



Welcome to my weekly series!
ASK THE LANDSCAPE PROFESSIONAL

Linda K. Lillie of Sprigs & Twigs

SPRIGS & TWIGS HAS BEEN DESIGNATED AN ESSENTIAL BUSINESS AND WE ARE OPEN, IN ACCORDANCE WITH CT GOVERNOR NED LAMONT'S EXECUTIVE ORDER 7H, DATED MARCH 20, 2020.

Hello Linda- I have a 15-year-old Mimosa tree that has bloomed beautifully until this year. Although the leaves appear normal, there have only been a handful of blooms. What's your suggestion? By the way, I really enjoy your column! Thank you, Martha

Mimosa trees are interesting, unusual and beautiful. They are native to Asia, but they do well in many climates throughout the United States. Mimosa trees (*Albizia julibrissin*) are a legume which means they are one of the plants that "fixes" nitrogen out of the atmosphere and transports it to the root zone where it can be used as fertilizer by the tree. Consequently, a mimosa does not have to be in particularly fertile soil because it actually improves the soil itself. Its leaves get up to 20 inches long and are "bipinnate" which means they are not a single leaf, but are separate like a fern and actually fold up at night and during a rainstorm. In Japan, they are called the "sleeping tree" because of their nighttime behavior. Mimosa trees are fast growing (up to 2 feet per year), can get 30 to 40 feet tall and 20 to 50 feet wide. Only mature Mimosa trees blossom, which occurs from May to June. The 2-inch flowers are pink, very fragrant, and form in fluffy clusters that look like fine silk threads.



After the flowers have been pollinated, 7-inch long seed pods form. **BE CAUTIOUS- Mimosa tree seed pods and seeds are extremely poisonous to pets and children!**

Since your Mimosa tree is mature and has blossomed previously, I suspect that one (or several) of the following things are going on.

- 1) Mimosa trees need full sunlight. If your yard has other nearby trees that are growing taller and gradually shading your Mimosa as they get bigger, that could be the problem,
- 2) Mimosa trees need very acidic soil having a pH in the range of 4.6 to 5. While the soil in this region is acidic, it generally is not that acidic. I suggest that you do a soil test to determine pH. If the soil needs to be more acidic, sulfur is added in a prescribed amount. If you need help with the soil test and application of sulfur (if called for), Sprigs & Twigs can assist.
- 3) Mimosa trees need moist, but well drained soil to thrive and blossom.

Thank you for your question.



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