that can be used to block the insects from laying eggs in the open pruning cut, including orange shellac, carpenter's glue and tree pruning sealant (that black tarry stuff that gets all over everything!). I have found that as long as you cut the cane to a minimum of a 45 degree angle, cane borers will not enter the cane.

Miniature roses can be pruned the same way as hybrid teas or floribundas, but many folks are happy to take a pair of hedge trimmers

(manual or electric) and lop off the minis about 12" high or so. Then, they just let them grow. If you use this approach, make sure that you still remove the dead wood and twiggy growth for the reasons mentioned above. Gary prefers to trim the canes of the minis individually, but it does take a lot longer, and the "mass trimming" approach is easier on the back.

Pruning climbers and shrub roses is usually done to remove only dead and damaged wood in the spring. It is best to know your climber prior to pruning. Some climbers bloom only on second year growth. Others only bloom on lateral shoots from the main cane. Consequently, trimming the canes may reduce the amount of bloom the bush will generate next year. Canes older than four or five years old should be removed to stimulate the production of more basal breaks and help with vigor. Once-blooming climbers should be pruned after the initial bloom cycle is complete. Established canes can then be cut back to where they are about a pencil width in diameter. This will allow new growth to develop between June and October. Side stems that have bloomed can be cut to the lowest five-leaflet stem, which should be about 1 to 2 inches from the main cane. This pruning process will aid in promoting bloom along the entire length of cane.

Old garden roses should not be pruned as if they were hybrid teas. Remove dead or damaged canes and prune lightly. Last years canes should be pruned to promote bloom production, and a few of the older canes on an established bush should be pruned back to stimulate new cane formation. Severe pruning of an old garden rose can do more harm than good.

After the roses have been pruned and the ends of the cut canes sealed, the pruned canes should be discarded. The roses and ground should then be sprayed with a fungicide to prevent any fungal spores from getting established in the garden. You can use a direct contact fungicide such as copper at a growing dose since the buds and leaves are developing on the rosebushes.

HRS OFFICERS FOR 2018

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|--|---|
| The Huntington Rose Society officers for 2018 are listed below, along with their contact information. | |
| President | Gary Rankin 304-697-0321 |
| Vice President | Archie Snedegar 304-755-9486 |
| Secretary | Linda Snedegar 304-755-9486 |
| Treasurer | Monica Valentovic 304-697-0321 |
| Assist. Treasurer | Beverly Delidow 304-429-4211 |

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Make checks payable to Huntington Rose Society and mail to:

CHECK ONE

_____ **SINGLE \$8**

Monica Valentovic, Treasurer
109 Cedar Court, Lavalette, WV 25535.

_____ **FAMILY \$12**

Additional Contribution: \$ _____

Levels - Prince (\$10-25); Princess (\$26-50); King (\$51-99); Queen (\$100 or more)

The Huntington Rose Society is a 501 C-3 non-profit organization and any donations are tax deductible.

The Thorny Bush
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