



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.

Hi Linda, I just pruned back this very old witch hazel. Did I ruin it? Karen

Hi Karen,

You did what is called "rejuvenation pruning", but I would have waited until the middle of April to cut it back. That's when the nutrients start flowing up from the roots into the plant above-ground which pushes out the new growth. You will know in April-May if the pruning was too early. What you should see at that time is new growth coming out of the ground or from different areas of the stems near the ground. If you see new growth, fertilize with compost and some organic-slow release, dry fertilizer like Flower-tone. Keep the plant well-watered. Most likely you will need to cut the existing stems back even further, but wait for signs of new growth. Give the plant until mid-summer for new growth to appear. If no new growth appears, the plant is dead.



The best time to rejuvenate prune a shrub is from the middle of April to mid-June. Sometimes the rejuvenation can be pushed to mid-Summer but it depends on the type of shrub and the amount of rainfall we are getting. Do not do this type of pruning at any other time of the year (especially in the Fall). In the fall, the nutrients within the plants stems and leaves are being taken down into the roots for the winter. Pruning this drastically will kill the shrub because no active growth is happening at this time. Good Luck.

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