



Garden Coach with Jennifer Brennan

March is the month for pruning and seed starting

March 11, 2022 (Friday)

Topic: Pruning

Pruning: Woody plants

- Trees and shrubs are easy to prune now because structure can be seen with no leaves
- Focus on damaged branches or diseased branches
- Deciduous plants now – evergreens later in the early summer
- Use by-pass pruning shears

Reasons to Prune:

- Pruning with a purpose
- When planting or transplanting
- To train
- To control size, appearance and health
- To control production of fruit & flowers
- To rejuvenate
- To create a barrier

Tree Anatomy – important to know the names of the parts

Tools:

1. Pruning shears (hand held)
2. Lopping shears – bypass vs. anvil

Do not use: Tree Paints and Sealers (old school – not recommended now)

Where to prune? Above a node

Large Branch Removal – 3 step cut

Branch Bark Collar

Dr. Shigo research:

Flush cut 1 year after pruning showing dying tissue above and below area where branch collar was cut away

Proper wound scar – “kiss”

Pruning involves making decisions based on:

1. Why?

- Removal of damaged plant parts
- Removal of errant growth
- Increase stem and foliar density
- Stimulate flowering & fruiting
- Create unusual shapes and forms
- Stimulate new growth
- Protect people and property

Pruning dormant shrubs

2. WHEN?

- Plants that produce flowers on OLD WOOD carry their flower buds on their branches over winter and should be pruned AFTER FLOWERING
- Plants that produce flowers on NEW WOOD (current season's growth) should be pruned BEFORE NEW GROWTH BEGINS
- *When* does the plant bloom?
 - **Old wood**..... like Magnolia, Lilac, Quince, Forsythia, Redbud (early Spring)
 - **New wood**..... like Roses, Potentilla, *Buddleia*, Rose of Sharon (Summer)
- **Correct** timing for pruning of FLOWERING trees and shrubs is primarily dependent on WHEN the plant produces its flowers.
- EASY time for pruning is when the plant has no leaves.... when it is dormant.
- ***If you are willing to sacrifice flowers for one season, prune when it is EASY***

Topic: Seed Starting – classic date is March 15 (8 weeks away from May 15, the average date of the last hard freeze of the season)

1. Seeds – choose what you like to eat! 4 brands at Chalet
 - a. Renee's Garden
 - b. Botanical Interest, Inc.
 - c. Seed Savers Exchange
 - d. Hudson Valley Seed Company
2. Fun Egg Carton Kits from *Backyard Safari Company* include 6 packages of Heirloom Seeds, Starter soil, Wooden plant stakes, Growing Instructions, Pencil & 100% Egg Carton Planter \$11.99 each
 - a. GROW Cocktails – Thyme, Lavender, Thai Basil, Mint, Lemon Balm, Blue Borage BSGG-C
 - b. GROW Herbs – Basil, Parsley, Chives, Oregano, Thyme, Sage BSGG-H
 - c. GROW Tranquility – Chamomille (calming), Holy Basil (reduces stress), Lavender (relaxing sleep), Peppermint (cooling & energizing), Wild Bergamot (soothing) Sage (memory & focus) BSGG-T
3. "Gear" needed –

- a. *Espoma* Organic Seed Starter Potting Mix - ESPSEEDST-1QT - \$14.99
 - b. Flat Tray 11" x 22" – JIF 5234 - \$2.99
 - c. COVER, HUMIDITY DOME 2"H VENT – HYF-CK64001 - \$3.99
 - d. Jiffy-Pots 2 – 2" diameter peat pots 12/pack – JIF 5211 - \$1.99
 - e. Jiffy-Pots 3 – 3" diameter peat pots 10/pack – JIF 5311 - \$2.99
 - f. Jiffy-Pots 4 – 4" diameter peat pots 6/pack – JIF 5444 - \$3.99
 - g. *Ferry-Morse* 7 Pot Seed Starter with tray – JIF B7 - \$8.99
 - h. 4 inch Round Green Plastic Pots – AKRO4000B71 - \$0.79
4. Success equipment –
- a. *Jump Start* Windowsill Heat Mat – HYF-MT10004 - \$26.99
 - b. Heat Mat 10" x 20" – Seedling heat mat – MT10006 - \$39.99
 - c. Liquid fertilizer – *Dyna-Gro* GROW liquid plant fertilizer - GRO-022 - \$26.99 (32 fl. oz) or GRO-008 \$9.99 (8 fl oz.)
 - d. *RapidClip* Wood Plant Labels 6"/24 pack – LL812 \$5.99
 - e. *RapidClip* White Plastic Plant Labels 6"/25 pack with pencil – LL826 \$3.99
5. Kits to start seeds – (pots, tray, dome and medium)
- a. Jiffy Windowsill Greenhouse – 10 peat pellets, tray & dome – JIF 41C - \$4.99
 - b. Jiffy Professional Greenhouse Refills pellets – 25/pack – JIF 5777 - \$5.99
 - c. Jiffy Self-Watering Greenhouse 34 plants – JIF 3414 - \$14.99

This is the time of year for houseplant care:

1. Fertilize NOW
2. Leaf damage from fluctuating watering
 - Improper watering technique
 - Causes yellowing older leaves
 - Leaf damage on young, newly developing leaves
 - Brown tips on leaves
3. Root rot
4. Insects now:
 - Fungus gnat
 - Two-spotted spider mite
 - Mealy bugs
 - Scale

Always know that you can send samples or photos to a diagnostician
I love my Microscope!

- Powdery Mildew –actual sample with magnified detail on the screen

Outdoor problems being seen:

- Public Enemy #1
- Animal Damage
- Wilt-Pruf spray