



PHOTO BY MARTHA HANNON

Club Cites Kobasiar Yard

The landscape of the John and Carol Kobasiar residence, 13 Sage Court, is the November Yard of the Month for the Carolina Shores Garden Club. In a natural setting of tall trees, John Kobasiar has carefully planned and planted more than 500 flowering and non-flowering shrubs and other plants.

Sex, Seed And Successful Gardening

I could always wake up the most bored students when I lectured on the "Sex Life of Plants."

Propagating plants by seed requires that the sophisticated gardener of the 1990s understand the basics about sexual reproduction in plants. Successful sexual reproduction in plants results in seed, or in the case of lower plants such as ferns and mosses, spores.

Hybrid seed result when the genetic material from two different plants successfully combines into a new genetic entity (the seed embryo). The plants produced from these seed will not be exactly like either parent but will have traits of both.

For every seed produced, a single pollen grain and a single egg were required. For example, each seed in a tomato represents the genetic product of the contents of a single pollen grain and the ovule which contains the egg cells.

Many folks confuse seeds with fruit. Fruits are nature's way of packaging seed. A seed properly packaged has the greatest opportunity to be relocated to a suitable nursery area. A sexually produced seed is genetically and physically distinct from the mother plant and consists of three parts: the embryo, food storage tissues and seed coverings.

The fruit is a ripened ovary which consists entirely of the tissue of the mother plant. When you eat an apple or pear, you are eating fruit tissue (or a ripened ovary). The portion you throw away (core) contains the ovules which contain the seed.

Seed and embryo development control the growth of the fruit. Therefore, good pollination is required to produce good fruit in many plants.

Some plants can produce viable seed from self-pollination while other species require pollen from genetically different individuals. This is why specific pollinator varieties are required for many varieties of apples, peaches, blueberries, chestnuts and many other fruit crops.

Other plant species are successful in pollinating themselves, like tomatoes or beans, and do not need special pollinator varieties.

In special cases plants have been selected by man to produce fruit without seed, as with the banana, seedless watermelon and Thompson seedless grape.

Some plants produce very small seed and others very large seed. Some members of the orchid family are known to produce millions of very small seed per pound, whereas the coconut represents a very large seed. (The husk around the coconut is the fruit.)



THE PLANT DOCTOR
C. BRUCE WILLIAMS
Extension Area Turf Specialist

Seed germination represents the earliest stages of plant growth. In order for germination to occur, the embryo in the seed must be alive, the seed must be non-dormant and the appropriate environmental conditions must exist.

Seeds from the apple, pear, rose, peach, cherry, pecan, camellia and maple have a dormancy requirement for germination. These species require two months to six months of moist chilling at 40 degrees Fahrenheit or less as a minimum requirement for optimum seed germination.

This moist chilling treatment is called stratification. Seeds can be stratified by simply mixing seed with moist sand, sealing the sand-seed mixture in a plastic bag and placing the bag in the your refrigerator.

Seed can also be directly planted in the soil during autumn, but seedling loss due to critters and weeds can be a major headache.

The embryos of some species are so well protected by the seed or fruit covering that the covering actually prevents the young embryo from growing. Seeds may require rubbing with sandpaper, cutting with a file, soaking in acid or cracking with a hammer to achieve germination. This process is called scarification.

Alfalfa, clover, canna, cotoneaster, witch hazel and thousands of other plants require scarification before the seed can germinate. The digestive tract of birds or animals often make the best natural plant seed scarifiers for obvious reasons.

A great many species of plants require both stratification and scarification before the seed will germinate.

Each species of plant has its own special requirements for seed germination. If you really want to seed propagate plants, consider the purchase of *Plant Propagation—Principles and Practices*, by Hartmann and Kester, published by Prentice-Hall, Inc., the most recent edition, and *Manual of Woody Landscape Plants* by M. Dirr, Stipes Publishing Co. These two books will cover nearly every aspect of the requirements for seed germination.

A less expensive alternative would be to contact your local N.C.

Cooperative Extension agent.
Send your gardening questions or comments to The Plant Doctor, P.O. Box 109, Bolivia, N.C. 28422.

West Students To Sponsor Blood Drive

West Brunswick High School health occupations students will sponsor their annual Red Cross Bloodmobile on Monday, Nov. 15, from 8:30 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. in the school library.

The blood drive is open to the public, but students will receive first priority. Blood donors must be at least 17 years old and weigh more than 110 pounds.

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David Sandifer

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Dr. Stephen Candela
announces the relocation of his
Orthopaedic Practice
to
144½ Jefferson Street
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effective December 1, 1993.
The new office telephone number will be 640-1022.
The Supply office will be open until November 24, 1993

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