KPOV – *The Point*

Gardening: Get Good at It

“Rose Care in Central Oregon”

August 31, 2021

Do you long for the fragrance and color of roses in your garden? With attention to planting and care, many types of roses can be grown successfully in Central Oregon. The following tips will help you grow this popular landscape plant.

If you’re shopping for a new rose, consider rugosa roses. Often referred to as “hardy” shrub roses, they can look like wild roses and include many plants with roselike blooms and scents but don’t require as much care as other roses.

Don’t dismiss the native rose either, Rosa woodsii, Wood’s Rose. A native like this wild rose can be rewarding in many ways with colorful flowers, foliage, texture, and scent. When grown in the right conditions, native plants typically experience less environmental, insect, and disease damage than nonnatives, while creating the best resource for local pollinators and wildlife.

In addition to careful selection, careful maintenance is a great strategy.

Apply a well-balanced fertilizer such as 10-10-10 during bud break in the spring. You can fertilize every 4 to 6 weeks during the growing season, but stop in late August or early September as the rose begins to go dormant.

During the growing season, roses can be pruned to encourage more blooms. When removing spent blooms, cut the stem back to just above the second five-leaflet leaf, counting back from the tip. This will enable new growth to sprout from that point. Cut the stem on a slant and always dispose of trimmed and diseased foliage promptly.

Water your rose deeply early in the day. Allow the soil to just barely dry out between watering. A general guideline is to water about every 5 to 7 days. Mulching beneath the plants keeps the soil moist longer. Be careful not to overwater, and avoid overhead watering. Water remaining on the plants can increase susceptibility to plant disease like black spot or powdery mildew.

Unless canes are tall, don’t cut roses back until the spring. Cut *tall* canes back to a height of 3 feet in the fall to avoid winter breakage. After the ground is frozen, you can wrap plastic rose collars around the base of the plant and mulch your roses with wood bark 6 to 8 inches deep to provide winter insulation.

Winter watering is very important for rose survival in the high desert. Water your roses every 4 to 6 weeks when there is no snow cover and the ground is not frozen - two or three times through the entire winter.

Monitor your roses for signs of environmental, disease or insect damage and treat as needed. The most common rose problems include black spot, rust, powdery mildew and aphids.

Black spot appears as ragged black spots on leaves that often turn yellow and eventually drop off the shrub. After relatively warm winters, black spot may be the biggest issue with roses.

Rust, which begins in spring and peaks in early summer, appears as orange pustules that can blanket the foliage in worst-case scenarios.

As the name suggests, powdery mildew shows up as a white powder covering the leaves, but without the black blotches typical of black spot. It usually hits roses during the transition into summer’s driest time.

Aphids are the primary insect rose growers have to worry about and are fairly easy to control: squish them with your fingers to release a chemical signal that attracts natural enemies like lacewings, ladybird beetles and parasitoid wasps. Follow with a strong spray of water to wash the remaining aphids to the ground. Since aphids are poor climbers, they often are eaten by ground-roving spiders and beetles.

For more information on roses and many other gardening questions, visit our website: [www.gocomga.com](http://www.gocomga.com) and look for the OSU publication link on the left sidebar. Or call the Master Gardeners at 541-548-6088. This has been Gardening: Get Good at It on KPOV, *The Point*.

Resources:

Fight the ‘big four’ foes of roses <http://today.oregonstate.edu/news/fight-%E2%80%98big-four%E2%80%99-rose-problems-prevention-strategies>

EC 1624 Roses: Planting and Care in Central Oregon <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/ec1624>

EC 1520 Controlling Disease and Aphids on Your Roses <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/catalog/files/project/pdf/ec1520.pdf>

EC 1623-E Selecting native plants for home landscapes in Central Oregon <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/sites/catalog/files/project/pdf/ec1623.pdf>

Landscape Plants: Rosa woodsii <https://landscapeplants.oregonstate.edu/plants/rosa-woodsii>