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Subject: Roses

Posted by [Maren](#) on Mon, 19 Mar 2012 01:51:41 GMT

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Roses

Readers will undoubtedly be surprised to note from the URL that this is only the third post with that title!

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Subject: Re: Roses

Posted by [blondviolinist](#) on Mon, 19 Mar 2012 02:15:28 GMT

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Maren wrote on Sun, 18 March 2012 21:51Roses

Readers will undoubtedly be surprised to note from the URL that this is only the third post with that title!

O.O

::iz shocked::

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Subject: Re: Roses

Posted by [EMoon](#) on Mon, 19 Mar 2012 03:31:14 GMT

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Madame Alfred has graciously (and apparently enthusiastically) provided six full-size wonderfully fragrant roses in the last two days (four today) and they're now disposed around the kitchen, improving it.

When the Hellgoddess enthusiasm for roses, and pictures of roses, and descriptions of fragrant roses, rekindled my own rose-hunger, I expected that none of her roses would grow here. I looked in the Antique Rose Emporium's online catalog, expecting to not find any--and there was Madame Alfred Carriere, with the claim that it could in fact grow in Texas. And so it is. We planted it somewhat later than recommended (it was a replacement for one that died after a freakish freeze, well below our usual) and it endured last summer's horrors quietly, produced one very small rose in October, just to prove it was a rose. In December it started growing. In January it threw out great fat new sprouts and zipped up about a foot. February--more, and we began tying it to its future supports. March--I realized it just might reach the top of the sort of

pergola thing we built.

(The "pergola thing" began as a low bridge over a shallow drainage ditch beside the driveway...from the driveway to the vegetable garden. With no shade. Unpleasant in the summer, and not particularly decorative. I said, "Why not put in posts and some sort of slat things on top for partial shade and then we could have vines or roses or something on it?" And lo, it was done, and while it was in the doing, Hellgoddess's rose discussions led to building it stouter than originally planned. Looking at Madame Alfred's suddenly robust and aggressive self, I can only hope it's stout enough.)

Incidentally, if anyone has a recommendation for a book on rose growing, pruning, feeding, etc. suitable for a very novice rose-grower--ideally something for a rose-grower in our climate and soil (alkaline, shallow over limestone, with months of intense heat and burning winds) I'd be happy to see it.

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Subject: Re: Roses

Posted by [Diane in MN](#) on Mon, 19 Mar 2012 05:53:56 GMT

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Lots of roses are annuals here, too, although the hardy shrub roses do well enough to be commercial-landscape and roadside plantings. The ones I had were this type. Unfortunately, they want sun, and when my front border became a shade border, they failed to thrive.

Antique Rose Emporium looks wonderful, although their very-cold-hardy roses are mostly zone 5 with a few zone 4. My gardening experiences here have made me only REALLY confident about plants surviving if they're fit for zone 3, but with global warming happening, we may be in zone 5 any year now. So, looking on the bright side of climate change, I've bookmarked the site. :)

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Subject: Re: Roses

Posted by [Milk Wine](#) on Mon, 19 Mar 2012 11:09:06 GMT

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Liz Druitt's The Organic Rose Garden is pretty awesome. She's out of the Dallas area, so she's not as specific to trashy soils (remember Neil Sperry's recommendation to have at least four feet of soil - to that, my Hill Country customers say HA!), but she IS specific to Texas. She consulted a bit with Mike Shoup (ARE owner/breeder-in-chief), too, and talks a lot about antique varieties. Useful book.

Subject: Re: Roses

Posted by [Milk Wine](#) on Mon, 19 Mar 2012 11:18:43 GMT

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May I be pushy and give advice? I sell these things for a living, and I sell them HERE, in Central Texas, not even in Brenham, where the climate is yummiier - sometimes - than ours, and the soil is definitely better.

