

Plantline

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A Newsletter from Carlton Plants LLC

Aronia

By Jason Bizon



Aronia melanocarpa 'Autumn Magic'

Walking through your local Saturday market you may happen across a pleasant palatable surprise in the form of a jam from the locally picked Aronia bushes. They're quite tart when fresh picked, hence the name Chokeberry.

These little clusters of red or purple berries make quite the table fare and may come in multiple forms. If toast spread is not your thing, perhaps try drinking some of the juice these fruits produce in a sugar induced drink or in the form of a libation. Aronia can be broken into two specific species which are both

very similar. The first is *arbutifolia*, or Red Chokeberry. The second is *melanocarpa*, common name Black Chokeberry, which is not to be confused with its distant cousin from the Rosaceae family Choke Cherry (*Prunus virginiana*). To this author both species lack the tight clean hedge look that would fit into a topiary type landscape. However, if one were to forgo its "hedge-ability" attributes it more than makes up in its profusion of peach-like flower clusters, berries and brilliant fall colors. Be mindful that the local feather population may be racing to beat you to the fall harvest. If shrub form is not for your application, don't overlook the adaptability of this plant in tree form or on a standard. Although a little more maintenance is needed annually to keep the trunk clean from suckers, these forms are a little easier to harvest and don't require the bending that the shrub form may. For those gardens or landscapes with a heavy design toward sustainability the Aronia shrub fits in right next to the blueberries and huckleberries.



Aronia melanocarpa 'Autumn Magic' fall color

And now let us welcome the new year, full of things that have never been.

Rainer Maria Rilke

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Carlton Field Reps

Arbutifolia's most popular selection goes by the name of 'Brilliant' or in proper nomenclature 'Brilliantissima'. It is one of our most popular selections of Aronia. Chokeberry has a wide range of hardiness from zone 4 to zone 9. Its adaptability to various soil types make it a good choice for borders and midsized screens growing 6-8' tall. Coastal and wetter communities will appreciate its tolerance to even the harshest conditions Mother Nature can throw at it. But before she sends winter your way 'Brilliantissima' gives a beautiful fall good night, turning the glossy green leaves of summer to a brilliant scarlet show. The red serrated spear tipped leaves are coupled with matching juicy red fruit that hold onto the stems long after the leaves are raked up. The fruit is small enough (4-10 mm) to be highly noticeable and easily harvested but do not leave a wintry mess on the ground below. Standing like a beacon in the fog, the fruit is usually consumed by the local bird population. 'Brilliantissima' is a stand out to garden centers as deer do not find it all too edible. These are welcome words to homeowners tired of watching their landscapes torn through by the ungulate population while at the same time providing much needed fruits for other more desirable creatures.

Aronia melanocarpa does not usually develop much autumn color. Sharing similar zones (3-8) as the

Arbutifolia this selection tends to remain more compact and bush-like with a height and spread of 3-5'. Unlike 'Brilliantissima' the berries of 'Autumn Magic' are jet black in color and usually the types wines and juices are made from. When the seasons are right the berries engulf the plant making it hang its head in an effort to support its fruits. They do not last as long on the 'Brilliantissima'. The purple wine colors contrast the oranges and reds of the other fall leaves most likely already on the ground. *Melanocarpas* do not change their leaves in unison. Walking by on a crisp October day you will notice the color splashes mixed throughout the plant, with some leaves various shades of green and others starting their fall turn. Having been introduced in the moist low lands of British Columbia, wet soggy feet do not bother 'Autumn Magic'. It is as tough as its previously mentioned counterpart.

Aronia fits well into the sustainable gardens market as a very durable plant that will be sure to please your landscape customer. Wildlife and fall color enthusiasts will be drawn to these selections either in fire engine red, purple or black merlot. Either way there is something for everyone.



Aronia arbutifolia 'Brilliantissima'



Aronia arbutifolia 'Brilliantissima'



Aronia arbutifolia 'Brilliantissima'

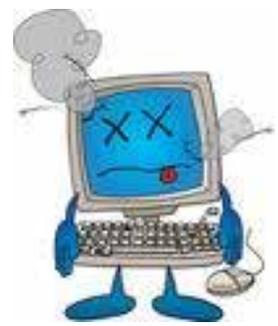


Aronia mixed in a hedgerow



Aronia melanocarpa 'Autumn Magic'

Be Prepared ! Make a Plan



By Jeanne DeHaan

Famous author J.K. Rowling, who wrote the *Harry Potter* tales, once said: "Never trust anything that can think for itself if you can't see where it keeps its brain." While we may not trust our computers at times, we all depend on them. After all, inventory needs to be tracked, sales orders need to be entered, truck manifests need to be produced, invoices need to be generated, and cash receipts need to be recorded.

