

# Gardening

## Why, when and what to prune

One of the things that most seems to baffle amateur gardeners is the why, what and when of pruning.

Pruning of large trees or exotic shrubs can be a complicated task, best left to professionals.

But for most average gardens, a few simple guidelines are enough.

There are two things you should keep in mind when you prune: it's done to make plantings shapely, and to keep plants healthy for as long

as possible. Most shrubs should be pruned when they're planted, to give energy that might otherwise be diverted to stems and leaves to root systems.

Prune all branches back about a third of the way.

Many established shrubs should be pruned each year, to get rid of old dead wood.

Prune flowering shrubs after they've bloomed, since many of them produce flowers on the

previous year's wood. Tamarix, mock orange, kerria, honeysuckle, forsythia and most spireas fall into this category.

Some flowering shrubs have to be pruned early in the spring. Hydrangea, for instance, benefits from this.

Most buddleias should be pruned to the ground, for completely new growth each year. The exception is the Fountain Buddleia, that flowers on

old growth. Roses should also be pruned back when planted, and sucker growth pruned away from the base of established hybrid, or grafted, roses. Cut off all dead and frost-damaged wood from roses in spring.

Foliage shrubs such as golden elder should be pruned early in spring. Evergreens should have dead and damaged wood removed early in spring, but be especially careful with these. It's easy to spoil the shape of an evergreen.

Some vines, such as the popular jackmannii clematis, can be cut back in spring, but I've found this isn't necessary every year.

Hedges need to be trimmed to a shape that will allow good growth. Make the top narrower

than the bottom on hedging like privet, so air and light can get to bottom branches.

Most trees have been pruned and shaped for years before you buy them at nurseries. You can, however, remove shoots that grow from the base or on the lower part of the trunk.

### Strawberries under tents

Home gardeners whose taste buds ache for "home-grown" strawberry shortcake, pie and jam could be enjoying the fruits of their labor by early June, with the help of solar energy.

Ontario ministry of agriculture and food horticulturist John Hughes says gardeners who erect low plastic tents over their plants could be enjoying berries up to two weeks earlier than usual.

"There is a terrific amount of solar energy collected under those tents that stimulates flower, bud and fruit development," says Hughes.

The tents are made of two- or three-

mil clear plastic, supported by wire hoops to keep the tents about 12 to 15 inches above the plants. This creates a greenhouse effect which promotes ripening of the berries.

"The main thing for home gardeners to worry about is proper ventilation under the tents. They have to be prepared to roll up the sides of the plastic on very hot days so the plants don't burn. Otherwise the fruit could rot due to the high humidity."

Hughes suggests placing the tents over only those plants which will bear fruit this summer. It takes two years for new strawberry plants to bear fruit.

### Control crabgrass early

"Crabgrass can be a troublesome weed in August, if it is not attacked in the spring," says D.B. McNeill, Ontario ministry of agriculture and food horticulturist.

"Because crabgrass is an annual weed which germinates in the early spring, it is often not recognized until brown patches show up in late summer."

Crabgrass can be controlled by pre-emergence herbicides, but can be controlled much more effectively by good cultural practices.

"A well-fertilized lawn mowed at 1½ to two inches will keep crabgrass under control."

Crabgrass does not like shade so it can be smothered out with a thick lush lawn.

However, if there was crabgrass in the lawn last summer, it will soon be germinating and a chemical weed control application must be made before germination.

Crabgrass herbicide is available in some fertilizers to save you a trip over the lawn. Check the label to see if the active ingredient is present.

Bensulide (Betasan), Chlorthal (Dacthal),

Siduron (Tupersan) and Tubertol (Azak) are all herbicides on the recommended list for crabgrass control.

Since the percentage of active chemical differs in the various commercial products available, follow manufacturer's directions and cautions on the label.

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Notice to property owners DESTROY WEEDS

Notice is hereby given to all persons in possession of land, in accordance with the Weed Control Act, 1972, Section 4, 14 and 20, and any amendments thereof, that unless noxious weeds growing on their lands within the Municipality of Richmond Hill are destroyed by the date of June 6, 1977 and throughout the season, the Municipality may enter upon the said lands and have the weeds destroyed, charging the costs against the land in taxes, as set out in the Act.

The co-operation of all citizens is earnestly solicited. D. WELDON, F. FRANKRUYTER, WEED INSPECTOR CLERK MUNICIPALITY OF RICHMOND HILL

**THANK YOU ALL**

The members of the Richmond Hill Agricultural Society would like to take this opportunity to thank all the people who helped in any way to make our 128th Fair the best on record. We also thank all the people who visited the fair. Without you it could not be the success it was.

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Notice is hereby given to every person in possession of land within the Town of Vaughan, in accordance with The Weed Control Act, Ontario, that unless noxious weeds or weed seeds are destroyed by June 1st, 1977, and throughout the season, the Municipality may enter upon said lands to cause the noxious weeds or weed seeds to be destroyed, charging the costs against the land in taxes as set out in the Act.

In the interest of public health, noxious weeds requiring eradication as they appear are Goat's-Beard, Chicory, Thistles, Ragweed, Poison Ivy, Wild Carrot, etc.

Although Dandelions, Burdock and Goldenrod are not considered noxious weeds within the Town of Vaughan under The Weed Control Act, the co-operation of all citizens is solicited in the elimination of these nuisance weeds.

G.A. WILLIAMS Mayor J.L. MADILL Weed Inspector

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