

DIRTY FINGERNAILS AND ALL

Fire blight: A potential death sentence for your fruit trees

BY SIOUX ROGERS

This past summer there was a serious infestation of fire blight in the Rogue Valley. I would not have taken much notice except that our small, humble heirloom-apple orchard also was affected. In searching the Internet for more information, I found a concise, informative Wikipedia site: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fire_blight.

Serendipitously, I came across an article by the late Paul W. Steiner, professor and extension fruit pathologist at the University of Maryland. This article was first presented at the State Horticultural Association of Pennsylvania Annual Meeting in January 2000. While it will definitely help you understand plant disease management, its philosophy applies equally well to all aspects of life (see <http://www.caf.wvu.edu/kearneysville/articles/philosophy2000.html>).



Gala apple tree with severe fire blight. These apples will not ripen and, in all likelihood, the tree is beyond saving.

[//www.caf.wvu.edu/kearneysville/articles/philosophy2000.html](http://www.caf.wvu.edu/kearneysville/articles/philosophy2000.html).

So if you're interested in fire blight—and Paul Steiner's philosophy, a visit to the two sites referenced here will be most enlightening.

Dirty fingernails and all
Sioux Rogers • 541-846-7736
mumearth2@yahoo.com

Fall colors in the Applegate

BY LUKE RUEDIGER

Fall in the Applegate is a great time to get out, enjoy the mountains and see vibrant fall colors. As the nights grow cold and crisp, the brilliant red of vine maple, the soft pink of Pacific dogwood, and the spectacular yellow of big-leaf maple and Oregon ash brighten the canyons with turning leaves. The display of color, although not as spectacular as the hardwood forests of the East, creates a dramatic contrast with the Applegate's towering green conifers. Water levels drop in the streams as leaves pile up in slow-moving waters, awaiting the heavy rains of winter to flush them downstream. Also waiting for the water levels to rise are fall Chinook, coho, and winter steelhead.

Fall is a time of transition and renewal; fish swim back to their natal spawning grounds and rain replenishes the drought-stricken soil. Calm, moist air begins to settle, bringing frost that paints the trees in their final display of fall

brilliance. To enjoy these final displays of color, consider taking a hike on the Middle Fork or Butte Fork of the Applegate River, the Mule Creek Trail, or the Enchanted Forest Trail.

On the slopes, responding to the stress of drought and cold, deciduous oaks create a brief yet spectacular display of incredible golden-yellow across the lower ridges and south-facing slopes. Understory shrubs of all sorts turn from lucid green to pink, to red, to yellow. Often the first woody shrub to turn in the fall is poison oak; arid conditions turn the leaves bright red or soft pink late each summer as the plants sink into winter dormancy. White and black oak brighten the hillsides and straw-colored grasslands with a short-lived display of unbelievable yellow. The leaves fall en masse on windy days and after a particularly hard frost.

Deer, bear, squirrel, and innumerable species of birds feast upon the season's

A 96-year-old needs your help — again

BY ROBERT VAN HEUIT

Yes, she is now 96 years old. You have helped her a number of times in the past and she needs your help again.

"She" is the beautiful, historic McKee Bridge over the upper Applegate River. The first phase of the restoration of McKee Bridge has begun. A portion of the matching funds (the funds needed to match the federal grant issued to Jackson County for restoration of the bridge) has already been raised and placed in an account with Jackson County.

In the first phase of restoration, the Oregon State Department of Transportation has selected Oregon Bridge Engineering Company (OBEC) to design the repair of the bridge. OBEC received a contract and has commenced work on the design. They expect to complete their work by the end of the year. After review and approval of the proposed design, it is expected that bids will be solicited in April or May of next year, provided that we are able to raise the remaining matching funds.

The engineers plan to design a support system between the existing abutments to support the bridge during construction.

Since a support system will not impact the river, work on the bridge can be conducted at all times of the year. If the support system had been founded in the river, the work would have been limited to a period from mid-June through October. OBEC began the work by conducting a site visit on July 30, 2013, to collect more detailed data to be used in their design.

To date, about \$18,000 in matching funds has been raised for the restoration. We are working on raising the remaining \$38,000 for a total of about \$56,000, which is needed as matching funds for the federal grant issued to Jackson County. We hope to raise a substantial portion of the remaining matching funds from charitable foundations and similar organizations. But local assistance is still needed. You can help by contributing to the McKee Bridge Historical Society (MBHS) at P.O. Box 854, Jacksonville, Oregon 97530.

Help keep McKee Bridge alive and functioning! Donate today!

Robert Van Heuit • 541-899-2927
President, MBHS
rvanh2000@yahoo.com

"We cannot solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them." —Albert Einstein



acorn crop, building up fat and energy for the long winter ahead. Some store the acorns in body fat, building energy reserves for the lean times ahead, while some store the acorn mast in treasure troves scattered across the landscape: in "granary" trees, hollow logs, the forest duff and dry rock crevices. Local carnivores wait for their prey to graze upon these acorns and build up winter fat reserves, so that they in turn become nutritious meals for their predators. Hiking trails such as the Mule Mountain Trail, the Sterling Ditch Trail, the Applegate Ridge Trail, and the Little Grayback Trail offer exceptional opportunities to enjoy local oak woodlands, their display of fall color, and the wildlife that depends upon them.

For more fall hiking ideas, as well as a good dose of botany, fire ecology, natural

history, human history, and geology, check out my newly published trail guide, *The Siskiyou Crest: Hikes, History & Ecology*. The book covers the entire Siskiyou Crest from Mt. Ashland to the Smith River, including the Applegate Foothills, the Klamath River, the Red Buttes Wilderness, the Siskiyou Wilderness, 19 roadless areas, and 76 hikes. *The Siskiyou Crest: Hikes, History & Ecology* is a comprehensive and informative field guide for the Siskiyou Crest. The book will become an essential backcountry companion for all those who love the Siskiyou Crest.

Luke Ruediger
siskiyoucrest@gmail.com

Note: The book is available at local book and outdoor stores. To order the book online, view the author's blog at www.thesiskiyoucrest.blogspot.com.

local color

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**Food Pantry
needs volunteers**

Applegate Food Pantry, located behind Ruch School, is in need of some volunteer help. We need fill-in folks to work filling boxes for people in need in our community. No full-time commitment necessary.

Our summer hours are 8:30 - 10:30 am on Thursdays. Starting September 12, our hours will be 3:15 - 4:30 pm on Thursdays.

Please call Arlene or Claude Aron at 541-951-6707 or 541-846-0380.