



Gresham Japanese Garden

Tsuru Island



Suggestions for Visiting the Garden

Have you ever been explaining something and felt that you are not getting the message across? Not being able to find the right description or finding the words. That is what I feel like when I am trying to tell people about what the feeling is like at a Japanese garden and what can it do for a person.

During my recent conference trip I had the opportunity to enjoy a talk by Hoichi Kurisu, a celebrated garden designer and builder and previous curator of the Portland Japanese Garden. In his presentation he discussed some suggestions for those that wish to benefit from the stroll through the garden. He has helped me find the words. At some point visit the garden just for YOU, your time, and your needs. I offer some suggestions for your personal visit.

- Take the stroll alone. Maybe you have someone with you, but spend most of the time in the garden by yourself.
- Leave the phones and the books and other distractions in the car.
- No pets, another distraction.
- Walk slow and listen to the sounds...gravel under your feet, wind blowing through the foliage, sound of the creek water over the beaver dam. Do not listen to sounds from outside the garden. Take a few minutes to relax.
- Watch for the red tailed hawk or the blue heron, bees and lady bugs coming to the shelters we provide or on the blooms that have pushed out.
- Notice the texture of the plant material and how one texture compliments another and how some contribute to the stabilization of the garden.
- Let the colors attract your attention and take yourself closer to see how the blooms are positioned on the plant and how they complement the surrounding area.
- Take a seat on one of the benches. Each bench has a special view that will be different from others and each will change throughout the day and throughout the year.
- Feel the temperature and take notice that it changes as you stroll through the garden from one area to another.
- Now you may be on your way back to the entrance and realize that the garden is changing again as you begin to see and feel the same garden but from a different prospective.

These are just a few suggestions of what is available to you at the garden. One last suggestion; as you walk back to the entrance, think about what you felt like when you came to the garden, then think about how you feel now. The essence of a Japanese Garden is to bring differing feelings of calm, peace and tranquility to each visitor.

Sharp Blades



Recently, I had a discussion about pruning tools, brand names and quality. Some just referred to "red handle" pruners. Quality and value are important, like many other things we purchase; you get what you pay for. Certainly a high end pruner is not necessary when only used a couple of times a year or may be abused by others. This discussion will consist of long term use of pruning shears.

Japanese made pruning tools seem to stay sharper longer. It has to do with the alloy of steel, heat treating and the normalizing process. The difference is the grade of steel and the addition of certain elements that tools are made of. Steel alloys have certain elements added to the mix that will cause the finished product to act or react in certain ways. One of those qualities is being able to

Behind the Scenes:

This month's "behind the scenes" involves the construction of the bridge and one of the key people involved that allowed the project to proceed.

In the early times of the project we needed a way to machine the lumber and were just plain running out of options. The issue was having a space and the industrial quality equipment that was capable of cutting, planing and sanding among other things to the "purple heart" lumber.

Having run out of the target high schools and college woodworking spaces, I started looking for a woodworking organization, club or a shop that might allow us to use the equipment. This was a long shot. I casually mentioned our dilemma to a friend and he said he knew of a person.

I am introducing Doug Mullins, the owner of Quality Woodworking Inc. located in Gresham. Doug was not only willing to allow our volunteers to come in and manufacture the components, but also offered his areas for storage and be available for assistance if needed. I am sure everyone has seen how big Mount Hood is. Now you know how big Doug's heart is. He was behind us and accommodating every minute during our project.

Doug was raised in Gresham, where he was mentored into woodworking by his grandfather and graduated from Barlow High School. He learned more about woodworking and began to excel in the trade becoming the true craftsman that he is. While communicating, coordinating work times and seeing Doug work, I quickly realized he is a true example of the word "craftsman". Doug builds custom cabinetry, cabinet style



furniture, tables and entire kitchens. After the 2008 crash Doug chose to do

his projects without employees and is located at Hogan and Roberts, which is so convenient to our project.

After starting his own business 29 years ago, Doug has a 4000 square ft. shop with every industrial rated woodworking machine you can think of. What bothers me is that he says he has hobbies too, like watching his children's soccer games, camping and riding dirt bikes, I do not understand how he has time. When I see the products that he puts out, it must take forever to complete. Then I see him finish one project and start another, I realize it is the control he possesses. I finally figured out that is part of that world, he not only is quality minded but he knows how to get it done.

