Geranium × cantabrigiense ‘Biokovo’ is the 2015 Perennial Plant of the Year. ‘Biokovo’ blooms in late spring with delightful masses of 5-petaled white flowers, about ¾" in diameter. This excellent groundcover perennial reaches up to 10 inches high. Petals are tinged pink at the base and have darker pink center stamens. The overall effect is that of a blushing pink geranium. The attractive foliage has rounded leaf edges. It is a perrenial plant, and is semi-evergreen in most climates. This plant is hardy to USDA Zones 4 to 8.

‘Biokovo’ does well in average, medium, well-drained soil in full sun to part shade. It is easy to grow and only requires deadheading to keep it looking good. It forms an attractive mound that offers scarlet and orange fall colors to your garden. Cut away any dead foliage in the spring and ‘Biokovo’ is ready for the garden season. The plant tends to be deer- and rabbit resistant. Dr. Hans Simon, Marktheldenfeld, Germany, found ‘Biokovo,’ a naturally occurring hybrid of Geranium dalmaticum and Geranium macrorrhizum, in the Biokovo Mountains of the Dalmatia region of present-day Croatia.

Source: Perennial Plant Association

---

### Rabbit Readiness for Plants

**Soni Cochran**

Extension Associate

If you’re getting ready to plant, don’t forget to think ahead! Rabbits will readily eat your tender plants. During spring, cottontail rabbits prefer young, growing vegetables like tulips, grass and garden vegetables like carrots, peas, beans, lettuce and beets. Other plants most eaten by cottontail rabbits include asters, hostas, hybrid lilies and impatiens. You can exclude rabbits from gardens with rabbit fencing, 1-inch chicken wire or hardware cloth. To keep cottontail rabbits out, your fence doesn’t need to be tall — it needs to be just two feet tall. Chain link and privacy fences are usually nearby and will care for the fledglings until they are enough to escape. Fledgling birds need to find a place to live when using any chemicals. Make sure you read the label carefully when using any chemicals. Many people try frightening devices but rabbits get used to them and become ineffective. Trapping is only a temporary solution.

### Cankers

From preceding page

- **Thyrocotria canker** — most common on honeylocust, but may attack American elm, white ash, mockernut hickory, willow and bur oak.

Common infection sites include pruning wounds and sunburned bark.

- **Hypoxyan canker** — species of red and white oak, maple, beech, basswood and sycamore. Infected bark sloughs away revealing fungal stoma beneath.

### Evergreen Trees

- **Cytospora canker** — Colorado, Norway and white spruce. Branches and tops of trees may be killed.

### Minimizing Canker Problems in Your Landscape

Canker fungi are considered weak pathogens because although they are commonly present in the environment at all times they are unable to attack healthy plants. However, weak or stressed trees are susceptible to canker infections. So, what causes stress in landscape trees and shrubs? Drought, overwatering, poor planting sites, physical damage, insect attack, stem girdling roots, planting depth problems, tree pruning, frost, sunscald, fire or herbicides. Usually the canker pathogen enters a plant through a wound or branch stub. The best way to prevent cankers on landscape plants is by keeping them healthy and vigorous through best management practices.

- Make sure new trees are planted at the right depth and remove stem girdling roots before planting.

- Keep trees watered during periods of drought. Moist soil 18–24 inches deep, focusing on the area from the trunk to the tree’s drip line. Trees should receive 1 inch of water per week throughout the growing season from rain or irrigation.

- Keep plants mulched to conserve soil moisture and moderate soil temperatures. Mulch also keeps mowers and string trimmers away from tree bark, preventing mechanical damage.

- Use good pruning practices to avoid unnecessary bark damage. Don’t leave branch stubs and don’t remove more than 20% of a tree’s canopy at one time.

- Protect the trunks of young, thin-barked trees from winter sunscald by shading or wrapping.

- Prune out branches killed by cankers. Tops of evergreen trees killed by Cytospora canker can also be pruned out. Make pruning cuts at least several inches below the dead section. Clean pruning tools between cuts to prevent spread of the pathogen throughout your plant. Clean tools by wiping them with 70% denatured alcohol or a 10% bleach solution.

---

### What to Do if You Find a Baby Bird

**Soni Cochran**

Extension Associate

It isn’t unusual for people to be concerned about baby birds they’ve found out of the nest during the spring and summer. How do you know if the bird needs your help? First, figure out if it is a nestling or a fledgling.

Nestlings have recently hatched from an egg. They are small, rapidly growing baby birds. When the baby birds are young, they thought these birds were “naked” because they don’t look like they have many feathers. Nestlings found on the ground are very vulnerable to the elements and to predators. If you see a nestling, do not attempt to feed a nestling. Nestlings have recently hatched (cardinals pictured). If you’re getting ready to plant, watch from a distance. It isn’t unusual for people to be concerned about baby birds they’ve found out of the nest during the spring and summer.

Fledglings are feathered, but still can’t fly. These young fledglings are feathered, and red oak. Pruning wounds of black walnut, American elm, maple, peach and willow. Infections occur through woody trees and shrubs. Deciduous Trees

— apple, cantabrigiense

ESTS & ILDLIFE http://lancaster.unl.edu/pest

Fledgling birds are feathered, sunscald, fire or herbicides. When you visit botanical gardens and arboretums, take your camera — it needs to be just two feet tall. Chain link and privacy fences are usually nearby and will care for the fledglings until they are enough to escape. Fledgling birds don’t need our help unless they are injured. Sometimes they will break a leg or wing during their awkward flights. If you find an injured fledging bird, please don’t attempt to feed it. Contact a wildlife rehabilitator.

The Wildlife Rescue Team in Lincoln can be contacted at 402-473-1951. This group raises, rehabilitates and releases orphaned or injured wildlife (except birds of prey). If you find an injured or orphaned rabbit (birds of prey), please contact Raptor Recovery at 402-944-2009.

---

### For More Information

Nebraska Extension NatGuide “Managing Rabbit Damage” (G2019): and a list of Rabbit Resistant Perennials is available at the Extension office and online at http://extension.unl.edu/pest

Garden Guide, Things to Do this Month

Mary Jane Froge, Extension Associate

Have successive plantings of beans and sweet corn to extend the harvest season. Harvest in平时by cutting by or by grasping the stalk and pulling up and gently to one side. Grass clippings can be used as mulch in flower beds and vegetable gardens if allowed to dry well before use. Never use clippings from a lawn that has been treated with a herbicide. Mulch around newly planted trees and shrubs. This practice reduces weeds, controls fluctuations in soil temperature, retains moisture, prevents damage from lawn mowers and looks attractive.

When you visit botanical gardens and arboretums, take your camera — it needs to be just two feet tall. Chain link and privacy fences are usually nearby and will care for the fledglings until they are enough to escape. Fledgling birds don’t need our help unless they are injured. Sometimes they will break a leg or wing during their awkward flights. If you find an injured fledging bird, please don’t attempt to feed it. Contact a wildlife rehabilitator.

The Wildlife Rescue Team in Lincoln can be contacted at 402-473-1951. This group raises, rehabilitates and releases orphaned or injured wildlife (except birds of prey). If you find an injured or orphaned rabbit (birds of prey), please contact Raptor Recovery at 402-944-2009.