

# Shrub Pruning



# Essentials to Prune Shrubs

- Identify
  - Species/characteristics
  - goals/objectives
    - Why are you pruning it?
  - age/establishment
  - time since last pruning
  - Time of flowering
  - Susceptibility to diseases
  - Environmental stressors at work





# What do you like? Intent and Context Matters for Pruning



Google Search: Formal front yard landscaping



Google Search: Natural front yard landscaping



# What do you like? Intent and Context Matters for Pruning



The sort of in-between??



# Introduction & Pruning Context



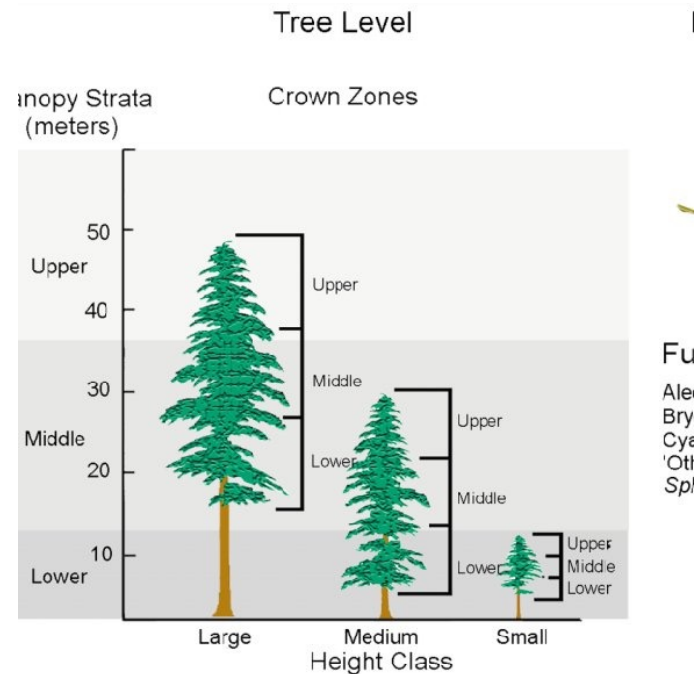


# Introduction & Ecological Considerations for Wildlife

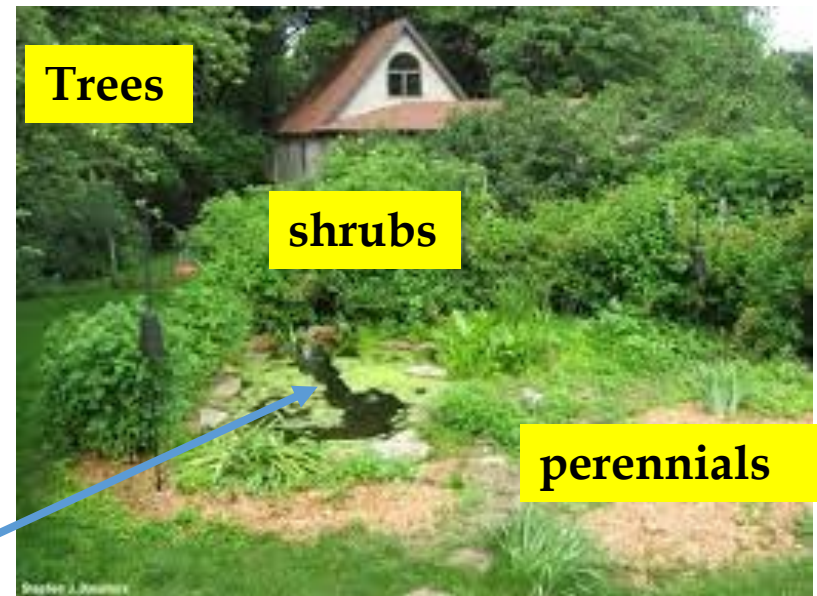


# Wildlife Needs

- Dense and open cover
  - Safety/hiding place
    - Feeling of security
  - Opportunities for food near safe places
  - Open cover for predators to have a view but hide from view
- Stratified layers

