

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 Burning Bush shrubs in my yard, but I read that they are very invasive. What's the story and what should I do?

Now that fall is just around the corner, Burning Bush, one of our region's most colorful fall shrubs, is about to show in all of its bright red glory.

Unfortunately, Burning Bush, known as *Euonymus alata*, is a non-native invasive plant that can be a threat to your entire landscape and can overrun your yard and our woodlands. Burning Bush is indigenous to Asia and was introduced and planted for its hardiness and bright red fall color. Before people realized how invasive it was, states used to plant it in large groupings along highways and homeowners planted it all around their properties.



The issue with Burning Bush is that it is easily spread by wildlife and can form dense groves that alter the structure of the natural plant communities in our woodlands.. Birds eat their fruit and then disperse the seeds over wide areas. I have had people tell me that they only have one Burning Bush in their yard and don't see any evidence of it spreading, and while that may be true, your one Burning Bush can be the source of hundreds of others scattered over dozens of square miles. Burning Bush has been banned in Massachusetts and New Hampshire and has been placed on the Invasive Plants List here in Connecticut.

The best way to control Burning Bush is to not plant it in the first place. However, if you find it on your property it is important to either remove it yourself or have Sprigs & Twigs remove it before it causes additional damage. You must dig Burning Bush up by the roots and bag it because, like most invasives, it can regrow from a missed piece or two.

There are many great non-invasive alternatives to Burning Bush that Sprigs & Twigs can plant for you including: Black Chokeberry (*Aronia melanocarpa*), Highbush Blueberry (*Vaccinium corymbosum*), Fragrant Sumac (*Rhus aromatica*), Witch-alder (*Fothergilla gardenii*), Oak-leaf Hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*) and Arrow-wood Viburnum (*Viburnum dentatum*), to name a few. Give us a call.

Sprigs & Twigs is a fully organic company that offers an Organic Lawn Care Program for your lawn. Visit our website or call us if you would like more information.

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Linda K. Lillie is the President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc, the premier landscape tree care & lawn care company in SE Connecticut for the last 17 years. She is a graduate of Connecticut College in Botany, a Connecticut Master Gardener and a national award winning landscape designer for her design and installation work.

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