



Scoutrees Breathe Life into the Environment

by Ian Mitchell

What do you get when you add hundreds of thousands of seedlings, *plus* some wide open spaces, *plus* lots of environmental enthusiasm, *plus* two green thumbs per participant, *plus* tender loving care?

These add up to Scoutrees, Scouts Canada's number one environmental project.

But why do we plant trees?

Scouts plant trees for a multitude of reasons. In his book, *The Urban Tree Book*, Arthur Plotnik suggests eight reasons a tree is more than just beautiful and pleasing to the eye.

1. Trees produce oxygen. A mature, leafy tree produces as much oxygen in a season as 10 people inhale in a year.
2. Trees become "carbon sinks". To produce its food, a tree absorbs and locks away carbon dioxide – a global warming villain. An urban forest is a carbon storage area that can lock up as much carbon as it produces.
3. Trees clean the air. Trees help cleanse the air by intercepting airborne particles, reducing heat, and absorbing such pollutants as carbon monoxide, sulphur dioxide and nitrogen dioxide. Trees remove this air pollution through respiration, by lowering air temperature, and by retaining particulates.
4. Trees fight soil erosion. They do it by conserving rainwater, and reducing water runoff and sediment deposit after storms.
5. Trees make effective sound barriers. Trees muffle urban noise almost as effectively as stone walls. Trees, planted at strategic points in a neighbourhood or around your house, can reduce a great deal of noise from freeways and airports.
6. Trees provide shade and cool areas. Shade from trees reduces the need for air conditioning in the summer.
7. Trees act as windbreaks. They are especially effective during windy and cold seasons. A windbreak can lower home heating bills by up to 30 percent.
8. Trees increase property values. Real estate values increase when trees beautify a property or neighbourhood.

Seedling Survival

Now that we know some reasons why Scouts should plant trees, let's explore how to ensure that seedlings survive and grow. Dr. William Carey (Auburn University professor) offers these "Green Thumb Commandments".

Commandment #1: Do not allow seedlings to dry out. Ample moisture is the key factor to seedling survival. Seedlings must never be allowed to dry out from nursery to planting. Remember: "if they dry, they die".

Commandment #2: Transport seedlings carefully. Rough handling can damage root systems and cause them undue stress.

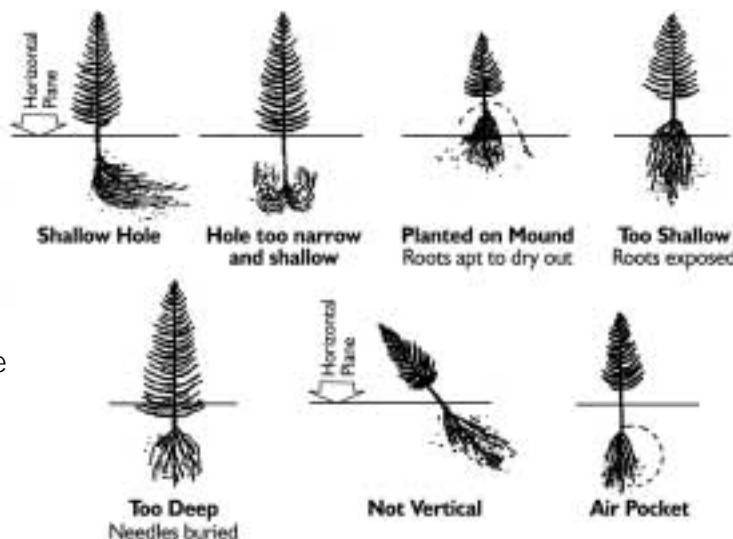
Commandment #3: Avoid temperature extremes. Fluctuations in temperature, especially excessive heat during storage and transport, can result in seedling trauma during planting.

Commandment #4: Plant seedlings promptly. Minimize storage time and avoid extended transport time.

Commandment #5: Do not trim or prune seedling roots. Seedlings need every single tiny root to absorb moisture and nutrients from the ground. The more root surface, the better the growth.

