



# HOME & GARDEN

Home and Garden information center • 12005 Homewood Road • Ellicott City, MD 21042 • 1-800-342-2507

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## Woody Ornamental Landscape Plant Tips

### Culture

- If you notice diseases on your woody ornamentals, go to our new feature called Monthly Diseases.
- If you planted trees or shrubs this spring, be sure to keep them well watered through dry weather this summer. Thoroughly soak the root ball every few days. A 2-3 inch layer of mulch is helpful. Keep mulch away from trunk/stem.
- Monitor plants that are prone to pest problems for new signs or symptoms of insect damage or disease. Be sure you have accurately identified the problem before taking action. Cultural and environmental factors cause at least half of all the observed plant problems in home landscapes. If an insect pest or disease is the culprit, always select the least toxic solution.
- Prune foundation shrubs back so they are at least 1 ft. from your house to help keep moisture and nuisance insects, like ants and earwigs, away from your home. Prune spring flowering shrubs after they are finished blooming. Shrubs such as holly, boxwood and euonymus can be pruned to a desired shape. To help reduce leaf and stem diseases of boxwood carefully thin out interior branches to promote air circulation.
- We are getting into the thunder storm season; to reduce storm breakage to shade trees prune overlapping or overhanging branches to open up the tree. Remove the spent blossoms of lilac and rhododendrons, but leave viburnum blossoms alone because they will produce berries for wildlife. Regular renewal pruning by thinning out older canes down to the ground is recommended for spring flowering shrubs like forsythia, lilac and weigela. This can be done now.
- Rhododendrons and azaleas can be fertilized with a balanced fertilizer after the bloom period.
- Poison ivy is very visible at this time. It has compound leaves with 3 shiny leaflets. The middle leaflet is on a longer petiole than the other 2 leaflets. Cut poison ivy vines back to the ground to weaken plants. If the stem is woody, paint the cut end with triclopyr or a glyphosate product immediately after cutting. Poison ivy that regrows after cutting can be cut or sprayed with glyphosate or triclopyr. Continue to spray or cut back plants through the growing season to eradicate this noxious weed. Do not handle the hairy poison ivy vines wrapped around trees.
- Clematis is a very popular flowering vine that is in full bloom now. It requires a soil with neutral to slightly basic (sweet) soil. The pH should be about 7.0. Test and amend your soil with lime, if necessary, before planting clematis. For best results, mulch the root system to keep it cool. It is optimal if you can plant the roots in shade while keeping the flowers in the sun.
- Wisteria is a popular blooming vine but it can quickly get over grown. To control its growth prune wisteria now after it is finished blooming. Wisteria frutescens 'Amethyst Falls' is a native replacement for the aggressive Asian species.
- Healthy container and burlapped and balled trees can be safely planted throughout the summer as long as they are watered during dry periods. Thoroughly soak the root ball every few days. Carry newly purchased trees by the root ball or container and not by the trunk. Handle the root ball gently. Shade trees should have a single, straight trunk. Contrary to popular belief it is unnecessary to prune or top a newly planted tree. Obviously damaged branches should be removed. Common planting mistakes include planting in compacted or poorly drained soil, planting too deep and buying damaged trees with poor root systems.

**Have a pest or gardening question?**

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