

Continuation from previous Newsletters: Pruning Wild Apple Trees with Bruce Robinson



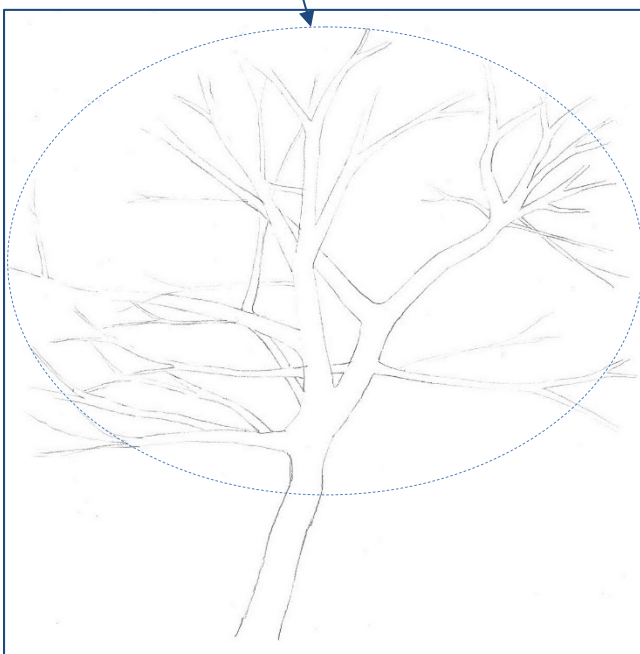
Bruce spent the first half of the workshop instructing participants how to examine wild apple trees in terms of pruning needs. After treating a handful of wild grown apple trees together he felt the group was ready to work on their own. Bruce then split the participants into teams of 2-3 and directed them to an area of the landowner's field where a large number of wild apple trees awaited maintenance.

The team working-on this tree took several minutes to look it over and decide what, if any, work was needed. They concluded that the overall form of the crown was already pretty good. However, there were some structural issues amongst the branches. Also, the crown was overly dense; less than ideal for fruit production.

The team verbally listed a number of things that could be improved with pruning and agreed on an order of priorities. They focused on the following two items:

1. Decrease the density of the crown for better light and air circulation.
2. Eliminate crossing branches and provide adequate spacing to avoid rubbing injuries and structural problems.

This tree's crown already had good general form; crown spread was a little more horizontal than vertical.



The foliage of this tree was very dense and a much closer view was required to see what work was really needed. The following page takes a closer look from within the crown. The pruning goal was to reduce crown density while eliminating structural problems at the same time. (See next page)

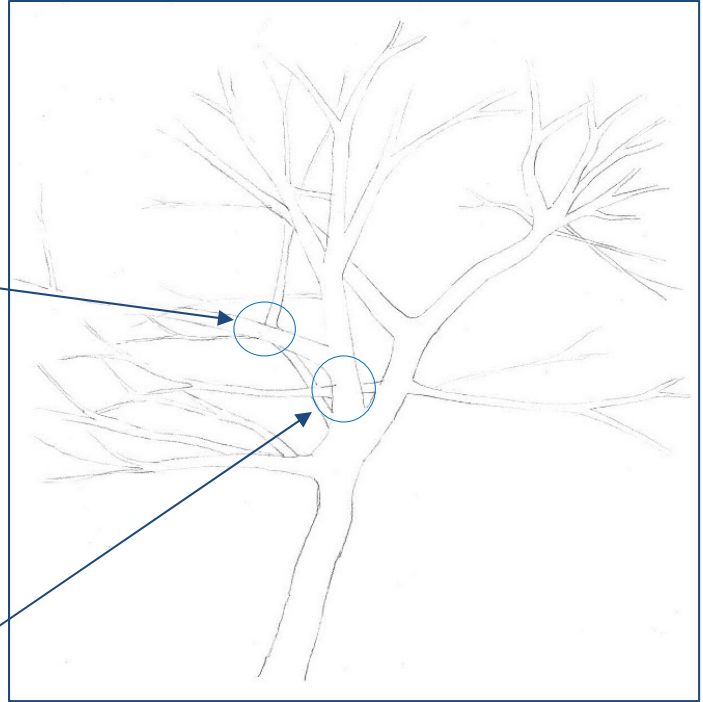


A noticeable change in crown density was accomplished without changing the crown's form.

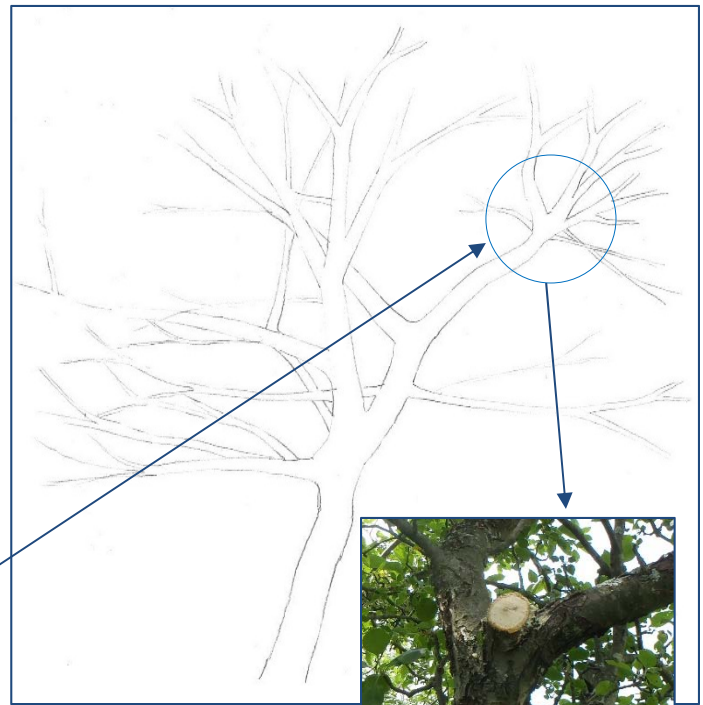
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This branch was removed because it was contacting a better branch and competing for light higher in the crown. (Picture from backside of tree)



Another crossing branch. Bark injury occurred where the branches were in contact. (Picture from backside of tree)



Before



After

Numerous lateral branches were crowding this portion of the crown. Two branches were removed in order to provide better spacing while also reducing crown density.