**Female Narrator:** [00:00:00] Welcome to the Lawn and Garden [MUSIC] podcast with University of Wyoming extension specialist, Jeff Edwards, and co-host, Jerry Erschabek. Originally aired on KGOS and KERM in Torrington. Join Jeff, Jerry and their special guests, as they talk all things gardening in Wyoming. Our Lawn and Garden podcast helps you improve your home garden or small acreage.

**Jeff Edwards:** Good morning, everybody. This is Jeff Edwards and Jerry Erschabek, with the KGOS, KERM Lawn and Garden program. Our guest today is Gary Stone from the Panhandle Research Extension office. Maybe I didn't say that correctly, in Scottsbluff. [LAUGHTER] Good morning Gary.

**Gary Stone:** Good morning Jeff. Good morning Jerry.

**Jeff Edwards:** Was that close enough? [LAUGHTER]

**Gary Stone:** It is now called the Panhandle Research Extension and Education Center.

**Jeff Edwards:** Oh, okay. All right, very good. But anyhow, you're in Scottsbluff, and you can answer questions for us. We'll get the chatting about garden things here in a bit. Good morning, Jerry.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Good Morning, Jeff. Good morning, Gary.

**Gary Stone:** Good morning.

**Jeff Edwards:** Let's take a few minutes and listen to responsers, and we'll be right back.

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**Jeff Edwards:** Good morning everybody. Welcome back to the KGOS, KERM Lawn and Garden program. Good to have you with us today. Jerry is excited as always.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** As always.

**Jeff Edwards:** As always. Our guest today is Gary Stone from the Panhandle Research Extension and Education Center in Scottsbluff. Today, we have decided we're going to talk about all things. There's a lot in gardening, which is what our topic should be. But we can end up talking about badgers, or other stuff [LAUGHTER].

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Or some other rabbit hole.

**Jeff Edwards:** Or some other rabbit hole. That's okay. [LAUGHTER] So Gary, what do you have on your mind today?

**Gary Stone:** Grasshoppers.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yes.

**Gary Stone:** We got plenty of grasshoppers. Some diseases on trees that haven't seen in the past or else they've manifested themselves a little bit more than what they have in the past.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay.

**Gary Stone:** A few other insects that I haven't ever seen around here before, but they're nothing really bad. But there's something just to be aware of.

**Jeff Edwards:** Just something for people to freak out about.

**Gary Stone:** Yeah. [LAUGHTER]

**Jeff Edwards:** Excellent. To me, it's like the middle of the season. The mornings have been feeling a little folio. Things are maybe winding down. But the rainfall that we had this last week has been awesome. We were at a point where I was thinking, "I've got really good [00:03:00] weed control this year, and not anymore." [LAUGHTER] The bad news [LAUGHTER] about the rain is that these weeds are going to grow about an inch and a half tall, and put on a seed head, no matter what, and it's usually going to be the kosher or the lamps quarter or something like that. So modem isn't going to do any good. We're still going to have a problem next year. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Didn't you tell me that one drop of water will germinate a weed seed?

**Jeff Edwards:** I did but I was just being slightly humorous, but I pretty much agree with that [LAUGHTER].

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I think that's true. [LAUGHTER]

**Gary Stone:** Well, what's this deal about rain?

**Jeff Edwards:** You didn't get any?

**Gary Stone:** No. [LAUGHTER] A lot of us didn't get any.

**Jeff Edwards:** Oh, my [OVERLAPPING]

**Gary Stone:** We're [OVERLAPPING] situation here.

**Jeff Edwards:** Goshen County last week had anywhere from an inch to three inches, I think in spots.

**Gary Stone:** That is [OVERLAPPING] you guys doing well.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. There wasn't a whole lot of hard stuff in it which is a benefit.

**Gary Stone:** Yes.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Gary, I was able to stick my screwdrivers six inches into the ground easily, as the test for the appropriate amount of water in my lawn.

**Gary Stone:** Really? [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I know that's one of your techniques.

**Gary Stone:** Yes, it is.

**Jeff Edwards:** Gary in this weird and odd time, what types of things have you been working on?

**Gary Stone:** Well, I had a number of calls that people think they've found the Asian giant hornet. That has not been the case. The Asian giant hornet, is not in Nebraska. It's not in Wyoming, it's not in Utah, or Idaho, or Montana, or South Dakota, or Colorado, or any of the states around us. What they've been finding are a set of cicada killer wasp. Which is only about half to two-thirds the size of the Asian giant hornet. It's a different coloring. Cicada killer does that. That's what they go after. That's what they feed on, and that's what they feed their young.

**Jeff Edwards:** Let's back up a little bit. Folks call cicadas locusts, which are truly grasshoppers, but that's a whole other conversation. The cicada killer is this large wasp that actually will sting the cicadas and pull them into a burrow and parasitize them. Lay an egg in them and then their larva will develop on that cicada. They are large. They're probably one of the largest wasps that we have in the area. But there's been so much press about the giant Asian hornet, I guess is what it's officially called. People are calling it the murder hornet. Fortunately, we don't have those yet. But people are going around and killing the cicada killers, which are actually [00:06:00] no threat to humans. If you mess with them, they might sting you and you probably wouldn't enjoy it. [LAUGHTER] But no threat to humans, they're doing their job. They are actually being predators of the cicadas that we talk about so often as weather predictors for the fall.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Have both of you been hearing cicadas?

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah, but I refuse to admit it.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah, well.