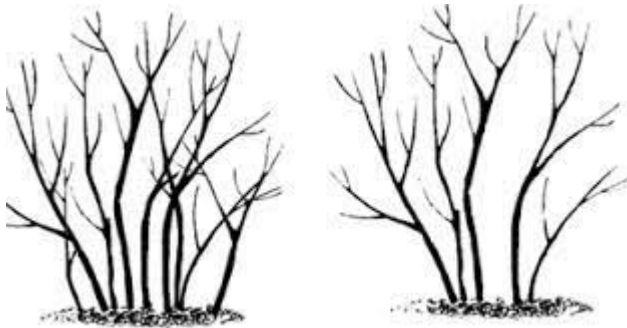


[https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Overview-of-the-study-design-and-stratification-of-sampling-units-The-canopy-strata-and\\_fig1\\_241347661](https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Overview-of-the-study-design-and-stratification-of-sampling-units-The-canopy-strata-and_fig1_241347661)





# Methods to Pruning Shrubs





# Shrub VS Tree Pruning

- Risk from failure is not an issue
- Most shrubs do not require pruning to prosper or flower
- Compared to trees
  - Same in that vigor can be lost with age
  - Differ in that vigor can be restored through significant pruning events



# Pruning Methods VS Type of Cut

## Methods

- *Thinning*
- *Maintain Size*
- *Rejuvenation*
- *Reduce Size*
- *Hedge/Topiary*

## Type of Cuts

- **Reduction Cut**
  - Removal of the main stem or cane back to a lateral branch
- **Removal Cut**
  - Removal of a lateral branch from a main stem/cane
- **Heading Cut**
  - An internodal removal of tissue
  - Promotes sprouting of new shoots
- **Basal Cut**
  - Removal of the entire cane to ground level



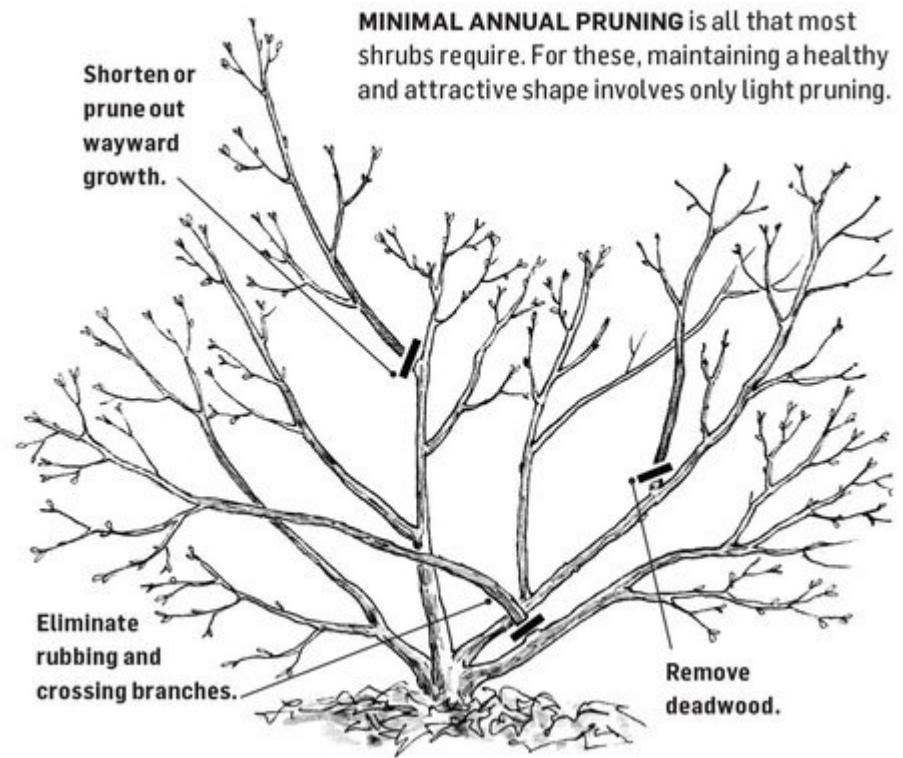
# General Shrub Pruning Ideology

- Type of cuts same for all pruning
  - Reduction, removal, heading
- Timing is important
  - Prune ideally in late winter or early spring
  - Plants that flower on 2<sup>nd</sup> year wood should be pruned following flowering
- Some pruned nearly to ground every year to improve flowering



# Thinning and Maintaining Size

- Important to use reduction cuts, not heading cuts
- Remove crossing/rubbing limbs – create spacing and room for growth
- Maintain shape and form and natural appearance
- Keep in mind shrub's room for growth and placement





