



Celebrating 22 Years!

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:
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QUESTION THIS WEEK:

Dear Linda - My question has to do with my Wisteria which should be blooming in the spring. It has been many years since it bloomed, perhaps decades. I wonder whether I'm pruning it incorrectly or if it requires special fertilizer or other care to get it to bloom. It's frustrating to drive by so many Wisteria in full bloom and mine doesn't have a single blossom. I look forward to your advice. Thanks, Alan

Linda's Answer:

Hi Alan,

Here are a few suggestions:

1. I suggest that you cut out a 3-4' ring around the base of the Wisteria and place 2" of mulch in the ring. The mulch ring will help delineate where not to put the lawn fertilizer which is Nitrogen based. Lawn fertilizer contamination within the root zone of the Wisteria will cause lots of leaves and no flowers on your wisteria. Mulch will also help keep the soil cool and moist around the base of the plant and keep the Wisteria roots from competing for nutrients and water from the lawn grass.
2. Use Flowertone organic fertilizer around the base of the Wisteria in the Fall only. Work it into the soil and water it in. Flowertone has the Phosphorus in it to encourage flowering along with other minerals that plants need. If you fertilize in the Spring, you will most likely get leaf growth only because Wisteria blooms in early to mid-May.
3. Make sure your Wisteria is in Full Sun. Full Sun means 7-8 hours of uninterrupted sunshine. Sunlight is needed to produce flowers. If the Wisteria is in shade, it will not produce flowers.
4. Proper Drainage is important too. Soil containing normal moisture is the best. Make sure there is no standing water or very dry, poor soil around the base of the plant.
5. Pruning is another important aspect of flowering. If the Wisteria is pruned at the wrong time of the year, the flower buds for next year's flowers can inadvertently be cut off. Since the Wisteria blooms in early-mid May, the proper time to prune is in July (usually before July 4th). If you wait until mid-late Summer or Fall to prune, you will cut off next year's flower buds. Cut the Wisteria stems back to within (3) buds from the base of the plant. These remaining buds will produce next year's stems and flowers.

Good Luck.



Wisteria

Linda K. Lillie has been President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc. for the last 22 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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