**Gary Stone:** I have not.

**Jeff Edwards:** Oh, really?

**Gary Stone:** No.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** The other night, Maria and I were sitting on the porch, and we heard this, and it's an odd cicada this time. Jeff, do they rub their legs to get the noise? Do they rub their wings?

**Jeff Edwards:** No. They actually have sound producing organs in their abdomen that they vibrate. It's a [NOISE] type of sound. But it's not really bees. It doesn't sound like a bee, but it can be very annoying [LAUGHTER] late in the evening.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Well, this one sounded like it was sick.

**Jeff Edwards:** Well, it gets sick.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** [LAUGHTER] It was a little different. It's a little different song than we've been hearing in the past. We both cocked our ear towards it, and we're like goin', Myrna says, "That one's sick. " [LAUGHTER]. Yes. It's different all right.

**Jeff Edwards:** Maybe it had gotten away from a cicada killer after it had been stung, and it just wasn't functioning correctly.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Maybe so.

**Jeff Edwards:** [LAUGHTER] You know, Gary, I've been doing some hot calls around the area, and I had one here recently that was bacterial type of wilt or something that was affecting pumpkins. So Jerry, you got to watch out, man.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I know, because isn't that what we talked about last time, about skeletolizing the leaf?

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah, I think so. It was really odd that the symptoms were, within a couple of days the plant just started turning brown and crispy. I sent a sample off to our plant pathologist and that's what he came back with. But it was different and happened really quickly. So you got to guard your pumpkin if you're going to be out there growing a giant pumpkin.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I've had that before, but like with wilt, blight with a tomato, I just pulled it.

**Gary Stone:** Sure.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** So as soon as I saw that something odd was happening with my pumpkins in the past, I haven't had it for a while, I'd just pull it and discard it and get rid of it right away.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. So Bill Stump is our plant pathologist. That was his recommendation as well.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. Odd things happen this time of year. I personally am dealing with an infestation of aphids. I'm not dealing with it very well [LAUGHTER] on my pepper plants. But my problem is, as I am hoping that the natural predators will catch up, but they never do, and I don't want to be killing them as well. So I've been holding off and that hasn't been working. So I got to [00:09:00] do something. [LAUGHTER].

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Are your pepper plants inside or outside?

**Jeff Edwards:** They are inside the high tunnel.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Inside?

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Well, it's too hot to keep the sides down. So are you buying more ladybugs or [OVERLAPPING]?

**Jeff Edwards:** Well, I had lacewing eggs in the area on the peppers, which their larva are predatory. Lady beetles, I have a really hard time, and I think other people have a hard time of keeping them around.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Keeping them.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. You kind of have to cage your plants, those types of things to keep them going. Every mantis that I come across, I shove into my high tunnel too. [LAUGHTER] The other thing I'm dealing with is on these hot, dry years, I get spider mites really bad in my raspberries. So it's crazy. I have read where if I can bump up the humidity and maybe water them a little bit differently because I'm using a drip system on them, but there's been some recommendations that I am going to try. I'm going to set up a misting system to kind of mist the leaves and increase the humidity just around the raspberry plants. But that's one of the things that I'm dealing with.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah. We're dealing with voles in my garden and yard and grass. While they are a good aerator, they're a pain in my rear end, because when you step onto a vole,

**Jeff Edwards:** Trench.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** trench, your ankle goes down about three inches, [LAUGHTER] Impacts the ground, you'd go yell. [LAUGHTER].

**Jeff Edwards:** So voles [OVERLAPPING]. Go ahead, Gary.

**Gary Stone:** But Jerry, are you sure those are voles or are they small badgers if they got a trench that deep?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Small badger. [LAUGHTER] So the hole is actually only about an inch and a half round, and it's pretty close to the surface. So I'm pretty sure it's a pocket vole or a pocket, what do they call, a pocket mole. Is a pocket mole and a vole? [OVERLAPPING]

**Jeff Edwards:** There's pocket gophers.

**Gary Stone:** We have voles and then we got moles.

**Jeff Edwards:** So vole with a "V" or a mole with an "M", and they are two different things.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Correct. And what I think that I have is a vole with a "V".

**Jeff Edwards:** Vole. Okay.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** Usually, they trail a lot between their holes and their surface trails. Is that what you have?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yes.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay. All right. They're really difficult to control. I don't know, Gary, do you have good recommendations for controlling voles in turf or gardens?

**Gary Stone:** Yeah. I just sent Jerry a couple of publications, one from Wyoming and one from UNL, on voles which should help him out. You can trap them. [OVERLAPPING] [00:12:00] You can try to trap them.

**Jeff Edwards:** You can trap them?

**Gary Stone:** Yeah.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah?

**Gary Stone:** You can put out a covered bait station.

**Jeff Edwards:** So this is what I heard a gentleman did. He took a inch and a half piece of PVC pipe and then shoved a rodent bait inside that PVC pipe, and then laid that pipe in their trail. [NOISE] So it's a covered protected bait station and they will go in there and feed on it, and you can check it and make sure if they continue to feed on it. If it disappears completely, you can re-bait it, those types of thing.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** My neighbor and I have been tackling it with a bait, but it's a sunflower grain type of thing that you put down into their hole and just shove it in, and then cover their hole easily and see if there is some activity. We put it in the hole going this way and then the other way. But we can't tell our success or our failure, and I want that "V" to stand for victory. [LAUGHTER]

**Gary Stone:** You need to understand one thing Jerry, is that they've got fresh garden produce to eat versus a dried up piece of grain. So which would you eat on? [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Well, probably that greenery would be more tasteful.