Roses are like so many things here in this area - like garlic! - where we're kind of our own little world. Compost, compost, compost, for one thing: we have so little organic matter in the soil here - and those rock shelves get so hot, even below the ground. I'd say your Madame Alfred is determined to stay the course with you, so weekly seaweed sprays (2T per gallon of water) when it gets really hot will repay her trust. Mulch, without mulching the base of the rose. Pruning only twice a year (1/3 off on Valentine's Day unless they've been in the ground four years, in which case 1/2 off, little crew cut on Labor Day), and only on shrubs - please don't prune your climbers unless you must, and then wait until after the first flush of bloom in the spring. Good balanced organic fertilizer to boost bloom, monthly Feb through May, then again in September.

::takes ARE hat off:: I hope this helps.

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Subject: Re: Roses

Posted by [b\\_twin\\_1](#) on Mon, 19 Mar 2012 12:31:59 GMT

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Remember I said I needed another climber? Just one climber . . . ?

SNORK

I'll send you 'Wedding Day'. I have a spare. That should take care of your place. And your neighbours two doors down.... ;)

Mme Alfred gave us roses through winter here too. She's a busy gal. <3

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Subject: Re: Roses

Posted by [EMoon](#) on Wed, 21 Mar 2012 05:19:17 GMT

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That helps a LOT. Thank you!! Right now Madame Alfred is sitting in a raised bed we built for her, to give some extra depth, and the bed was mostly filled (two years ago) with well-rotted horse manure mixed with a little soil. (I have two horses. We have a manure hill that moves as we remove rotted manure from the bottom of one side, and add fresh manure to the top of the other side.) We didn't feed her last year because it was so hot and dry we thought it would risk trouble.

She's mulched with bark mulch, because it lets me water through it without splashing and without wasting too much water on the mulch itself. She hasn't been pruned at all since she was planted except to take off individual leaves that look "strange." So I guess next fall will be her first pruning.

But she's a climber, so...should we or shouldn't we, and if so...I guess I need the book. I think she's got too many big stems now--but how would I know? Also, is it OK to feed during the worst of the summer heat (e.g. July and August) or should we encourage her to rest and then resume feeding when it cools off, toward October?

In San Antonio, I had deep Houston Black Clay soil, so we dug the four-foot holes, put heavy fertilizer in the bottom, then sand, then a sand-clay-compost mix to the top. The roses loved it. But here, near the house, the soil isn't as deep (and ranges from inches to a foot at most.

The old Lady Banks on the east side of the house we just let alone and try to give some water to in summer...it's gotten bigger year by year and it now a huge mound we have to whack back to get from the front yard to the back on that side. That's its "pruning" and it's done whenever we can't get through the gate without being tangled. The several Cecil Brunners did very well just being left alone until last summer, when they croaked in various measure. We couldn't water them, poor things. There's some part of most of them alive, but I need to whack off the dead parts.

The little white climber (intensely fragrant, blooms for one week in May) we found when we moved here has survived the move to new locations, and seems to love the raised bed-or-mound we've planted the various ones in. (R- layered it; it roots well that way, we found.) But before that, it lived on the property line and did fine left alone except for supplemental water in summer.

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Subject: Re: Roses

Posted by [Milk Wine](#) on Wed, 21 Mar 2012 10:47:52 GMT

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The book is awesome, but I'm going to be brutally honest with you: you really don't need to prune her. Ever.

Now if you want to, that's another story. But bear in mind that a plant generally mirrors below ground what it has above ground, and when you prune, you have corresponding root die-off below-ground. This is what happens with grass, and why letting turfgrass get to 18" before cutting it actually CREATES tilth rather than destroying it, and why hard pruning a week before moving a rose makes digging it up much less stressful, both for you and for the rose. If, however, your rose

has fought so hard to dig down its roots in a year of horrible heat, honestly, I see no reason for those roots to die. We encourage folks to prune their shrubs, just because it encourages good branching and increases bloom, but your climber needs neither of these things, and will bloom her little head off regardless. I know this breaks with a lot of gardening tradition, but this is what we've found works here in Texas, and bloom is not impaired.

