



# Yankton County Conservation District Newsletter

## Plant Spotlight

### Common Hackberry, *Celtis Occidentalis*

#### Description:

- ◆ Alternate, simple, ovate 2-4" leaves
- ◆ Small, plain, pale green flower in leaf axils
- ◆ 1/3" dark round purple drupe fruit
- ◆ Autumn color is pale yellow to yellow green
- ◆ Bark is often a grayish brown with corky ridges, stucco-like



#### The Facts:

- ◆ Native from North central to Northeastern US
- ◆ Prefers moist soils, but can tolerate drier sites
- ◆ Adapted to slightly alkaline soils
- ◆ Grows to 40-60' with a moderate to fast growth rate of 2'+ per year

#### Agroforestry Products:

- ◆ Fruit eaten by many birds and mammals
- ◆ Wood used for boxes, crates, inexpensive furniture, veneer, firewood, handles for axes and hoes
- ◆ Fruit used fresh, processed into jellies and preserves, or dried and ground into flour (be mindful of hard seed)
- ◆ Medicinally used to treat jaundice. Bark teas for sore throat

#### Cons:

- ◆ Commonly damaged by browsing rodents, rabbits, and deer
- ◆ Nipple gall and witches-broom tend to reduce foliage/twig aesthetic

#### Pros:

- ◆ Good in windbreaks and as a shade tree
- ◆ Many Agroforestry uses
- ◆ Medium to fast growing
- ◆ Good replacement for Ash trees due to similar form & adaptability
- ◆ Relatively few pest problems



(Information taken from *Shrubs for the Northern Great Plains Landscape* by NDSU Extension Service and *Trees! An Illustrated Field Guide* by John Ball)

## Hand Plant Orders Are Closed for Spring 2022 Check back in September

### 2023 District Spring Prices TBD

#### Tree Planting

Priced per rod row for shrubs  
Priced for rod row for trees  
(Minimum of \$350.00)

#### Grass Drilling

Priced per acre (10 acre minimum)

#### Pheasants Forever Drill Rental

Priced per day for Members  
Priced per day for Non-Members

#### Products:

#### Live Traps (prices may go up)

\$61.035 w/tax - 12" x 36" long = \$65  
\$67.10 w/tax - 16" x 36" long = \$75



#### Fabric Staples:

10¢ + tax each

#### Fabric

60¢ + tax - 3' x 3' sheets

#### Tree Tubes

\$3.50 + tax - 36" tall  
\$4.00 + tax - 48" tall  
\$4.50 + tax - 60"  
\$5.00 + tax - 72" tall

## Newsletter Via

### Email Option

**We are now offering the option to receive the quarterly newsletters via email. Please email your first and last name to [yanktoncd@sdconservation.net](mailto:yanktoncd@sdconservation.net) and include whether you wish to receive newsletters via email AND mail, or only through email.**

## Tree Planting Information and Requirements

**Those wanting to plant trees in 2023 & 2024 need to prepare now!**



Prepare the area in spring, summer, & fall 2022...

- ◇ For planting in spring 2023 if planting into what was pasture, soybeans, or alfalfa
- ◇ For planting in spring 2024 if planting into what was corn or an old shelterbelt

Before we can plant YOU must do the following:

- ◇ Contact us about your desire to have us complete a machine planting so we can determine eligibility, soil types, schedule an initial evaluation, & develop a plan
- ◇ Make sure all debris is removed from tree planting area
  - Corn, soybean, or other stubble needs to be disked the year prior to give it a chance to decompose.
  - All tree stumps & large roots need to be removed from the area & smaller roots disked so as to decompose to avoid damage to the people planting or to our machinery
- ◇ The soil must be disked until it's a fine, garden soil like consistency. Tree roots seal better, have a better survival rate, & weed barriers go on better with a well tilled area.
- ◇ Apply Treffan & incorporate prior to last pass of tilling.
- ◇ The land must be prepared and evaluated by the district before a tree planting can be scheduled

In preparing for planting and after, remember...

- ◇ If you are using a weed barrier, you are responsible for contacting your own contractor. They may need to order weed barrier, so be sure to do that as soon as you know what's needed. We have some recommendations depending on where your property is located
- ◇ Trees need to be kept totally weed free & well, but not overly, watered for best survival & results
- ◇ Cost-share available for some participants of FSA Farm Program or with NRCS

## Seeking Grass Drill Operator

We have 2 Truax FLX II Grass Drills that require a skilled operator. Grass drillings typically take place in the spring and fall depending on what is being planted. This is a seasonal position, with the potential for machinery and property maintenance work in the spring through fall. Flexible hours. Hourly pay dependent on experience. Must be over 16 years of age and have experience operating a tractor, preferably also experience operating a grass drill and/or planter.







# Wind Erosion like Never Before

by Dan Mehlhaf

This spring’s weather was very unusual with dry and windy conditions over a large area of the Great Plains. In South Dakota during the month of April in Sioux Falls saw an average of 16.1 mph sustained winds, according to Jeff Chapman, a meteorologist for the NWS in Sioux Falls. That's the windiest it's ever been since the NWS started keeping average wind records in 1949. On April 14 a northwest wind over 50 mph blew for most of the day causing significant wind erosion on unprotected cropland fields in the area. I observed one field, cut for silage last year and fall tilled, that was blowing so bad that it was causing near zero visibility on the adjacent road. After the wind went down, I returned to the field and observed that the road ditches were level full of soil from the field. Curiosity got the best of me, and I took a soil sample from the ditch to see the value of nutrients it contained.

The test revealed 180 ppm nitrogen, 33 ppm phosphorous, 288 ppm potassium and 26 ppm sulfur which are all very high. If you convert these number to dollars per acre of nutrients, this soil would contain \$996/acre of N, P, K and Sulfur, not including other micro nutrients. In contract to this field, the neighbor’s field was protected from wind erosion by standing stubble and showed no visible signs of erosion. Another field nearby that was also cut for silage had been protected by seeding a cover crop. The value of a cover crop is difficult calculate, but in this case, it is very clear.

Dan Mehlhaf, DC, USDA-NRCS

## For Students

Check out our website, [www.sdconservation.org/yanktoncd](http://www.sdconservation.org/yanktoncd), and Facebook page, look for Yankton County Conservation District, for upcoming opportunities for students

## John Ball Articles

(more articles can be found at [extension.sdstate.edu/tree-pest-alert](http://extension.sdstate.edu/tree-pest-alert))

### Cladoptosis and Cottonwoods

Cottonwoods are a familiar sight on the prairie horizon. The tall, wide spreading canopy is hard to miss. It is hard to miss the amount of canopy raining to the ground at this time of year. The ground beneath many large cottonwoods is littered with twigs and small branches.

While some of this fall is due to breakage during the numerous storms crossing our state, many are the result of a natural phenomenon known as cladoptosis. The word comes from the Greek clados meaning branch and ptosis falling.

Pick up one of the fallen twigs and you might notice that there is a clean cut around a rounded, raised center. If you climb the tree and find where it was connected, you notice the stub forms a crater. Put the two together and you have a ball and socket. There is no tear or break as would be found if the twig broke in the wind or was chewed by a squirrel.



Why cottonwoods and some other tree species such as willows shed twigs during the summer is not completely understood. It is considered a response to stresses such as drought, so we see shedding more during dry years, but it occurs every year on many cottonwoods. I think they do it just to annoy us.



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