**Jeff Edwards:** That's what I would prefer.

**Gary Stone:** So your bait should probably work better in the fall or the winter than it would during the summer.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Okay. Now they're active, correct? They're active year round.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah, and it only takes one or two to screw up your whole lawn.

**Jeff Edwards:** Well, it only takes one or two to make a whole lot more. [LAUGHTER].

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah. [LAUGHTER] Yeah. Well, I want to get them.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. Don't we all. I seem to have a mole that's working in one of my areas of the yard. I tell people not to really worry about moles because they're out there, they're feeding on worms and insects and things, whatever they can find. They're not really feeding on your plants. More carnivorous, aren't they, Gary?

**Gary Stone:** Yeah. Yes.

**Jeff Edwards:** So to me, in my mind, I think of them as being beneficial, but I've let this one go. I'm thinking there's just one. There could be a whole family there now, but maybe I might have to do something to deter it from living where it's living. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** So are you trapping? Are you baiting? What are you doing with him?

**Jeff Edwards:** I've been ignoring him. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** How's that working out?

**Jeff Edwards:** I'm guessing somebody else that I live with might not appreciate it if it goes on too much longer. [LAUGHTER].

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Not so much.

**Jeff Edwards:** [LAUGHTER] I might be encouraged to try to take care of the mole problem.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** So is that where some people will treat for grubs?

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. Usually, they're feeding on insects, [00:15:00] and it's usually related to insect infestation issue, those types of things. But this too [OVERLAPPING]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Now the bad part.

**Jeff Edwards:** Go ahead.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** The bad part about that is it kills your worms then too, because that's a broad spectrum kind of putting out pelletized poison, right?

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. Oh, you're thinking the poison would kill the worms?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Well, doesn't a grub poison kill worms as well?

**Jeff Edwards:** Not necessarily. Gary, you want to weigh in on that?

**Gary Stone:** No. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** We finally found a touchy subject for Gary. [LAUGHTER]

**Jeff Edwards:** All right, what's our next topic? [LAUGHTER]

**Gary Stone:** I'm going to leave that one alone. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Let's change. I've been seeing these predatory wasps nest. Where I see them is I have laid some brick in the back of my house with just dirt centers, and they drill a hole right through the center of that, and then they push up little dirt mounds that look like little volcanoes.

**Jeff Edwards:** Volcano wasps. [LAUGHTER]

**Gary Stone:** Sand wasps.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Is that what they're called?

**Jeff Edwards:** No.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** No.

**Jeff Edwards:** Say it again, Gary.

**Gary Stone:** Sand wasp.

**Jeff Edwards:** Sand wasps.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** They are so cool, they won't bother you either, unless you try to pick them up or pinch them or whatever. I used to take the hose and wash their hills away. Now, wait a minute, because you told me that they were predatory wasps and they were good things.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yes, they are good things. They love grasshoppers.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Now, aren't they black?

**Jeff Edwards:** The majority of them, I think are greenish yellow or at least their eyes are greenish yellow. Is that correct, Gary?

**Gary Stone:** Yes.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. I think their bodies have some black on them. I haven't seen one in a while. I have some here but I haven't looked at them. I want to remind you that most wasps will leave us alone, but if you mess with them [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Wait a minute, like this?

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah, like that.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** [LAUGHTER] All of the girls in my family, scream, yell, run, slapping at them, [LAUGHTER] you're going to get it. The best thing to do is to take a breath, try to zone in.

**Jeff Edwards:** Have a zen moment.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** [FOREIGN] and just relax.

**Jeff Edwards:** Have a zen moment and walk away and ignore them.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** But of course, they say the same thing about me with snakes. [LAUGHTER] I can jump about 17 feet. Well, not quite that, but snakes really scare me and so I can move really quickly, and I know that those girls have a hard time stand still around a wasp or a bee or bumblebee, that sort of thing.

**Jeff Edwards:** Jerry, [00:18:00] standing long jump for you, if you are given a snake, you would be a world record holder, right?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Not quite, but pretty close. [LAUGHTER]

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah, I can do it without snakes. We see them a lot on the road when we're cycling.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Do you ever fear that they'll jump up at you?

**Jeff Edwards:** Fortunately, all the ones that I've seen this year have been dead, so I don't have [LAUGHTER] to worry about it.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I think you're going by a little too fast for them, but that's always a fair. We used to ride motorcycles and I'm like going, "Oh, man." It would just give you a jump, a little flutter in your stomach, blows little butterflies. Yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** I think that was a rabbit hole. Let's talk about snakes.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** That was a rabbit hole. [LAUGHTER] I've got one more about, I have a solitary beehive and it was given out on one of those Master Gardener programs things. For the first time, I have renters. I have three of them.

**Jeff Edwards:** Are they hives for mason bees?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yes.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Well, either mason or a leaf cutter.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay. Sure.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Because there's a little leaf in the hole. I don't know. There's occupancy for about, I would say, 30 bees, and I have occupancy now that have three spaces filled up.

