

Right tools make pruning easy

Thursday, April 6, 1982

(P)15A

Well, folks, the honeymoon of leisure from garden activity is over. Now, let's get down to the gritty-gritty.

This is pruning time for late-blooming shrubs. Don't touch forsythia until after it has flowered as the buds formed in July and August. The same goes for flowering crab which flower early in the spring. Sometimes you have to prune where a shrub or tree has been neglected and lost its aesthetic form.

There are three tools which are favorites. A ratchet pruner makes pruning

Musical drama set for 2 performances

Farmington Hills Christian Center announces the two performances of the musical drama by Michael Parks "The Third Day." The first performance will be at 7:30 p.m. Good Friday, April 9; the second performance will be at 6 p.m. Easter Sunday April 11.

The performers invite their audience to travel with them to Jerusalem in the days of Jesus, in a presentation of music and drama.

There is no charge for admission. Farmington Hills Christian Center is located at 23233 Drake Road (corner of Drake and Freedom Roads) in Farmington Hills.

down to earth Alicia Burlingame

a joy. It's a small hand tool. It is lightweight and prunes tough, medium-size branches in easy stages. One one location, you squeeze it three or four times and the branch falls off. If your hardware man doesn't carry it, tell him to look in his catalog and order some. You will thank me for the tip. Father's Day is coming.

THE SECOND FAVORITE tool is the lopping shears. I like it for reaching up and cutting off sucker branches. The third choice aid is the combination pole saw-pruner. When you use it to reach the high twig growth, you let the sunshine into the middle of a tree. The tree will look better and you will have far more flowering another year. On a fruit tree, this can mean more fruit.

The Brooklyn Botanic Gardens, 1000 Washington Ave., Brooklyn N.Y. 11225, published a handbook "Pruning," 68 pages, \$2.85, which is a meat and potatoes guide. The list of article authors reads like a "Who's Who" of horticulture.

STROLL AROUND YOUR property on the next nice day and analyze your pruning needs. Basically, you prune for character and size control. Often you control your house views with your pruners.

Research has shown that whether or not you paint a wound after cutting makes no difference on the amount of decay, so save your money and time.

In experiments by the USDA, it has

been shown that if a tree has been bumped in an accident, if the wound is properly cleaned and treated, it will speed healing and reduce the possibility of decay. The secret seems to do it right after the injury. Clean away the ragged bark and smooth the wound. Wrap the wound with a bandage of Black 4-mil polyethylene and use plastic tape to hold it tight.

It is even noted in the handbook to keep those pruned branches of a grapevine for use at Christmas time to make holiday wreaths.

POST-PRUNING THERAPY for your garden is given, plus a watering and fertilizer program. The pruning of evergreen trees is well covered in the handbook as is shrubs.

Last year some trees in Oakland County were damaged by the gypsy moth caterpillar. As a result, those trees were without leaves. In the normal cycle, as the tree convalesces, it will leaf out again, but will be weak, like a human after a bad illness. Feeding is very important, especially around the circle of the drip line.

The mysteries of pruning are unraveled in this excellent handbook. Among the 39 articles written by 18 experts there is an article about creating fascinating sculptured topiary animals as directed by Disney World in Florida.

I have seen this art done in our sunny American climates. Would love to start with four privet shrubs and create a four-legged animal. Any takers?



Dancers turn teachers

Members of Harbinger Dance Company, now in residence on Oakland Community College's Orchard Ridge campus, turn teachers for non-credit courses this spring. Contemporary dance, tumbling, gymnastics, jazz, tap and ballet are on the roster. Registration inquiries are taken by calling the company, 477-7014. Two of the company dancers heading up classes this spring are Kitty Skillman and Thomas Morrell.

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