It is not my intention to advertise for Doug but finding a person like Doug I don't mind sharing his abilities and wish I had met him a long time ago because of the kind of person he is.

The Friends of Tsuru Island not only thank Doug but are standing in applause as this is written.



NEXT MONTH: Lawns Part 2

Questions / comments to:

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Cont. Sharp Blade:

hold the edge. The heat treating process has to do with the heating of the rough product to a certain temperature and for a certain period of time; turning the heat off and allowing the tool to cool for a certain period of time which may include a quenching process. In short, this is a process of aligning molecules so that the end product will be as durable and long lasting as possible. The Japanese makers of these and other tools choose to make the product out of the best suited material with the right procedure possible for function and longevity.

Some have issues with dulling and the blade cracking or chipping. make sure that the tool is not being used for wire cutters or the blade as a screw driver. This could result in the dullness or a cracking condition.

There are several manufacturers who are willing to sell replacement blades like hot cakes and the other will sell the whole tool as you need it.

In the end the plant material must be considered in choosing the correct equipment. Dull and dirty will never be good for the plants.



NORTH AMERICAN
JAPANESE GARDEN ASSOCIATION

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Helpful Hint: soak your new shirt in water with 1 cup of white distilled vinegar and 2 tea spoons of salt for 30 minutes to set the color and prevent fading and bleeding of dark colors. It will make whites even brighter too.

Friends of Tsuru Island has shirts available for your purchase!

As you can see we have hired an expensive model (Austin Card) to show off these black with red print shirts produced by CY Graphics. Hanes' BEEFY-T 100 % pre-shrunk cotton. S, M, L, XL

ON SALE NOW \$19.50 each

All sales benefit the maintenance of Tsuru Island

Order on-line

gresham.japanese.garden@gmail.com

VISA payments accepted

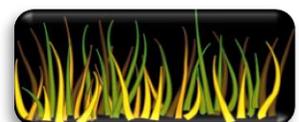
The seed approach is pretty basic, good seed, good prep, rake some grooves, apply the seed, add a cover product to hold the surface/seed if heavy moisture takes place and roll the area to push the seed into the soil. Of course rolling and raking several times before applying the seed will level the areas. The roller exposes the inconsistencies

The seed needs moisture and temperature to germinate and when the seed does germinate it cannot dry out. Watering depends on the time of year and cloud cover etc. Continue to water 2-4 times a day just to keep the

surface moist. As the grass plants mature and roots get set deeper and deeper into the soil, the less water the plants will need. This is all a based on observation and paying attention.

You cannot apply weed control to new seeded lawn because the new grass plants will be affected. Patience is the key here. BEFORE planting grass seed let the weeds grow. After a week to ten days spray the weeds with a non-selective herbicide that will kill off the weed (before they produce new seeds). Do this at least two times. Now that most of the weed seed has germinated and are gone, the new grass seed can go down without the invasion of all of those weeds.

Hydro-seed on the other hand is a bit less labor intense and forgiving because the mix is coming in a large tank that is prepared to your specifications. The tank contains the seed, water, lime, fertilizer and cover product with a green/blue tint. The color makes no difference because it is just there for the installer to see where they have been and where they need to go. The solution is pumped through a hose to apply the mix. The same water application applies here.



Getting a Better Lawn...

has to do with consistency. Doing the right things at the right time and every time is the key. Starting with the soil preparation to maintenance efforts.

Grass plants are no different than caring for other yard plants. A one-thousand square foot lawn is going to have tens of thousands of grass plants that all come from some type of seed.

The New Lawn...