**Jeff Edwards:** Interesting.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** The lab is happy about that.

**Jeff Edwards:** Gary, do mason bees create leaf nests like cutter bees?

**Gary Stone:** I don't know. I don't think so, because I think they're more of a brown grower, I think.

**Jeff Edwards:** Oh, I don't know.

**Gary Stone:** Leaf cutters definitely do, but mason bees, I'd have to check on that too.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay. All right. Mason bees may use a earthen plug between their eggs instead of a leaf nest. I don't know. Gary's doing research, I can see him looking stuff up. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** All the hollyhocks sure blooming?

**Jeff Edwards:** Yes, it's time for those later season things to be blooming.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** What gorgeous flowers they produce. Now, I've spoken out about hollyhocks before and said I didn't like them. I'm changing my mind. I seem to like them, but not enough to have them at my house.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. As long as somebody else is enjoying them, they're fine.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah, and I enjoy them from afar.

**Gary Stone:** What's wrong with hollyhocks? [LAUGHTER] They're old school. I like old school. [LAUGHTER]

**Jeff Edwards:** Gary, it's like that one vole that's in your yard, turns into many voles. Hollyhocks are the same way.

**Gary Stone:** They want to grow it at my place, I don't know why. [LAUGHTER]

**Jeff Edwards:** You haven't had the right people have been dropping off seeds [00:21:00] for you. [LAUGHTER]

**Gary Stone:** I did.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** One or two seeds is all it takes.

**Jeff Edwards:** Our hibiscus finally started blooming this week. We've been traveling around town and seeing people's hibiscus blooming, I don't know, for a couple of weeks now. Ours, they've waited for whatever reason, I don't know why. Diane and I were talking about them. I said, "Do you remember those being white last year?" [LAUGHTER] "No."

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Were they yellow?

**Jeff Edwards:** No. I think they were pink and dark pink centers. This year, they're white with light pink centers. I don't know if that's a soil fertility type of thing. I don't know, it's like it's not the plant that we planted there. I don't know. [LAUGHTER]

**Gary Stone:** Did you soil test?

**Jeff Edwards:** Not since they've been in the ground, Gary, but touché. [LAUGHTER]

**Gary Stone:** Maybe there's micronutrient or something that use that color that you expected.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah, I can tell you they did not get fertilized this year, so that could be a source of some of the latency in the discoloration that we think we're seeing.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Jeff.

**Gary Stone:** Mason bees put a mud plug in between their cells. If it's leaf, it's probably leaf cutter, and if it's mud, it's probably mason bee.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Would you say that the mason bee would also put a mud plug on the outside?

**Gary Stone:** Probably.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah. This is definitely a leaf and it's circular, it is just the right size, right into that hole.

**Jeff Edwards:** Leaf cutter bees actually cut two different styles of pieces out of plant. I don't know if you've noticed that or not. If you have roses, they go after roses pretty well, but they'll either cut an oblong shaped piece or they will cut a circular piece. One of them is to line the edge of the nest, I think that's the oblong piece, and then the circular piece is the piece that they use to plug in between each cell where they've laid an egg. If you're looking at damage on rose plants and you'd see two different types of cuts, I guess, that is still the leaf cutter bee.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** When I no longer see anything in those holes, should I take something and clean that hole out?

**Jeff Edwards:** No, they'll clean them out, I think. I don't think you need to go back through and clean them out.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Okay.

**Jeff Edwards:** It'll be next spring before they emerge.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Then I get to watch them for a long time.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. The other interesting thing is the first one in is the last one out. You know what I mean?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** There's multiple cells in there that the leaf cutter bees [00:24:00] collect pollen, make a pollen ball, and then they will lay an egg on that pollen ball, and then seal that cell. That would be one cell. I don't know how they do this physiologically, but the first one that was laid on a pollen ball, that first cell will be the last one out. It makes sense, right? Because if you were the first one in and you're the first one out, you're pushing through all of those other cells to get out. An interesting biological response to how they nest.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah, when I got my nest, I thought, "Oh boy, hey," and then nobody came to visit. I picked up a vacancy sign, but that didn't help either. [LAUGHTER]

**Jeff Edwards:** It usually takes a while.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah. Finally, I got my three visitors and we're trying to make them as comfortable as possible.

**Jeff Edwards:** Food, shelter, and water, right?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah. [LAUGHTER]

**Jeff Edwards:** Before we got on the leaf cutter bee discussion, you were going to ask a question?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Jeff, we've talked about your tree that you are going to do something with it. It was leaning so bad. You and Diane looked at the tree and said, "Yo, man, leaning way too hard." What did you ever decide to do with that?

**Jeff Edwards:** I wish I knew what type of tree it was. I can't. It's some type of a hawthorn and I don't know what it is. They were very popular a couple years ago at some of the nurseries. It blooms in the spring for about a week and then that's it. Very slow growing tree. When we planted it, we didn't get it in straight so I staked it. Left it staked, I think, for two years, pulled the stakes off and then of course, this spring, what happened, right? The wind blew [LAUGHTER] a lot. [LAUGHTER] Apparently, it hadn't had enough time to stabilize in the first position that we put it in. It was basically laying over after one of the wind storms that we had. I picked it up and actually dug in underneath it, jammed a lot of soil underneath it, and got it straighter. I can't say that it's really totally straight, but then I staked it on four sides. My plan is, which is totally against the rules, to leave it staked as long as possible [LAUGHTER] and see what happens. If it doesn't survive, then I'll find something else to put in there. [LAUGHTER] Gary, the rule of thumb when you're staking a tree is a year, right?