We all use computers to do these plus a myriad of other tasks that keep our nursery businesses running. Unfortunately, computers do fail, whether it's due to age or power surges. And sometimes, disasters such as bad weather or fires happen, damaging or destroying the office building as well as the computers. For the past several years, a concern at Carlton Plants had been that the computer servers were aging and could quit working at any time. The tape backups were unreliable and often failed. So, three years ago, a more comprehensive computer contingency plan was created.

The purpose of the plan was to be prepared in the event of computer failure or if the main office was damaged or destroyed. The goal of the plan was to make it as painless and economical as possible and to be up and running critical functions within a specified number of days.

The plan addressed two scenarios, server failure and main office disruption or loss. The first priority was to replace the servers, but this brought about many questions. After all, the old system had done the job for many years, so it was kind of scary, not to mention expensive, to think of replacing it. Would the existing software be compatible with the new servers? Would the old servers be

able to run side by side with the new ones for a time, until it was certain that the new servers were doing their job? The new system would eliminate backup tapes by using a backup server. It was decided to invest in an additional server onsite in an alternate location rather than rely on a remote backup service. Ideally, the backup server would be in a different building other than the main office, but where was the best location? Finding a location for the main office on a temporary basis should it be needed was the second part of the contingency plan. After exploring a few alternatives, the best solution seemed to be to convert part of the main warehouse lunchroom into temporary office space. The lunchroom could easily be divided into cubicles with movable partitions. Due to budget constraints, installation of electrical and phone lines was put off for a later date. With the addition of desks, telephones, computers and printers, the goal was to be up and running in a week's time. A list of all purchases needed is kept on file and current to speed up this process in an emergency.

With questions and concerns in hand, a meeting took place with the computer vendor. They proposed the purchase of two master servers, a primary server and a secondary backup server. Within each master server there was a server for the Windows operating system and a server for the Linux operating system. The proposal included Linux software, hard drives, multi-port switches, cabling and labor for installation. The primary server is located in the main office and the backup server is located in the main warehouse building across the parking lot. There is a wireless connection between the two servers. If the primary server goes down the computer vendor can either switch things over remotely via the internet or a technician can come out and do it manually. Total cost

of the server replacement project was about \$40,000. Once the new servers were in place a testing phase was employed to verify that the conversion was successful.

It was useful to assemble a computer contingency notebook. This invaluable resource is a "go-to" place if something happened to the office. The contents of the notebook include important contacts, a list of suppliers and vendors, customer information and maps and diagrams. All employees completed a survey to assess office equipment and supplies on hand to make it easier to replace things if needed. Employees were also asked about their procedures for backing up files, cleaning up older unwanted files, managing emails and avoiding spam.

Meetings were held in each department to give information to employees about recommended computing practices. Recommendations included saving files and getting rid of old ones, defragging and disk cleanup, and use of anti-spyware programs.

A mock system crash was conducted to test the backup server's performance and everything seemed to go smoothly. The system will be tested annually and recommended practices will be reviewed periodically with employees.

While planning can be time-consuming and easy to postpone, it is hoped that sharing these ideas may be of benefit to you in your business.



Appreciating our Surroundings

By Allan Elliott



Hawk visiting the office

Due to the nature of our business, many nurseries are located in a rural setting. Regardless of location, each has elements that make it interesting and special in its own way. However, as we travel the same roads and arrive at the same place day after day for years it's easy to take our surroundings for granted!

One of the enjoyable sights around Carlton Plants is the abundance of birds throughout the year. In particular there is a population of various raptors of all sizes and types. They range from a variety of hawks, owls, kites, harriers, osprey, kestrels and even bald eagles. Crows, ravens and vultures are also regular visitors. They work the fields, ditches, fence rows, rivers and ponds to feed themselves. Their numbers are significant

enough that sightings are routine yet interesting.

