

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: *Now that the leaves are off the trees, I notice that my cherry tree has several large, ugly black growths. They concern me; what is causing them and what do I do about them?*

Answer: Your cherry tree has a common, but destructive fungus, *Apiosporina morbosa*. It is widespread in plants such as plums, cherries, wild black cherries, and peaches. It was first reported over 200 years ago in Massachusetts and, although it is found all over the country, it is most common in New England. Not only does it look terrible, it can actually kill your trees unless action is taken. The disease forms various shaped hard, black swellings that can get quite large (over a foot across) and grow larger year after year. Black knot can occur on the main trunk, small twigs or any of the tree's branches (or all of the above). The picture shows a section cut from a diseased tree that has black knot over 6 inches across. The disease is spread by spores which are ejected from the fungus and easily spread by the wind. New infections generally occur in April through June during rainy, warm periods when the temperatures are in the low 70's.



Section of a cherry tree infested with Black Knot Fungus

To save your tree, you must take remedial action before April 1. Prune out any black knots or swelling wherever they occur and cut back at least 4 inches away from the diseased pieces you remove. If the disease is on the side of a larger stem of the tree, cut into the healthy wood at least an inch past the infection all around. Since the removed pieces of a tree may still be actively infected, burn or bury the debris. If there are many infection sites on your tree, the only practical solution may be to remove the tree completely and dispose of it. You should inspect your trees annually.

If you need assistance with your cherry or any of your trees, give us a call. We'd be happy to help.

"Ask the Landscape Professional" Now Offering Classroom Lectures

I have decided to expand "Ask The Landscape Professional" by offering periodic classroom lectures on a variety of topics.

The sessions will be open to the public and will be 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 1 - "Top Ten Low Maintenance Garden Habits"
January 21 from 3:00-4:00 (several spaces left)

Lecture 2 - "Unusual Native Perennial Plants"
February 3 from 3:00-4:00 (just announced)



I look forward to meeting you there!

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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Sprigs & Twigs



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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