**Gary Stone:** Under two years.

**Jeff Edwards:** Under the two. Okay. Yeah. Well, I don't know there's something going on here. I don't know if it's the topsoil that I brought in. It is not compacted where it's at and it's not really putting out a lot of roots. I don't know, but it just doesn't want to stand up straight. It's green. That's the important thing and it's still growing, so we'll just watch it and keep [00:27:00] seeing what happens.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** There is a black walnut tree here in town that blew over when we had a microburst. It blew over and the owner was offered by several of his neighbors, well, we've got a chainsaw, we can help you out with that, and he goes, "No." So he put dirt on top of the root ball and that thing is still growing and still producing, and that microburst was like four years ago. [LAUGHTER] It's just fun to drive by and look at it, and see the black walnuts starting to come off of the tree.

**Jeff Edwards:** Wow, that's interesting.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Still growing, still fruiting. So no matter how tippy your tree is, it's still growing and that's a good thing.

**Gary Stone:** So this is an unproven worm remover technique, I guess. But if you collect the black walnuts and the husks are hard to get off, if you let them turn brown and do their thing, and then soak those in water, and if you pour that water on the lawn, at least this is what happened to me when we lived in Iowa. The earthworms just came boiling out of the ground where we dumped that water. I don't know if it was an irritant, or the tannins, or whatever in that water, but it was interesting to watch that. [LAUGHTER] They didn't like it, let's put it that way. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Did you go fishing then later?

**Jeff Edwards:** No, but I should've.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** You should have. [LAUGHTER]

**Jeff Edwards:** It didn't kill them, but it just moved them on.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** A friend of mine gave me a bucket of black walnut nuts and it says here, set this by a tree and you'll have some small trees coming up soon because the squirrels will come and get them. Well, the squirrels did come and get them. I don't know what happened to them. I think they ate them, because we never did get a black walnut tree planted.

**Jeff Edwards:** Well, if they're hungry, yes. Maybe you should have planted a few on your own.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Perhaps.

**Jeff Edwards:** Have you ever watched a squirrel try to eat a black walnut?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** No.

**Jeff Edwards:** It takes them a really long time. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** They get really messy, [LAUGHTER] because I took a black walnut apart thinking, why? Yeah, this husk, yeah, okay and I get into the inner shell, and I'm noticing, gosh, my hands are getting really dirty. Somebody should make a stain. Yeah. They already have.

**Jeff Edwards:** It has a stain.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** It took a while to get that black walnut off of my hands.

**Jeff Edwards:** Right. But the shells are really hard. I don't know.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Really hard.

**Jeff Edwards:** It takes a squirrel along time to gnaw through a black walnut husk or shell.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I've spoke to you about my Hot Wings maple tree?

**Jeff Edwards:** Yes.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** So my brother and I, I was on [00:30:00] the tree and he stood far away, 90 degrees to it, 90 degrees to it again and we positioned it so that it was pretty straight up and down. Put it in, and just the other day, I was looking at it and there's a little piece of red tape on the tree. I can only think that, that was a marking of where the tree sat in the ground as they dug it up, because they faced the tree, because lo and behold, it's actually in the same position. The red tape is towards the sun and it's standing up as straight as it can be. So maybe look for that if you're going to buy a tree and see if there's any any markings on it. It just might be where the tree was standing in position before they dug it up and put it in a pot or moved it, or something. That's my theory.

**Jeff Edwards:** Interesting.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** Maybe you should try and peal that piece of tape off. It's probably not good for the tree.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Let me write that down. [LAUGHTER]

**Jeff Edwards:** How long has it been in the ground? [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** About a month.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. It was just this year's anniversary gift, right?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. Okay. So we've had our Hot Wings maple for five or six years now.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** How big around is it at the bottom?

**Jeff Edwards:** Probably only three inches.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** Two to three inches. Very slow growing tree, but still, I love it. It's very cool tree to have in your landscaping, and if people aren't familiar with those, there are three of those, not on Main Street, but on Highway 26 in Michel.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Michel, I think.

**Jeff Edwards:** On the south side.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** There's two of them and those are trimmed up. Now, there's two of them on East D Street on the east side of the road and they're not trimmed up. They're more of a really tall bush and they're pretty, they're two. I prefer the tree style as opposed to a bush style. But yeah, they're really pretty.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah, They're interesting, and I know we've talked about this before, but the seed pods are just cherry red and so it's a nice contrast to the green foliage that the tree has.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah, I thought they were a fruit until I got up closer to them. [OVERLAPPING]

**Jeff Edwards:** You could probably eat them if you wanted to.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah, if you wanted to. I'm not that hungry yet. Gary, you have anything that you've planted new in your yard or property?

**Gary Stone:** My windbreak, it's 35-40 years old and it starting to thin out a little bit. I can see through it. Of course, we planted them way too close when we put them in. We should have spread them out, but live and learn. But since it's thinning out, I went to our local NRD up [00:33:00] there in Wyoming with the conservation district and purchased some trees. So I bought the 40 potted ponderosa pines to get started and hopefully I'll live long enough to see them get up at least 20 feet or so, and start another windbreak in front of the old one and fill in those areas. Next year, I'll try and get some more ciders and some more pines, and put those in. My lindens just didn't take. I don't know why. But I wanted to plant some linden trees just to try and see if they'd grow out there.

**Jeff Edwards:** We tried ponderosas in our tree rows and we have had a very poor survival rate out of the ponderosas. So my thought is to go around and collect hackberry volunteers and the locust trees.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Honey locust?

