

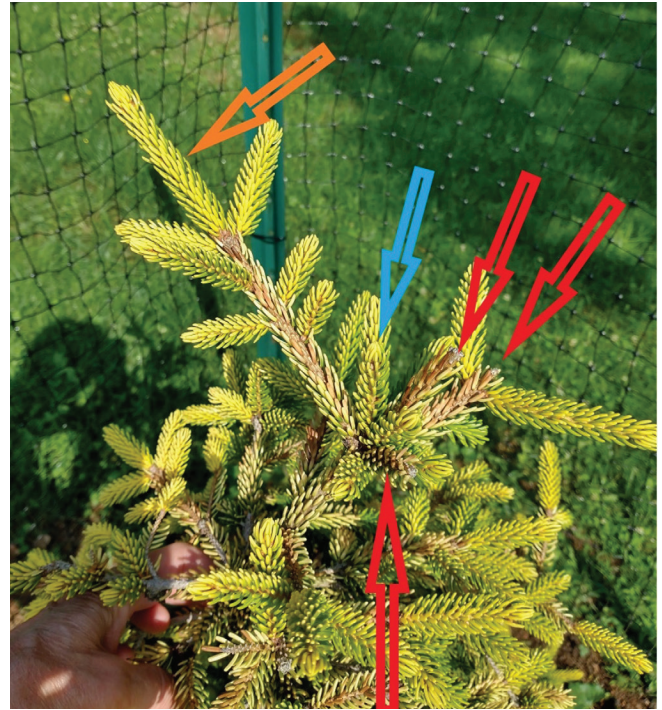
Friends of Oakbourne

by Tom Bare, Friends of Oakbourne

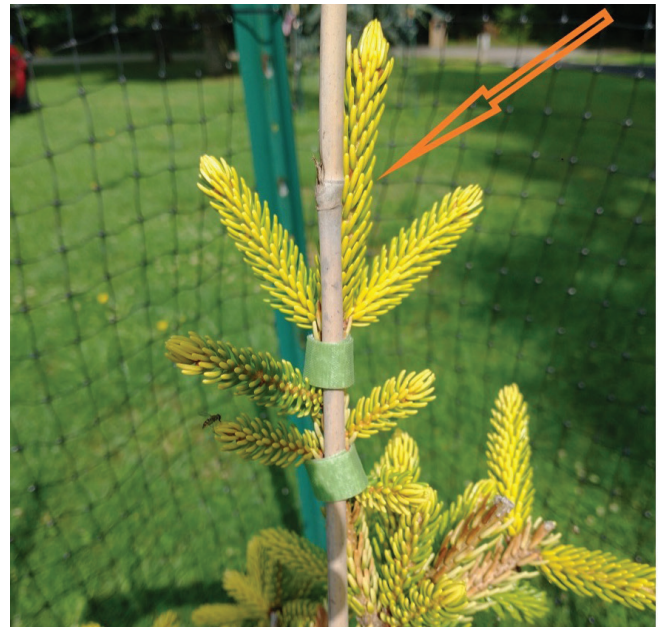
Because of the hot summer weather, Friends of Oakbourne (FoO) will be planting memorial and replacement trees this fall. During the summer, FoO has been maintaining our previously planted memorial trees, and we've started our arboretum tree identification project. This project's goal is to identify all the trees in the Oakbourne Park Arboretum and to locate each tree by GPS coordinates. We plan to use this data to create a database that will be available on the Friends of Oakbourne page of the Township website. The database is planned to not only contain tree identification and location, but also planting dates (if available) and, eventually, tree descriptions/characteristics. This will be a "living database" in that new trees and new information will be able to be incorporated when available.

As you walk around the Oakbourne Arboretum, you'll notice many distinctive shapes exhibited by different varieties of trees. Many conifers, including, among others, pines, spruces, firs, and larches, have a naturally symmetrical pyramidal shape. This shape is due to a specialized growing point called the terminal bud which is located at the very top of the tree. If this central tip/bud is damaged and a strong new leader is not established, the tree may lose its symmetrical shape and become (for shorter trees) more shrub-like or (for larger trees) more rounded and shorter than normal.

During our spring/summer tree maintenance, we discovered that the terminal leader and two other terminal side branches (all indicated by the red arrows in **Picture 1**) in a recently planted memorial tree (*Picea orientalis* 'Skylands') were apparently damaged at the nursery and/or during the winter. The blue arrow in **Picture 1** shows that a new, but small, leader was indeed established during the spring growth. However, the orange arrow in **Picture 1** points to a larger more vigorous side branch coming from the terminal area. While this larger branch might have naturally over time assumed the position of the new terminal leader, we wanted to ensure that this vigorous larger branch became the new leader. This was accomplished by attaching a small bamboo stake to the tree trunk and then fixing the large side branch (indicated by the orange arrow in **Picture 2**) to the stake so that it will be fixed in a vertical upright position. If this works as expected and the vertical branch becomes the terminal leader, this small tree will develop with a nicely symmetrical pyramidal shape as it matures in the coming years.



Picea orientalis 'Skylands' with damaged terminal and terminal side branches



Skylands spruce with strong new leader fastened to bamboo stake

Interested In Donating A Park Bench Or Tree?

Contact Tom Bare (tmbare@hotmail.com or 610-399-1572) if you are interested in donating a park bench or tree to be planted in Oakbourne Park and Arboretum to honor a special person or loved one or to commemorate an important occasion.