



Welcome to
my weekly
series!

Linda K. Lillie of Sprigs & Twigs

ask the landscape professional

SEND ME YOUR QUESTIONS ... 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 Thoughts This Week:

What you found is a **Praying Mantis egg case**. Every year in the fall, Praying Mantises mate and produce one or more egg cases, a frothy secretion that hardens to protect their eggs from winter weather and birds. When the spring arrives and the weather is warm for a few weeks, the eggs will hatch up to 200 tiny mantises all at once. The young crawl out of the egg case, dry off and disperse into the vegetation without a trace. This whole process takes an hour or two so it's easy to miss even if you are keeping an eye on an egg case.



Praying Mantises are carnivores with insatiable appetites. When first hatched, the small mantis feed on small insects such as aphids and as they grow in size, so does the size of the prey they can overcome. They can grow up to 6 inches in length and live from spring hatch to the onset of cold weather. Praying Mantises are on the hunt day and night and can wait for hours for a meal to come by, but that's what they do - wait and suddenly reach out and attack. Praying Mantises are generally good for your garden because they control pest insects. But, they are not selective and will eat beneficial insects as well. Any insect is a meal for a Praying Mantis. If there are no other insects available, they will eat each other!



Praying Mantises get their name because they hold their hands together and appear to be praying. Don't be fooled though. If an insect gets within their range, the Praying Mantis will strike with lightning quick speed and snare the prey with the sharp spines on its arms. They are perfectly safe for humans because they don't sting or bite. They are also entertaining because they are the only insect in the world that can turn its head a full 180 degrees. So don't be surprised if you are looking at them from behind and they swivel their head and look right back at you!

They are wonderful additions to your garden and if you want to make sure you have some in your garden this year, you can actually buy Praying Mantis egg cases on-line!

Sprigs & Twigs, Inc is a proud sponsor of the first annual Ledyard Colonel Classic 5K Road Race on April 5th at 9 am. The race begins and ends at Ledyard High School (24 Gallup Hill Road). Proceeds will benefit Ledyard High School scholarship funds. Runners and walkers can register for the race at www.ledyardrec.org.

Sprigs & Twigs is a highly regarded, professional, full service, national award winning Landscape Design, Installation, Maintenance, Tree Care and Lawn Care Company. We are completely organic. Visit our website or call us for more information.

Sprigs & Twigs

Linda K. Lillie is the President of Sprigs & Twigs, Inc, the premier landscape tree care & lawn care company in SE Connecticut for the last 18 years. She is a 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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