

ask the landscape professional

Linda K. Lillie of Sprigs & Twigs



Welcome to my weekly series!

Feel free to send me questions you'd like to have me answer and I will do my best to address the ones of most general interest.

Email or mail your questions to: info@sprigsandtwigs.net or Linda Lillie, Sprigs & Twigs Inc, PO Box 245, Gales Ferry, CT 06335

Question of the Week: *I have a large number of azalea bushes in my yard; they are well established and exhibit a great variety of color and show every spring. I have started to notice a fungus showing up on branches throughout most of my bushes. Any idea what this fungus is and how may I protect my plants from additional fungus spread?* Dave G. – Groton

Answer: What you are observing on your Azaleas is lichens growing on the stems. The lichens are not parasitic and will not harm the Azaleas. They make their own food and get moisture from rainfall. The lichens can be rubbed off by hand, but I would just leave it alone. Lichens tend to grow where there is good air circulation. Because your Azaleas have a less dense foliage, which allows more sunlight to penetrate the branches, the lichens have found a good home.

Azaleas prefer morning sun, acid soil and soil moisture. So if your Azaleas are planted in an area where they receive afternoon sun, they could be stressed. Make sure the roots of the Azaleas are mulched (about 2-3" but not buried), the mulch keeps the soil cool and moist. Allow the leaves in the fall to decompose around the base of the shrubs to create organic matter which feeds the Azaleas and acts as mulch. Do supplemental watering during the hot, summer months if Mother Nature is not providing enough rain. Feed them each April with Hollytone Organic Fertilizer, a slow release pelletized fertilizer that needs to be applied only once each year. The moisture and feeding will help the vigor of the plants and hopefully grow in fuller and deter the growth of the lichens.



Photos courtesy of Dave G. – Groton

"Ask the Landscape Professional" Now Hosting Lectures



I look forward to meeting you there!

The sessions are being held in our Gales Ferry office at 41 Kings Highway, Suite 207. Space is limited and you need to call the office (860-235-0752) to make a reservation.

Lecture #2 - "Unusual Native Perennial Plants"
February 3 from 3:00-4:00 (Session is full)

Lecture #3 - "Surprising Native Shrubs and Trees"
February 10 from 3:00-4:00. (Space is Available)

Lecture #4 - "Pollinator-Friendly Landscapes"
February 24 from 3:00-4:00. (Space is Available)

Sprigs & Twigs is booking 2014-2015 Snow Removal services now and scheduling appointments for 2015 Garden Design, Spring Leaf Clean-ups, Garden Spruce-ups, Landscape Maintenance, Organic Lawn Care, Mowing and Trimming Services, Stonework and Custom Carpentry Services. Go to www.SprigsandTwigs.net for details. Call us anytime to discuss your landscape needs and to meet with our staff.

Sprigs & Twigs is a highly regarded, professional, full service, national award winning Landscape Design, Installation, Maintenance, Tree Care and Lawn Care Company. We are completely organic. Visit our website www.sprigsandtwigs.net or call us for more information.

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Linda K. Lillie has been President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc. for the last 19 years. She is a graduate of Connecticut College in Botany, an accredited NOFA Organic Land Care Professional, a Connecticut Master Gardener and a national award winning landscape designer for her design and installation projects..

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