**Jeff Edwards:** Honey locust, and start moving them up to where I thought I wanted ponderosa pines. [LAUGHTER]

**Gary Stone:** That's good. I guess I wanted the ponderosa pines just because I think they're a neat tree. They'll probably grow a little faster, and I already got hackberry. I've got a whole couple of rows of hackberries and they're 30, 40 foot tall. Again, we probably planted them too close, but they do serve their purpose. They do stop the wind.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Gary, don't most people, when they're planting a tree row don't they plant them too close on purpose because of the fact that some of them die and they go, well, they are going to die anyway, so they're going to plant them a little closer and if they do get big, they'll cut some of those trees out?

**Gary Stone:** Yes, and that is what we should've done. We should have went and cut out every other one. But all of ours lived. [LAUGHTER] So essentially, for 30 years, we had a hedge, and now the hedge is starting to thin out.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah.

**Gary Stone:** But yeah, it's been great. When the wind blows, I have to step outside and I have to look at the pods of the tress to see if the wind is there. It does a great job.

**Jeff Edwards:** Awesome.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** If you have honey locust, if you have a female honey locust tree that gives pods, you will have a lot of small starters that you can give away or put it in a pod. I know we do. We have a lot of little ones coming. But now, here, the last two years, my honey locust has not given pods, so I'm just thinking that hopefully, they either froze with an early spring freeze or I'm hoping that my tree isn't dying because they're getting to be pretty good size now.

**Jeff Edwards:** Hey, I forgot to take a break. We need to take a break and listen to our sponsors.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Let's do that.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay, we'll be back in a bit. [MUSIC]

**Female Narrator:** If you have an interest in gardening and want to help your community grow, the University of Wyoming extension master gardener program is for you. A new 14-week training session begins September 3rd. [00:36:00] This session will be virtual, so anyone across the state is welcome to join. To sign up, visit the bitly link in this episode's description or visit wyoextension.org and click Programs, Master Gardener. Registration is $75. The master gardener program; learn, give, grow. [MUSIC]

**Female Narrator:** [MUSIC] Looking for the best way to keep up with all the news from University of Wyoming Extension, the College of Agriculture, and Wyoming Ag Experiment Stations. The uwagnews.com website features real-time education, research, and extension events, and feature stories from across the state. Bookmark uwagnews.com today and subscribe to our monthly e-mail newsletter. Uwagnews.com. Growing people, knowledge, and communities.

**Jeff Edwards:** This is Jeff and Jerry with the KGOS/KERM Lawn and Garden program. Glad you're joining us today. Our guest today is Gary Stone, and we've been talking about trees and plants. I think you were on the program about a month ago, Gary, and we were talking about turf and things with turf, and it got hot after that and people were struggling trying to keep their turf green, and I know I was one of them. But after that rain that you didn't get, that we got, our lawn is looking pretty darn good right now. [LAUGHTER] I believe that there was a three-week period where we did not mow the lawn, didn't really worry about it because it was too hot and dry, and now we're back on that weekly schedule again.

**Gary Stone:** Yeah, it gives you something to do.

**Jeff Edwards:** All right, yeah, thanks, I have plenty to do. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** We've been cutting weekly, but we've been also watering as well, and we've even raised our blades a little higher to give that turf a little more shade, and that rainfall was just a blessing. There are so many nutrients out of rainfall, it's just incredible how it had made it grow.

**Jeff Edwards:** Well, and it's an even application of water too, right? It just goes everywhere, it needs to get to.

**Gary Stone:** Yeah, we talked about application of water, I did have one call. People said our turf's dying, I go there and look, and right away, it's very obvious it was a water situation. You can see where the sprinkler heads that we're working were getting the coverage and then you had green turf and everything, and where it wasn't. You could see the pattern where the sprinkler should have been. There's a nice water circle or half circle and that sprinkler head was too deep, or it was covered up by the grass, and it just wasn't up high enough to get the water out and do its job, and so again, early in the spring, even now, go out when all your sprinkler [00:39:00] system comes on, check each zone.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah.

**Gary Stone:** Make sure each sprinkler's working properly and getting the coverage.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah, I had a similar call this spring. The system wasn't operating correctly. There was spots in the lawn that were dying, two of the heads had been run over by a lawnmower, so they weren't even coming up out of the ground anymore, and that's where the dry spots were, and we also had a fault error that was shown up in the control box. Some of the wires have gotten crossed, or pierced, or something. So not all of the zones were coming on, so we had diagnosed that and get all that corrected and fixed, and fortunately it's green and up now. It happens.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** [OVERLAPPING] Every once in a while I'll be driving to work and look over the side, and there's this waterfall coming up out of somebody's yard [LAUGHTER] The head has come off or whatever and you go, "You know, that's not a good thing. That's not even application, that's just a waterfall."

**Jeff Edwards:** Right, the geyser. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** The geyser? [LAUGHTER]

**Gary Stone:** What it is, is a lot of money going down the drain, literally.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Oh, yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Fortunately for me, and maybe for you too Jeff, is you just have to pay for your electricity for the pump, because we have our own well, and we can water, and we do. For those that are on a city water or a municipality water, they have to charge for their water by the gallon, or the first 10,000 is free, and then they start collecting. Sometimes it can get very expensive to own a lawn.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yes it can, and people do alternative things, right? They take out lawn, they put in flowers.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** They do other xeroscaping type activities.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** So bury it. Is this a good,

**Gary Stone:** [OVERLAPPING]. with my water, I can probably cut my lawn with that, the bluegrass just actually spread out, and spread out, and spread out, and I just let it go, and now it's to the point I'm looking at it and saying, "I don't need to be doing this anymore." I mean, like you said, [inaudible] and then shrubs or something else. This fall we'll see how cheap I can buy the mulch at the lawn and garden stores where they want to get rid of it, then I'm going to go town and [inaudible] RoundUp or glyphosate, a whole bunch of turf and then I put down mulch.