Over the past five plus years, the nursery has installed raptor poles as perches along fence rows, farm roads, scion orchards, ponds and wildlife buffers. The perches receive regular use as these birds of prey work the landscape to keep themselves fed and they help keep the rodent population in check.

Oregon provides opportunity for nesting of various species as well. Most noticeable is that of the osprey nest just north of



Using the raptor pole

the nursery (4 feet diameter x 18 inches tall) sitting atop a 50 foot power pole. It provides seasonal interest from April when adults arrive through September when the offspring and adults migrate south.



This past summer a Carlton employee found an osprey struggling on the ground beneath the nest.

Close observation showed that the bird had both legs hooked with a large five inch flatfish lure. After subduing the bird, it was taken to a wildlife certified veterinarian and rehabilitation clinic in Salem for care. This event serves an example of how awareness of our surroundings can add interest to our lives, particularly all the bird watchers at Carlton Plants.



Osprey nest

Raptor Facts:

A raptor is a bird of prey known for its predatory habit of feeding on other animals.

Raptors have 3 eyelids, top, bottom and lateral. The lateral protects the eyes during flight and feeding.

A Red-tailed Hawk can spot a field mouse from 100 feet.

A Hawk's vision is 8x greater than that of a human.

Owls can hear a mouse step on a twig up to 75 feet away or detect a rodent burrowing under the snow.

The wingspan of an eagle can vary from six to seven feet.

Falcons can fly at over 100 miles per hour.

Osprey dive in the water for fish snatching them with their razor sharp talons.

Vultures lack a syrinx (bird vocal cord) so its only sounds are grunts or hisses.

Unlike other Hawks, Harriers rely heavily on their sense of hearing to capture prey.

A TIME FOR CHANGE

By Allan Elliott

Carlton Plants has been a part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Oregon Department of Agriculture's Virus Certification Program for forty years. This process ensures that trees, shrubs and rootstocks in the Prunus, Pyrus, Malus and Cydonia genuses are free of detrimental viruses and are certified for shipment nationally and internationally.

The program establishes guidelines for growers to follow for producing V.C. seed, seedlings, layers, scion wood and finished trees. A critical element of this process is to establish Virus Certified mother stock in soil that is void of harmful disease and nematodes or weeds that can harbor them. As with many things the guidelines are continually being revised and upgraded. The new proposed Nation Clean Plant Network standards encouraged Carlton Plants to establish a new Virus Certified Scion Orchard.

Work on the project began in 2010 and involved individuals from throughout the company that were associated with the V.C. program. The planning was comprehensive and covered issues and concerns ranging from:

- **Location and necessary acreage**
- **Soil quality, drainage and compost use**
- **Soil testing, pH and nutrient levels**
- **Grass cover between rows**
- **Roads, irrigation and deer fencing**
- **Rows, plant spacing and labeling**
- **Equipment width and turning radiuses**
- **Organization of the orchard for the planting of various products and genuses**
- **Involvement of O.D.A. – approval**
- **The production of many new plant materials for replanting**
- **A timeline and budget**
- **A planting and maintenance manual**



Each element of the plan was studied, researched and discussed for making the best final decision. Plans became actions as the project was phased in over the next three years. The 12 acre orchard is now being planted and will be for years to come. Soon the O.D.A. will be inspecting, sampling and testing plants for certification. We are hopeful that this area will serve our needs for V.C. propagation materials for the next three to four decades.



Foreground - First planting
Background - Field prepped for spring planting



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Sales Corner

Many good items are still left on our inventory.

Visit our website carltonplants.com for the most current listing. From the Home Page click on *Availability* then select *With or Without pricing* for Trees, Shrubs or Rootstocks. After entering the password, *bareroot*, be sure to click the *Submit* button to open the page.

Winter Tradeshows

National Green Expo	January 5-6	Booth 409
Great Lakes Expo	January 6-8	Booth 617
Montana Green Expo	January 8-9	Booth 3C
Northern Green Expo	January 8-10	Booth 1032
MANTS	January 8-10	Booth 809
CENTS	January 13-15	Booth 1913
Green & Growin	January 16-17	Booth 723
Idaho Hort Expo	January 22-24	Booth 302
Great Plains Expo	February 3-4	Booth 13
New England Grows	February 5-7	Booth 3004
Pro Green Expo	February 12-14	Booth 624
NorCal	February 13	Booth 739



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