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ARTICLES

Documents: Latest From: **Art Drysdale:**

More Questions - Boomeran Lilac & Weed Control


Where to obtain a 'Boomerang' lilac; ditto for a Wollemi Pine, and how to get products that work for weed control in Ontario and Québec gardens!
by Art Drysdale


by **Art Drysdale**


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Art Drysdale, a life-long resident of Toronto and a horticulturist well known all across Canada, is now a resident of Parksville, British Columbia on Vancouver Island, just north of Nanaimo. He has renovated an old home and has a new garden there. His radio gardening vignettes are heard in south-western Ontario over two radio stations: Easy 101 FM out of Tillsonburg at 2 PM weekdays and CD98.9 FM out of Norfolk County at 11:40 AM weekdays.

Art also has his own website at <http://www.artdrysdale.com>








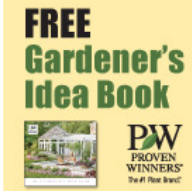


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May 16, 2010



Above, The Boomerang Lilac seems to have become a very popular plant, and quite quickly too. Below, my favourite shot of a Wollemi Pine. Author photo.



Three more questions this week, both on topics I have written about previously.

The first came from Joyce Brant in an area where she likely listens to my daily gardening vignettes on EASY101 FM. Here's her question: "Just read about this great lilac called the Boomerang Lilac. Where would you suggest to find it? I have been in to many places here in the Kitchener Waterloo area and have not found it. We are in Kitchener in southern Ontario. Any help will be greatly appreciated."

This so-called "ever-blooming" lilac was introduced to Canada in 2008 by Toronto's GardenImport company (it was a result of breeding done by Spring Meadow Nursery in Grand Haven Michigan) and in that year GardenImport had it exclusively in Canada. Since that time its distribution has become much wider. For example, Sheridan Nurseries, a major partner of Spring Meadow, grew it in Canada and sold it wholesale, as well as at retail in their own garden centres. I would suggest you try the Sheridan store in Kitchener immediately as they may still have some. If they do not, try a large Loblaws (or Zehrs) store as each of their stores was sent around four dozen plants.

I understand from the GardenImport Website, they are already sold out, so if neither of these suggestions works out, it might be worth your while to call all of the other Sheridan Nurseries stores (in the Toronto area), and perhaps the major Loblaws stores as well. You can find out the information on the respective Websites.

Good Luck in your search!

The second question came from Zofia Stefanowicz in Etobicoke, Ontario who said: "Hi I am still searching for the Wollemi pine and as of today no luck. I have been searching for two years now."

In checking I see that Zofia last enquired about a Wollemi pine last year, and that in my April 26/09 article here on ICanGarden.com I told her I too had not had much success in locating one. And, subsequent to that article, no one bothered getting back to me about availability in Ontario.

I find it difficult to believe that there are no Wollemi pines for sale in Ontario. Here in B.C. they are widely available, but then that may be because they are hardy here outdoors. However, they may be hardy growing in southern Ontario, if in a protected location (and/or wrapped for at least the first winter). How are we going to know if someone doesn't try one or two? So, what to do?

I think your best bet is either to undertake a massive telephoning blitz of various retail (and perhaps also wholesale) firms in the Toronto vicinity. Karl Stensson, president of Sheridan Nurseries, told me just on Friday of last week that there was "no availability so we won't have it." But, again, I find that hard to believe although some sellers here have indicated there could be a shortage of plants through 2009-2011.

If you were to find a seller in British Columbia, you might be able to make a special arrangement for them to pack and ship it to you during the summer months. Finally, the last resort would be to write to Lori Pickering, the proprietor of Jurassic Plants out here on the Sunshine Coast (at Halfmoon Bay) who not only grows the Wollemi Pine but ships them, only within Canada. You may contact her at: info@jurassicplantsnursery.com. The site currently says they have four foot plants at a price of \$199, and if you request it, they will give you a quote on the Canada Post shipping charges. In the past, they have also offered smaller sizes.

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The final inquiry for this week comes from Doug and Bonnie Moulton, and it goes like this: "Art, have always enjoyed your comments & advice on both tv & radio. We live in Southwestern Ontario. With the recent chemical ban here, we are struggling to control weeds in our lawn. Other than smuggle products in from the U.S. (ha, ha), what alternatives are available to us? Thank you.'

I could write several chapters of a book on this topic, but I'll keep my comments short and to the point. First I would say, don't laugh too hard, your suggested solution is the only obvious viable alternative. Remember, nearly all of the lawn weed control products (containing 2,4-D, Mecoprop and Dicamba) as well as products such as Roundup and WipeOut are all approved federally as safe to use. Bringing them back from the US should not be a problem. There are a number of actions ongoing at present (for example, Dow Agrosciences is suing the federal government for allowing the Quebec government to ban the use of their products, and there is a lawsuit against a number of individuals in the Ontario government (including the minister responsible) for taking the action they did based on false statements and miss-information supplied by enviromaniacs--particularly the Canadian Cancer Society.

One interesting point is that the Canadian Cancer Society still sells cut-stem daffodils during their annual spring campaign. Those daffs are mostly grown out here in British Columbia and the CCS well knows that the growers use virtually the same pesticides they want banned for all Canadians to use on their lawns! Yes, ironically both daffodil production for the Canadian Cancer Society and the Professional Lawn Care Industry use the same ingredients that are needed to control insect and weed pests. Even more ironically, professional lawn care maintenance requires less pesticide inputs than daffodil production. Obviously (to all but the enviromaniacs) if it is safe touch and hold a pesticide-treated daffodil, it is also safe to walk on a pesticide-treated lawn.

By all means, buy it in the U.S.!

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