**Jeff Edwards:** Very good.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Is it still too early to plant a fall grass?

**Gary Stone:** No.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Is this about the right time?

**Gary Stone:** Here in another week or two would be a good time to start, get past some more of this heat. The key is to keep up moist, not overly saturated but moist so that seed will germinate, come up well.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Do you like to plant rye with your grass seed as a inner crop?

**Gary Stone:** I prefer to use this great bluegrass blend of some kind and keep the rye and the fescues [00:42:00] out if you can.

**Jeff Edwards:** So Gary, if somebody chose to plant buffalo grass, when is the best time? I know it's hard to get it to establish, but when is the best time to probably do buffalo grass?

**Gary Stone:** Probably a month ago.

**Jeff Edwards:** A month ago? Okay, I'm just asking, I have all my turf in place but [LAUGHTER]

**Gary Stone:** Probably end of May, 1st of June, sometime in there when you start to get some heat come on and the seed will germinate well. Again keep it moist with good seed-soil contact, bear with the weeds for a year or two until the buffalo grass can fill in and start to get cold and spread out, and form a good cover.

**Jeff Edwards:** Buffalo grass is a true warm season grass, right? So it doesn't green up like we think grass should in the springtime. It just hangs out, then all of a sudden [NOISE] it's green?

**Gary Stone:** Yeah, that's pretty much it. It won't have the dark green color that you normally like to see, it's more of a whiter green, maybe a blueish cast to it. But again, probably come on, you know, end of May, 1st of June start to come on and then probably go dormant the end of August, first part of September. But it roots down into the three feet so you got a deeper profile from that root zone to draw moisture from.

**Jeff Edwards:** Maybe only have to mow it once. [LAUGHTER]

**Gary Stone:** Once or twice in the season. Fertilizer is minimal. [OVERLAPPING] One thing it doesn't like, there are two things it doesn't like, it's not very good for high traffic areas, and if you've got any type of shade anywhere, find a different type of grass. It just likes full sun, full sun, full sun. No shade.

**Jeff Edwards:** Full sun exposure.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** If folks are trying to get rid of their buffalo grass in their lawn?

**Gary Stone:** Why? [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** It looks different, it acts different.

**Gary Stone:** Now, you say buffalo grass. Is it buffalo grass or salt grass?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** It's a real wide-leaved grass.

**Gary Stone:** Okay. Then that's a type of fescue, a feud. Pick that leaf blade and run it up the leaf blade. It should be smooth if you bring it back down towards the base. If it's rough from the backside, it's probably a fescue.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Okay.

**Gary Stone:** Then you're going to have to go and then spray with the glyphosate or try and dig it up as best you can after you water and get all the roots. Then you'll throw some more [inaudible] in that hole and put some grass seed in there.

**Jeff Edwards:** The bottom line is, good luck.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah, good luck.

**Gary Stone:** Now, I've got patches that in my lawn. It doesn't spread, it doesn't get away on me. It's green. It's growing. I leave it alone.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** It's not what I consider a weed, so I'm going to leave it alone. [LAUGHTER] [00:45:00] Now, I do have a turf area that's fine fescue. It's a different grass. The leaves are very narrow and thin. It mats together and I like that. It's a nice colored grass, but it doesn't spread like bluegrass does to me. I've got some spots that just refused to fill in, and so those spots are weedy to deal with. For whatever reason, this particular turf has a lot of sandburs in it, so that's been a struggle that I'm trying to get under control. [LAUGHTER] Gary is shaking his head. Sandburs and turf, [NOISE] [LAUGHTER]

**Gary Stone:** Those sandburs and the puncture vine.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah.

**Gary Stone:** Add bad news. [LAUGHTER]

**Jeff Edwards:** Gary, I had an individual call me and ask if there was some place where they could get some puncturevine weevil and give that a try. Do you know any sources for puncturevine weevil?

**Gary Stone:** I guess, for them, to maybe contact the Goshen County Weed and Pest and see if they've got that, or maybe the Department of Ag and see if there might be resources with those. And see if they could be farmed.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. It would be interesting, but I know that people have released them in the past, but they just don't establish here. They're a warm season insect and they just done overwinter. I would love to see some biological control that works really well for puncturevine. I really hate that stuff. [LAUGHTER] [OVERLAPPING]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** The seeds stay viable.

**Gary Stone:** I'm going to pull here one of these days and [inaudible] that's going to get into the tires and into the spread again, so yeah, I got to get off [inaudible] .

**Jeff Edwards:** Well, don't wait too long. [LAUGHTER]

**Gary Stone:** No. [LAUGHTER]

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah, the seeds remain viable for a really long time, so it's one of those, if you let it go, then you're just restarting the clock on your problem. It's years that the seeds are viable for. I don't know. Gary, do you have a number in your head for how long?

**Gary Stone:** I'm going to say 5-7.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. I think that's what I remember as well. So if you miss one year, then the clock starts over.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** It doesn't take very many of them to make a field.

