

MOVING CONIFERS

Since my last article the warmer weather has arrived and a sudden burst of activity can be seen spontaneously erupting as we emerge from our homes with more vigor. We all seem to be out there planning where we are going to plant or sow new things during the coming season. Also thinking about what didn't work in our gardens last year and how we could make those things work better this year.



I have been doing a lot of planning for the gardens I maintain as I have numerous small to medium sized conifers that are just in the wrong place and so I have been moving them.

We can lift and relocate many moderate size conifers with much success at most times of the year [except early May to mid September] if we follow some basic guidelines.

The first rule is plan ahead if you have a plant that has grown too big or is just not right in its current location. A year before you plan to move it, you need to root prune.

Root pruning entails cutting a circle around the entire base of your plant. Push a spade into the ground at least 5 inches wider than the foliage above ground spreads. Angle the spade at about 30 degrees towards the trunk and push in the whole depth of the spade's blade. Do this all the way around the plant.

You will be cutting through main roots but you will encourage a fresh regrowth of those small fibrous roots from the middle of the plant. This regrowth will help the plant re-establish once you have moved it. The thick roots on most plants are for anchorage and the small fibrous roots are the ones that take up moisture and nutrients so promoting the smaller roots can only be a good thing.

If you are moving a conifer over 1.5 metres tall, you may well need to cut a circle around the tree that is 8 inches or more away from the trunk. Professional advice is worth seeking if you have a large tree. Feb/Mar/Apr are good months to do this as the conifer has the whole of the following growing season to put on extra roots and may be ready the following autumn but you can root prune at any time of year. You will just have to wait a full 12 months if you do it at another time so as to allow time for the new roots to grow.

Once you are ready to dig the plant out, water vigorously for a week before you do so. Then find the sharpest spade you can lay your hands on and gently dig around the plant. Retaining as much soil around the root ball as you can, make sure that all the roots are cut off as cleanly as possible or disease could well get in and affect the health of the plant.

When you have detached the root ball, roll it onto a sheet, sack or bag. Then tie up the material you have wrapped the plant in so that when you carry it to the new location, no extra soil falls away from the roots.

Fill the new planting hole completely with water and let it soak away fully before you place the conifer in it. All this water soaking deep into the earth will encourage the roots to grow downwards and as such will enable it to cope with summer drought conditions.

If you want to stake the tree, insert the stake before you backfill the hole with soil and compost. That way you won't hammer the stake straight through the middle of the roots you have been nurturing for the previous 12 months.

Back fill the hole with soil and compost once you have removed any wrapping and water the plant well each evening for the following 6 weeks at least. Also spray the foliage with a mist of water each time too. This will help to stop the plant losing water quicker than it can produce new roots to support itself.

It's a hard job to begin the gardening year but an invigorating one for both the gardener and the plant if done properly.

Happy Gardening, STUART MABBUTT
June 2010

SUMMER SUNFLOWER COMPETITION!

Seedlings are now available. See www.madnews.co.uk/moldova for information on how to grow your sunflower and a colouring page. Thanks for your support.
MARCHAM MOLDOVA LIFELINE



**Marcham
Moldova
Lifeline**

NEWS FROM MARCHAM SCHOOL

On Saturday 15th May 4 members of Marcham School Staff took part in the Playtex Moon Walk in London. We walked 26 miles to raise money for breast cancer charities. We set off at 11.40pm on Saturday 15th May from Hyde Park along with 17,000 other walkers, all in decorated bras (even the men). As you can see from the picture [on the cover] we all had to put several layers back on as it was very cold during the night but were still smiling at the half way mark.

We would like to thank all the parents, grandparents and children of Marcham School who sponsored and supported us and we hope to have raised over £600 any further donations would be gratefully and enthusiastically received.

Morland class had a very exciting trip to the Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre. There, Morland class learnt about Roald Dahl's childhood. We learnt that he had two younger sisters called Ophelia and Beatrice. Then we smelt the Wonka chocolate bars. It was scrummidleyumptious. We ate our lunch in Miss Honey's classroom. We went round the streets that Roald Dahl based his stories on. In the museum the whole class sat in Roald Dahl's exact writing chair. But of course not at the same time.

Outside Miss Honey's classroom there was a little model of the giant peach. We also saw Roald Dahl's house and writing hut. We were so exhausted after that long trip so we were happy to be back on the coach.

BETH MAWDESLEY, Year 4

At the beginning of May Morland class had four tonnes of topsoil delivered to us for our raised beds. About a week afterwards we started shovelling the soil into the four raised beds. Mrs Capel then set us some homework which was to make a bird scarer as the birds would find our crops irresistible. When we finally finished shovelling disaster struck! One of the planks on the side of the raised bed came off and the soil leaked out, but we quickly shovelled all the soil to the other side. The next day Mrs Capel came with a drill and screws and fixed it, so we were able to finally finish. Luke was great because he used two shovels at once! Next we planted the seeds. We had peas, onions, beans, butternut squash, tomatoes, peppers and potatoes. At the end of it all Mrs Capel gave Morland class a 'What a Star' certificate. [see cover for photo]

ASHLEY WITHERS, Year 4

**Marcham and District Ex-servicemen's Club, North Street,
Marcham, OX13 6NG**

Notice to all life members

All life members including widows and widowers of members are reminded that they must register in writing to the secretary at the above address, or register at the club each and every year they wish to remain on the list of current life members. The closing date of this registration is April 1st. each year. Due to the late display of this notice, for this year 2010 only, the date of registration is to be extended to 1st July 2010.

Please note that those failing to respond by July 1st 2010 will no longer be considered members and their names will be removed from the current register of life members.

Chairman 26th March 2010