# General Pruning Recommendations for Forsythia





# Pruning Forsythia and Common Ninebark





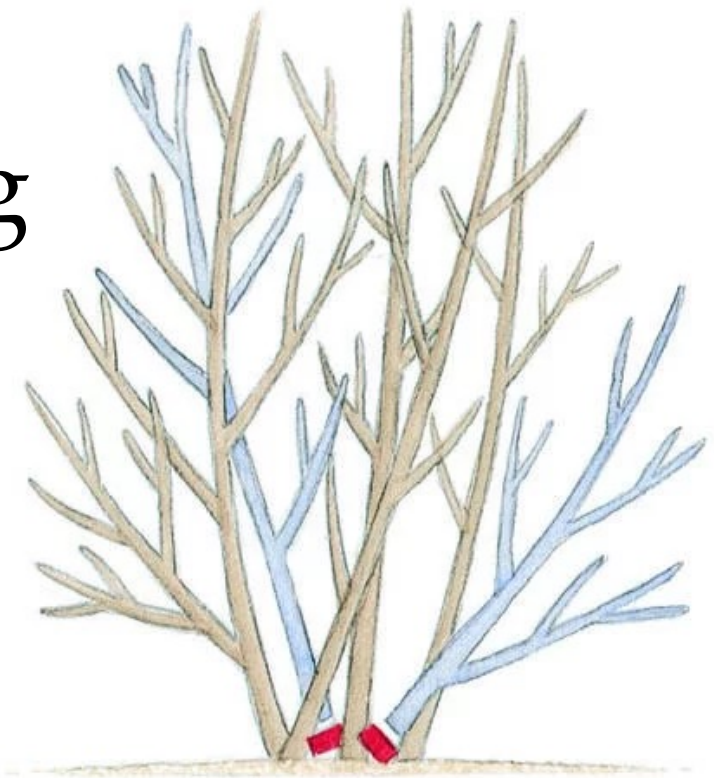
# Thinning Canes

- Remove canes to ground level to create space and allow individual canes to grow
- Individual canes increase in size and canopy – like mini trees



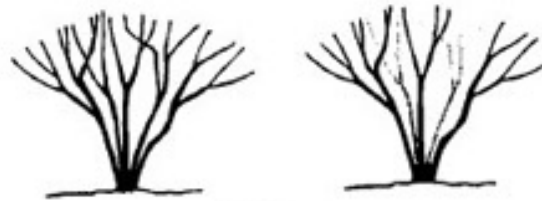
# Rejuvenation Pruning

- Remove about 1/3 stems to ground level. Repeat annually
- Usually I remove some of the largest/oldest stems to rejuvenate and over-extending
- Allows light to base for sprouts to grow well following treatment





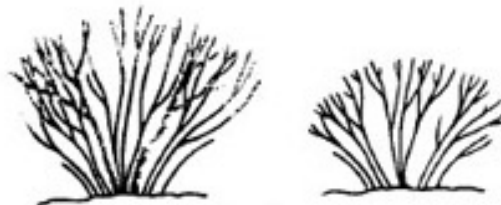
# Rejuvenation Pruning



First year



Second year



Third year

# Pruning Red Twig Dogwood





# Pruning Spirea



# Reducing Size

- Reducing where possible, head as needed
- Cut at varying lengths so the shrub still has natural appearance.
  - Want to hide cuts as possible



# Pruning Juniper and General Ornamental Pruning Recommendations





# Creating Small Trees from Shrubs

- Raise lower canopy
- Essentially, follow your guidelines for shade tree pruning
- Can give a really neat appearance





# Pruning Pagoda Dogwood





# Hedges and Screens

- Formal vs Informal Hedge
  - Formal is sheared
  - Informal is usually naturally pruned
- Goal is to retain lower growth
  - Reduce tops and keep tops tight to hedge so lower growth still gets light





# Formal vs Informal Hedges

## Formal

- Positives
  - Geometric, orderly appearance
  - Hedging is relatively quick
- Negatives
  - Growth predominantly on outside (inside dies)
  - Pruned every year or two
  - Holes take years to close
  - Very difficult to reduce size
  - More insect and disease concerns
    - Plants more stressed

## Informal

- Positives
  - Foliage on inside also
  - Holes will regrow more quickly
  - Size easily reduced
- Negatives
  - Not as clean and neat in appearance
  - Takes longer to prune

# Disease Susceptibility

- Plants susceptible to diseases
  - Rosaceae family – fire blight
    - Cherries
    - Apples
    - Crabapples
    - Fruit trees
  - Conifers
    - Various fungal diseases
  - Pagoda Dogwood
    - Golden Canker





# Questions?