Let's start with seed (this includes sod). Different parts of the country will have different types of grasses. Within those types can be different versions of the seed and all for different reasons. Just like computer technology, seed changes with new advancements and industry needs. For this article I will focus on the northwest. Seed in the immediate area is highly influenced by Oregon State University and the growers in the Willamette Valley. In the northwest the primary type of seed is perennial rye and some fescue with most of the premium products being a blend of seeds. This is because certain seeds may be affected in a negative way to the environment. If one grass does not survive the rest will and so on. The growers of a

sod product do not know where the product will be used and in what micro-environments. With this approach some of the seed product will thrive in heavy use areas with part sun and others will work better in low usage area with full sun

Remember that you get what you pay for when it comes to grass seed products. Seed has a shelf life; so if you find it on sale check the expiration date. It will be usually 2-3 years. The premium brands are those that will have a name brand with a blend suited for the Willamette Valley.

There are three standard ways to create a new lawn. They include establishment with seed, hydro-seed and sod. Regardless of which one of these approaches you might choose the soil preparation will be the same. Tilling, raking, rolling, amendments, fertilizer and dressing are the components. One part of this scenario that is a moving target is the amendments. This relates to compost, lime, gypsum, sand and so on. The compost is sometimes misleading because of the type of soil in the area. If the area has a top soil blend then the compost may not be necessary. If the area is heavy on the clay, less compost may be in order because it will retain moisture. So by putting in more compost it may cause a problem with too much water retention.

Cont: Getting a Better Lawn

Sod on the other hand is very forgiving in many ways. When the sod is down you have your new lawn. One way that sod is more forgiving has to do with weed seeds. Once the sod is down the weed seed will not germinate and use the same benefits to grow big and healthy as the grass seed will.

Sod, depending on the grower, can have a netting in it that helps with the harvesting and handling of the cut product. An added benefit is that the netting may block the path of moles that wish to surface in your lawn. Even if you do not have a sod product that is prepared in this fashion you can still lay down netting under the seed bed or the sod as an ounce of prevention, no moles, no worries. Sod already has the root system and the soil for the grass plants to survive, however you will still need to add that water because the cut sod patch is like a sponge soaking it up. Until the roots go down into the mother soil where the moisture is the patch of lawn will be stressed and die. You can plan to mow the lawn in about 10 days.

When do I do all of this...

Seed and Hydro-seed need to be planted generally speaking after the last frost, late April/May to the middle of October in the Pacific Northwest. Before the last frost there will be less germination and the rest of the seed will be consumed by birds. Sod on the other hand can be laid anytime the sod grower will cut it. As long as the ground is not frozen the green light is on. If there is a freeze after the sod is laid the thaw will add to the moisture of the plants.



Project List:

Our newsletter audience includes volunteers from all three of our GESCA divisions; the Garden, Skosh, and the Student Exchange Program. No one does these projects alone. We have excellent support for graphic layout with drawings, pictures for the projects progress, construction, woodworking, stone work, soil preparation, irrigation, natural resources and composting, just to mention a few skill sets. These are all available through our volunteers.

- The greenhouse installation coordinator is Karl Davis.
- The pavilion machining and construction project coordinator is Kent Thompson.
- Plant material identification for Tsuru Island coordinator is Bill Peterson.
- A new chain-link fabric for the fencing around the shoebox.
 - the existing hardware will be used and painted black
 - the areas can be upgraded in stages on different days
 - the equipment is available
 - if anyone knows a fence installer that will be appreciated
- The lawn for the emergency path in-front of the shoebox.
 - Needed is a commitment to keep watch over the lawn during the HOT months. Also to provide nutrients so that it will flourish.
- Design and build a sign board that will display the schedules for educational events and classes that will take place at the Garden and/or in the shoebox. Materials and equipment are available.
- Install an additional irrigation main line from the horseshoe area leading up to the shoebox. (planning in progress for more than a year)
 - The Dingo with a trencher is available.
 - The pipe and glue for the installation are available.
 - A team leader is needed. The knowledge needed is available to get the project started and going.
- Winter green has been installed in the general vicinity of the "Turtle" on Tsuru Island. There are 5 left.
 - Many more are needed for this area and will be available to be installed so that the area is filled in.
- Materials have been purchased and sown and are currently at the screen printers for banners to put on light poles between Main/Powell and Tsuru Island.
 - Coordinating the installation of the banners and installation of brackets that are provided by Parks and Recreation. This is a one day project.

Thank you to all the volunteers that put forth

an effort to make this a wonderful environment