**Jeff Edwards:** No. There have been times when we have gone out and hand-removed them, and you have plants that are six or eight feet across. That's a lot of seeds to try to eliminate.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** We were invited one time to pick corn out of this guy's field and the sandburs that we're in his field were just horrendous.

**Jeff Edwards:** It made you didn't want to not go back for more corn, didn't it? [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Well, he grew some Indian corn for us and he says, "Okay, it's ready." So we went out [00:48:00] and I was unprepared.

**Jeff Edwards:** You are wearing shorts that day. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I wasn't wearing shorts, but I was wearing cotton socks and tennis shoes, and holy cow, oh my God, what's biting my ankles?

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** It was all sandburs and man, oh, man, oh, man. Well, I'm not sure. Is there a product that you can use to ready yourself for sandburs while in standing corn?

**Jeff Edwards:** A hoe.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** A hoe. [LAUGHTER] I have three or four of them. One just cut my thumb a while back. [LAUGHTER]

**Jeff Edwards:** That's about the only product [OVERLAPPING] to take care of sandburs in standing corn. It's down to hand removal at that point.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah. Amazingly enough, sandburs in corn, they've got everything they need. They've got all the water they can possibly stand. They get fertilized, so they can be knee high and just miserable to get through if you're out there trying to get corn. Yeah. The two really nasty weeds that I dislike are sandburs and goat-weeds. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah

**Gary Stone:** Along with Kosher, Russian thistle, and all the [OVERLAPPING] Canada thistle, and musk thistle, and bindweed. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Gary, what's the difference between Canada thistle and Russian thistle?

**Jeff Edwards:** Two different types of thistle.

**Gary Stone:** Yeah.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Just two different types. They have a different seed pod, leaves?

**Gary Stone:** Well, Russian thistle is annual, Canada thistle is a perennial.

**Jeff Edwards:** Russian thistle is typical of what we think of as a tumbleweed.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Oh, okay.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah.

**Gary Stone:** Along with big man-eating kochia plants.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yes, Christmas tree kochia plant.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Then the Canada thistle are solitary soldiers, right? With the big purple head?

**Gary Stone:** Yeah. [OVERLAPPING] pod or whatever.

**Jeff Edwards:** You might be thinking about either musk thistles or bull thistles. Canada thistles, they don't have really large flowers. They're smaller. Some of our weed folks at the university talked about the flower type being like a makeup puff type of thing. Is that what you're thinking of, Jerry?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** The head is probably about four inches in diameter and it's fairly tall, but the whole plant itself grows to be about 4-5 feet tall. When I was working on the railroad after high school, we used to spray the crap out of it, and it had the really pretty purple head as it bloomed and the leaves stood out a foot or so, and half a way from [00:51:00] the stalk of the plant. If you just glanced at them, they looked like a bunch of soldiers standing out there.

**Jeff Edwards:** So those would not be Canada thistles?

**Gary Stone:** Yeah.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** That would that be more of a musk, maybe.

**Gary Stone:** Probably.

**Jeff Edwards:** Probably. Yeah.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** I know, they were hard to control.

**Gary Stone:** No, they're easy.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Okay.

**Jeff Edwards:** Chop them.

**Gary Stone:** Yeah. Just go out there and cut them down.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah. [LAUGHTER]

**Gary Stone:** Or spray them in the fall. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Spray them in fall, before their seed head flies. They're the ones that remind me of a hollyhock because there's just a scatter seeds in their seed head, and they replant well.

**Gary Stone:** Yeah. They reproduce by seeds, so that's why they're easier to control than a Canada thistle, which has an extensive root system, it's halfway to the center of the earth.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah, Canada thistles, the flowers are smaller, the plants, it's more of a community, I guess. The plants are closer together, but they're perennial and they have a really extensive root system. Some of these other thistles don't act like that. Yeah. Hey, look at that. I believe we have used up a whole another hour [LAUGHTER] of the Lawn and Garden Program.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** They go so quickly. Can I say one more thing?

**Jeff Edwards:** Yes, certainly.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Save the date, October 3rd for the Giant Pumpkin Weigh Off, out at the Faroe grounds. Bring your pumpkin in, even the prettiest pumpkin may get an award.

**Jeff Edwards:** Even if you don't have a pumpkin, please spectate.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Yeah. Come on out and look. It's just a bunch of fun.

**Jeff Edwards:** Yeah, go stare at people. [LAUGHTER]

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Scare at the big pumpkin and you wonder, "How in the world did that pumpkin get so big?"

**Jeff Edwards:** Ooh and aah at the big pumpkins. Excellent. Farmers Markets still is occurring on Thursdays Downtown Torrington, right?

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Correct, 4:00-6:00.

**Jeff Edwards:** 4:00-6:00 on Thursdays, and that's every Thursday.

**Jerry Erschabeck:** Correct.

**Jeff Edwards:** Okay. Very good. So patronize local producers If you can. I think that we are out of time. I hope everybody who listened today may possibly have learned something. If not, well, sorry. [LAUGHTER] We appreciate you joining us today and thank you, Gary, for being our guest. We'll be back next week.

**Female Narrator:** [MUSIC] You've been listening to Lawn and Garden with the University of Wyoming extension specialist, Jeff Edwards, and co-host, Jerry Erschabek. Catch next week's episode Tuesday at noon on Spotify or Extension's Horticulture page. [MUSIC]