Fertilizer in the summer, our summers, is not needed, and really isn't wise - think of a person running in the heat, which is kind of what we want our roses to be doing (performing under stress). That person does not need their tummy full. Instead, they need lots of trace minerals and vitamins and water - that's why we recommend the seaweed - it's more like a tonic than a meal. Spraying it once a week on any of your plants, or even just mixing it up in a bucket (shades of Howl's Moving Castle) and putting it out as a soil drench works just fine. Fertilizer, like pruning, also encourages fresh growth, and we really don't want any more growth on that plant in the summer than it puts on already, since it then has to support that growth, and that puts stress on the roots. The only time I'd feed in the summer is if we get record floods again and all the nutrition washes away.

Sounds like Madame Alfred is in a gorgeous bed - perfect. There may be nothing for the inside of a man like the outside of a horse, but I think there's nothing for the outside of a rose than the inside of a horse.

(pauses for groans)

I just thought that up. I'm going to have to use that at work....Well, I would if it wasn't so cumbersome. Anyway....

And you're so welcome. (: This is one of my favorites topics, busman's holiday though it is.

At times, I get to be a rose therapist at work - not for the roses, but for the people who buy them! One of the most fun things is answering the phone call of ladies who introduce themselves with full married name and town. I know then that this is a Southern belle of a certain age, and settle down for a fun (and super-long) conversation.

C'est la vie on the dead Ceciles (so sad! I love that rose!) - it's heck trying to keep this stuff alive in drought. A co-worker of mine had her well get dangerously low the last hot hot year (3 years ago, I think), and had to let her roses go in the hopes that they'd keep household water. It sucked. I don't think she's ever tried to replace them - the shaggy, more native garden remains, and she concentrates on that.

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Subject: Re: Roses

Posted by [Milk Wine](#) on Wed, 21 Mar 2012 12:47:48 GMT

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Yeah, you can really tell that we trend south, whatever we might say about ourselves (Global Rose Purveyors? Something like that).

We are in a region where temporary plastic pop-up greenhouses, while sufficient protection for many tender plants in the winter, get destroyed utterly by the summer sun, and require storage. Mad dogs and Englishmen, presumably, are the only things frolicking out here when July starts burning us to the ground....

Besides, can't y'all have peonies? Nothing to complain of, then.....:grin::

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Subject: Re: Roses

Posted by [Diane in MN](#) on Fri, 23 Mar 2012 04:51:23 GMT

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Milk Wine wrote on Wed, 21 March 2012 07:47

Besides, can't y'all have peonies? Nothing to complain of, then.....:grin::

Oh yes, lots of peonies around here, and I love them. Every couple of years or so I look around the yard and think about where I could plant some, but they want sun, too, and that's in short supply on the dog-free side of the house. It's a good thing I've started to get very fond of hostas. :)

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Subject: Re: Roses

Posted by [EMoon](#) on Sun, 25 Mar 2012 03:36:44 GMT

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Erin, thanks, again. Just yesterday, the Cecelie Brunner parts that are alive exploded with their tiny pink flowers--my husband brought in four or five of them and we floated them in a bowl next to the pitcher and jar with the Madame Alfred blooms in them. I once foolishly admitted here that I'm not a pink-fond person, but that's in clothes (I look awful in pink, sick in fact.) Roses, on the other hand...the delicate blush on those Madame Alfred flowers are incredible, and I've always liked the cheerful pink of other flowers. Just not on me, because...well...ick.

I'm glad that this year Madame Alfred will have stored rainwater to drink and not city water (being as there is hardly any city water--the town had only four wells; one is now completely dry and the other's pump has serious problems, so we're very short. We were featured in the county paper as having the worst water shortage in the county.)

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Subject: Re: Roses

Posted by [Milk Wine](#) on Wed, 28 Mar 2012 03:22:53 GMT

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Bless y'all's little hearts - we heard about poor Spicewood - the whole town went dry! Such an awful summer. I'm so glad y'all have all that rainwater. (:

I'm not much of a pink girl myself, especially the paler shades, but I have long since given in to the pale pink roses. Mmm, fragrance....

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