

**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

Question of the Week:

I have an inkberry hedge that is out of control; it's quite large and leggy. I would like to know if I can prune it at this time of year to get it back into shape.

Linda's Answer:

Yes and no. Your inkberry needs what is called 'rejuvenation pruning' where 1/3 to 1/2 of the plant is removed to encourage new growth. Yes, you can 'rejuvenation prune' your Inkberry, but DO NOT do it at this time of the year. Right now, all shrubs and trees are heading towards winter dormancy, a time period where everything in the plant slows down, especially growth. If you pruned the Inkberry now, there would not be enough time for the new growth to get 'hardened off' before the hard frost comes. The best time to 'rejuvenate prune' your Inkberry is in spring when the plant's growth process is revving up. Cut the shrub back by 1/2, loosen the soil around the base of the plant and fertilize with Holly-tone® organic, slow-release fertilizer. Water the fertilizer into the ground well and mulch around the base of the plant to keep the soil moist and cool. If Mother Nature does not provide rain, keep the plants watered. When it comes time to prune the Inkberry, DO NOT use a hedge trimmer. When a hedge trimmer is used, the top of the shrub grows the thickest and it gets very leggy at the base. Instead, prune by hand and cut the stems at varying lengths deep inside the shrub to encourage full growth throughout the shrub. Rejuvenation pruning can be done on just about any shrub that is looking thin and leggy.



This time of year is, however, good to do dead-wood pruning and shaping pruning. Dead wood pruning, as the name suggests, is the method used to remove the dead parts of the shrub. Shaping pruning gets the shrub back into a natural shape and removes those long and straggly stems that may get whipped around in the winter winds.

If you need any help with pruning, don't hesitate to call. We have trained and highly-skilled pruners on staff and we'd be happy to do it for you this year and teach you how you can do it next year. Also call our office now to set up an appointment for an estimate and get on our schedule for fall close-down garden maintenance. This is also the perfect time to be thinking ahead and planning for next year's garden design and installation project. Give us a call.

Sprigs and 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 at www.sprigsandtwigs.net or call us for more information.

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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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