How NOT to Plant Trees

Make photocopies of these drawings and discuss the tree planting problem. How can you turn this into a game?



MORE INFORMATION ABOUT TREE PLANTING

Does your group want more information on tree planting? Visit this web site (<http://nfpa.bc.ca/education/ourforests/links/links.html>) for lots of tree planting information.

Are your Beavers, Cubs and Scouts looking for some cool games relating to tree planting? They should surf to: www.canfor.com/5120.asp.

Commandment #6: Do not wash seedling roots. Landscapers sometimes apply gel to seedling roots at the nursery to prevent drying out during transport.

Commandment#7: Plant bare root seedlings in cool weather; spring is a terrific time to plant. Cooler temperatures are conducive to seedling survival and healthy growth.

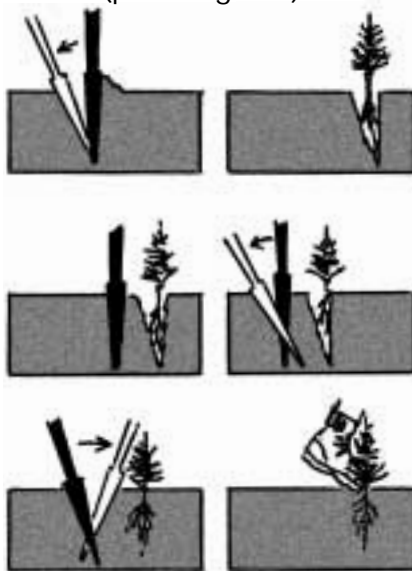
Commandment #8: Plant seedlings deeply. Greater exposure to the soil and its water content – even two centimetres of added depth of planting – significantly improves survival rates.

Preparing and Planting

Preparing the site is very important; it aids seedling survival and growth. Planting sites are usually disced or ploughed by forestry experts to ensure that all seedlings are planted in full sunlight. Spacing is important, too. But how far apart you space the seedlings depends on your reason for planting (e.g. provide a windbreak or beautify property), and the type of tree being planted (e.g. hardwood or softwood). Ask your

seedling supplier to make sure you plant the trees the proper distance from each other.

Dibble (planting bar) Method



Using a dibble or planting bar is the most popular tool used by tree planters. Begin by inserting the dibble straight into the soil to the full depth of the blade. Then, pull back on

the handle to open the planting hole. Don't rock back and forth on the handle as this will cause the soil to compact.

Remove the dibble and push the seedling roots deep into the hole. Pull the seedling back up to the correct planting depth. Gently shake the seedling to allow the roots to straighten out. Now, insert the dibble halfway into the soil several inches in front of the seedling, and push the handle forward to close the top of the slit; hold the seedling in place. Push the dibble back down the full depth of the blade and pull back on the handle to close the bottom of the slit. One more push forward will finish the job. All that's left is to close and "firm up" the planting hole with your heel. Be careful not to damage the seedling.

Scoutrees Materials

Your council will have Scoutrees materials, which include planters' kits and crests for all who take part. Be sure to congratulate youth members after the planting for doing a good deed. X



IN THE MARKET

Lethbridge Alberta's Scout Shop

by Howard Osterer

Did you know that Lady Baden-Powell officially opened the Scout Shop in Lethbridge, Alberta, in 1952?

At the time, the Scout Shop shared the premises with a clothing store. In 1972, the Girl Guides opened an outlet in the same building. Today, both organizations operate shops in the building.

Judi Currie-Ross and Muriel Stan will welcome you when you visit the Scout Shop, located at 217 - 12A Street South. After stepping through the front door, immediately you'll be impressed with the pleasing design, thoughtful presentation and product selection. You'll sense a true Scouting ambiance. Check out the original campfire blanket on display, as well as Scout dolls, and terrific camping products.

If you're in the neighbourhood, visit the Scout Shop in Lethbridge. You'll be delighted with what you see. X



"Welcome to our store!"

Judi Currie-Ross and Muriel Stan will welcome you when you visit the Scout Shop. As you can see from our photos, the outlet is always well-stocked with quality merchandise.

