

Welcome to my weekly series!

# ask the landscape professional

Linda K. Lillie of Sprigs & Twigs

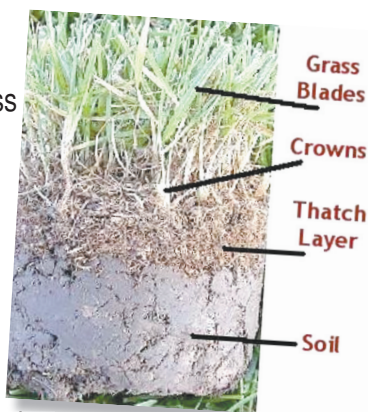


Feel free to send me questions you'd like to have me answer and I will do my best to address the ones of most general interest. **Email or mail your questions to:**

**info@sprigsandtwigs.net or Linda Lillie, Sprigs & Twigs Inc, PO Box 245, Gales Ferry, CT 06335**

**Linda's Information This Week:** *I have been getting a lot of questions on lawn thatch lately, so here's the story ..*

Thatch is not dead grass clippings that normally fall to the surface when you mow the lawn. Grass clippings actually decompose and are very beneficial, so much so that you should not bag them or remove them. Thatch is a tightly woven mix of living and dead stems, leaves and roots that accumulate just above the soil and around the base of grass plants. Thick layers of thatch, greater than 1 inch, are trouble, because air, fertilizer and water is restricted getting to the roots of the grass plants and turf diseases can thrive.



In thinner layers, thatch is actually a good thing because it moderates the temperature of the soil and provides a cushion over the soil surface. The ideal situation is to have thatch build up at the same rate it decomposes and the key to that lies in having a healthy soil, with lots of microbial activity. Beneficial microorganisms like soil with a pH of about 6.5, adequate moisture and good aeration. Soils where microorganisms don't thrive (acidic and compacted soil) is where you see thatch build-up. This is the basic approach of our Organic Lawn Care Program – improve the microbial activity in the soil. With chemically treated lawns, not only are the microbes and earthworms killed with the chemical fertilizers and pesticides, but many times they are over-fertilized causing the thatch to build up with no microbial activity to decompose it. You also have to be careful if you have an irrigation system not to over-water your lawn – that also increases thatch buildup.

Sprigs & Twigs offers a number of lawn care options depending on your special needs: 1) aeration for compacted lawns, 2) Soil testing and analysis of results, 3) dethatching for heavily thatched lawns and 4) a full season Organic Lawn Care Program. See our web site for more details and give us a call.

## Sprigs & Twigs

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100% Organic  
Weed Killer  
Retailer**

Linda K. Lillie is the President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc, the premier landscape tree care & lawn care company in SE Connecticut for the last 17 years. She is a 1997 graduate of Connecticut College in Botany, a Connecticut Master Gardener and a national award winning landscape designer for her design and installation work.

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