


All Gardens Great & Small
by York Co. Horticultural Agent **Tom Becker**



reduce or eliminate the flower display on forsythia, lilac, mock orange, butterfly bush and vanhoutte spirea for a year or two, it's best to sacrifice the flowers for the long-term health of the shrub.

If spring-flowering shrubs need only light pruning, prune them immediately after bloom. Pruning immediately after bloom allows gardeners to enjoy the spring flower display and gives the shrubs adequate time to initiate new flower buds for next season.

Summer-flowering shrubs, like spirea, bloom in summer of the current year's growth. Prune these shrubs in late winter or early spring. Summer-flowering shrubs pruned at this time will still bloom in summer.

After pruning, avoid using pruning paint or wound dressing. Research suggests that wounds heal more effectively without the application of pruning paints. These products may be a waste of time and money when used for purposes other than aesthetics.

Keep your pruning tools sharp and clean. Pruning shears with curved blades work best on small branches up to about 1/2" diameter; use lopping shears

(long-handled pruners) for branches up to about 1 1/2". Beyond that size, use a pruning saw. Avoid the temptation to tackle a too-large branch with a too-small tool. The cut will be ragged and can permanently

damage the tool so that it never cuts well again.

Any questions can be directed to Thomas S. Becker, horticultural agent, Penn State Cooperative Extension, York County (717) 840-7408.

Wolfe Appointed To Urban Horticulture

DAUPHIN (Dauphin Co.) - Penn State Cooperative Extension in Dauphin County was announced the appointment of Kathy Wolfe to program assistant in urban horticulture.

This assignment is a part-time two-year position that was possible through university funds and a grant for rural and urban initiatives.

"We have been wanting to expand cooperative extension's programs in the urban communities, and are extremely pleased with this appointment to this important position." Said Patricia Powley, extension director in Dauphin County.

"Kathy will provide leadership and educational support for the development and implementation of gardening programs for children and adults in urban

communities. Her work will focus on horticulture programs in uptown Harrisburg and at the Dauphin County prison."

Wolfe has been involved in cooperative extension since 1987 when she became a Master gardener volunteer. She began her horticulture career in 1988 at the U.S. National Arboretum in Washington, D.C. In 1990 she was hired as a program assistant in Cumberland County extension where she coordinated the Master Gardener program. Wolfe joined the Dauphin County extension staff in 1994 to coordinate a special project for senior centers, and in 1997 became public relations coordinator for the extension office. Wolfe is a graduate of Lock Haven State College with a bachelor's degree in education.

A good gardener knows when not to prune. Proper timing helps ensure young, vigorous wood on healthy plants.

Many deciduous trees and shrubs possess attractive bark, fruit or leaf color providing fall and winter enjoyment. Trees with attractive gray bark include American yellowwood, beech, elm, hackberry, hornbeam, juneberry, mountain ash, red maple and saucer magnolia. Trees and shrubs with colored twigs include red-twig dogwood, japanese maple, sourwood and striped maple. Prune these plants in late fall, late winter or early spring.

Because most flower buds form on current or previous

year's growth remove one-third of the oldest wood on healthy shrubs annually.

Old, neglected shrubs often require extensive pruning to rejuvenate or renew the plants. Proper rejuvenation pruning on lilac, privet and many of the spirea badly overgrown plants to a young, natural growth habit. Simply cut back at the base of the shrub. Replace the plant if needed with a new, more vigorous plant.

Although fall is okay, a better time to rejuvenate large, overgrown shrubs is late winter or early spring (March or early April) before growth begins. While heavy pruning in late winter or early spring will

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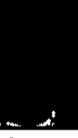

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