

Live Free or Dig

with the Littleton Garden Club

The Root Slayer

BY EA FRASER

fraser_elizabeth@hotmail.com

Like most avid gardeners, I have lots of tools. You know the adage, "For safety and efficiency, use the right tool!" I have a collection of long-handled tools like rakes, shovels, and hoes. Sometimes, multiple versions are used because the heads are different for different tasks.

I have many hand tools like trowels, claws, and probes, including the Cobra Head, which I'm especially fond of. And on and on with pruners, clippers, small saws, and the like. I figured I had the garden tool domain covered with my diverse collection. Little did I know I needed the new go-to tool, the Root Slayer.

While on a garden tour in Landaff last August, I mentioned my difficulty dividing certain perennials. Several fellow gardeners on the tour quickly gave enthusiastic testimonials for using a Root Slayer shovel for these jobs. Say what? You mean there's a tool that I don't have?

I checked online and found plenty of

information and opportunities to purchase a Root Slayer. The Root Slayer is a hybrid shovel with a V-shaped notch at the shovel tip and rip-saw teeth on both sides that easily slice through roots. The teeth on the blade's sides all face in the same direction and are designed to cut on the down stroke. It's a multipurpose shovel that eliminates the need for other digging tools, like hatchets, pry bars, and saws.

Does it work? I have a recently logged area where a balsam fir stand once stood. Of course, it beckoned me, as a gardener, like a blank canvas

ready for planting new shrubs and trees. I had a rude awakening when I tried to dig a hole for a shrub with a heavy-duty garden spade. The shovel was no match for the heavy tree roots. I resorted to using a crowbar and laboriously picking and digging a hole.

Then I got the Root Slayer. I intended to order one online, but while in Lowe's, I spotted their Kobalt brand Root Slayer and purchased it. Armed with my new shovel, I planted more shrubs in the heavily rooted area. Viola!

Digging the holes with the Root Slayer was like a knife through butter. Also,

the maidenhair fern that had resisted all prior dividing attempts was easily divided with the Root Slayer.

I'm a convert and looking forward to using my Root Slayer to dig up and divide very mature perennials this coming gardening season. For years, I've accumulated more and more tools to get gardening jobs done. I envision the Root Slayer becoming my go-to shovel, and it may help me downsize my extensive tool collection. I recommend it. It's a cool new tool to include in your arsenal of gardening equipment.