

ASK THE LANDSCAPE PROFESSIONAL

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 this Week:

Dear Linda – I loved your recent article about landscape design and I especially loved that you specialized in naturalistic, low maintenance gardens. How much maintenance can I expect to have to do after the garden is installed?...Katie



Linda's Answer:

Dear Katie –Gardens that we design and install are low maintenance, but not NO maintenance gardens. There are a number of low maintenance features we incorporate in each of our designs:

- **Right plant for the right spot** – plants will thrive where we place them because we take into account not only the needs of the plant but the environment they are in. We have extensive experience in the different micro-climates in Southeastern Connecticut - A plant that grows well inland would not be suitable for a windy shoreline site. Plants are chosen and placed so they will not overgrow their space which would require constant pruning to keep them under control. We use quite a lot of native plants that have adapted to our local condition and thrive so there will not be many plants that don't survive, in fact, once the plants get established after the first few weeks, you will not have to water them.
- **Weed control by use of ground covers** – we add a thick layer of non-dyed organic mulch to minimize weed growth. Over time, the groundcovers we plant will spread and mulching will not be necessary.

Maintenance you can expect to do after your garden is installed:

- Periodically, pull any weeds that poke through the mulch layer. You will also want to replenish the mulch layer at 1" per year to replace the mulch that normally decomposes annually.
- Minor pruning throughout the season to keep stray twigs in place, deadheading any flowering perennials (removing the spent flowers so that others can follow). At the end of the season, cut back any spent plants to get them prepared for the winter months when all of the plant's energy is going down to their roots.

Thank you for your great question. This is our 23rd year and we are so confident of our design procedures, we guarantee everything we plant. Give me a call if we can be of service.