



ask

Celebrating 20 Years!
the landscape professional
Linda K. Lillie of Sprigs & Twigs

Welcome to my weekly series!

Email or mail your questions to: info@sprigsandtwigs.net or
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Thank you Readers for Voting Sprigs & Twigs
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Question this Week: *Hi Linda- There are several wild azaleas on my property behind my house in the woods. They are old and a bit spindly as the oak trees around them have shaded them for 40+ years. I have enjoyed the blooms for many years and I was wondering is there any way I can transplant them to a better location where I can see them more easily? Should I prune them in preparation? What time of year would be best to move them? Thanks for any advice you can share. ...Robin*

Linda's Answer:

Hi Robin,

Yes, you can transplant the azaleas. Cut each one back by 1/3 in height before moving. This helps the plant focus on growing new roots to support the shrub. This is very important. If you don't prune it back, the transplanted shrub would not be able to support the entire, unpruned shrub with water and nutrients. You can transplant them anytime from late August through September. Using a back-hoe would be very helpful (and absolutely necessary if they are large) because you will be able to transfer a lot of good soil with the plant, hopefully with roots intact. If some of the roots are broken in the process, make clean cuts with a pruner before planting. Make sure the azaleas get planted in the shade with lots of leaf litter compost around the roots to hold the moisture in. Before the hole gets filled in, fill the planting hole with water and soak the root ball well. After you fill in the hole, add 2-3" of mulch above roots, but keep the mulch away from the trunk of the azalea. Water every 3-4 days, very deeply. Between waterings the soil near the surface will dry out which encourages the roots to go more deeply to look for water (which is what you want to happen). Do not water every day. Watering daily causes the roots to remain near the surface of the soil which weakens the plant and makes it more susceptible to drought conditions. Keep watering until the end of October or until Mother Nature starts providing sufficient water. Let me know if you need help with transplanting, we'd be happy to assist. Good Luck.



Linda K. Lillie has been President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc. for the last 20 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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