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SEASONAL HARDENING IN TREES AND SHRUBS USEFUL EVEN THOUGH NOT WINTER-HARDY

AT first glance, the title appears to be a contradiction in terms. But not when we realize that a plant doesn't need to be fully hardy to be useful—referring to those plants whose tops are commonly winter-killed all or part of the way to the ground, but that grow back and flower in one season.

Some of the plants listed are killed to the ground each winter in most of New England. Others are injured this severely only in certain winters. Some commonly escape damage in the warmer parts of New England, but are injured to varying degrees in the colder parts.

One thing that most of them have in common is the ability to grow rapidly and to initiate, develop, and mature their flowers—all in one growing season. Two exceptions, *Hydrangea quercifolia* and *Stephanandra incisa*, do not flower on current season's growth, but are included here because of their value for foliage effect.

Pruning: Because of the frequent winter damage, pruning becomes especially important. For species that usually kill to the ground level or near it, such as *Vitex agnus-castus* and *Buddleia davidii*, pruning simply involves cutting off the dead tops each spring.

For species that may be killed to ground level in some years and only partially in others, such as *Elsholtzia stauntonii* and *Hydrangea arborescens grandiflora*, the functional height of the plant depends upon the severity of past winters. Probably the simplest way to prune such plants is to cut them back to about six inches from the ground each spring, even though this may mean removing considerable live wood in some years. When this is done, the functional height of the plant remains more or less constant and its usefulness is enhanced.

For species that are killed back only partially in the colder parts of Zone 5, such as *Caryopteris*, *Hibiscus syriacus* and *Tamarix odessana*, pruning close to the ground is not necessary or even desirable, except occasionally for rejuvenation. However, since flowers are borne on current growth, maximum bloom can be

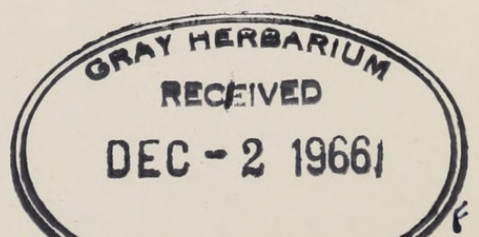




PLATE XVIII

Top: Among the ornamental vines that can be killed to the ground and still return to usefulness in one season are certain species and hybrids of *Clematis* and Silver Fleece Vine (*Polygonum aubertii*). The clematis hybrid illustrated is 'Lady Caroline Neville'. Bottom: Kirilow Indigo (*Indigofera kirilowii*) is a fine large-scale ground or bank cover. It forms a dense mat of underground stems and, when killed back severely in winter, recovers quickly during the next summer.

obtained by fairly drastic pruning, which results in vigorous new growth. This is particularly true of *Caryopteris*, *Hibiscus syriacus*, and *Tamarix odessana*.

Landscape plants that are frequently winter-injured but return to usefulness in one season

<i>Scientific Name</i>	<i>Common Name</i>	<i>Hardiness Zone</i>
<i>Buddleia davidii</i>	Orange-eye Butterfly-bush	4
<i>Caryopteris clandonensis</i> and cv. Blue Mist	Bluebeard	5
<i>Clematis jackmanii</i>	Jackman Clematis	4
<i>Clematis texensis</i>	Scarlet Clematis	4
<i>Clematis</i> hybrids (some but not all)*	Hybrid Clematis	4-5
<i>Elsholtzia stauntonii</i>	Staunton Elsholtzia	4
<i>Hibiscus syriacus</i>	Shrub Althea	5
<i>Hydrangea arborescens grandiflora</i>	Hills-of-Snow	3
<i>Hydrangea quercifolia</i>	Oak-leaved Hydrangea	5
<i>Indigofera kirilowii</i>	Kirilow Indigo	4
<i>Lespedeza</i> species	Bush-clovers	4-5
<i>Polygonum aubertii</i>	Silver Fleece Vine	4
<i>Spiraea billiardii</i>	Billiard Spirea	4
<i>Spiraea bumalda</i> 'Anthony Waterer'	Anthony Waterer Spirea	4
<i>Stephanandra incisa</i>	Cutleaf Stephanandra	4
<i>Tamarix odessana</i>	Odessa Tamarix	4
<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i>	Chaste-tree	6
<i>Vitex negundo incisa</i>	Cut-leaved Chaste-tree	5

* For a partial list of *Clematis* species and cultivars that bloom on current season's growth, see Wyman, D. *Shrubs and Vines for American Gardens*, New York. The Macmillan Co. 1949.

HARRISON L. FLINT

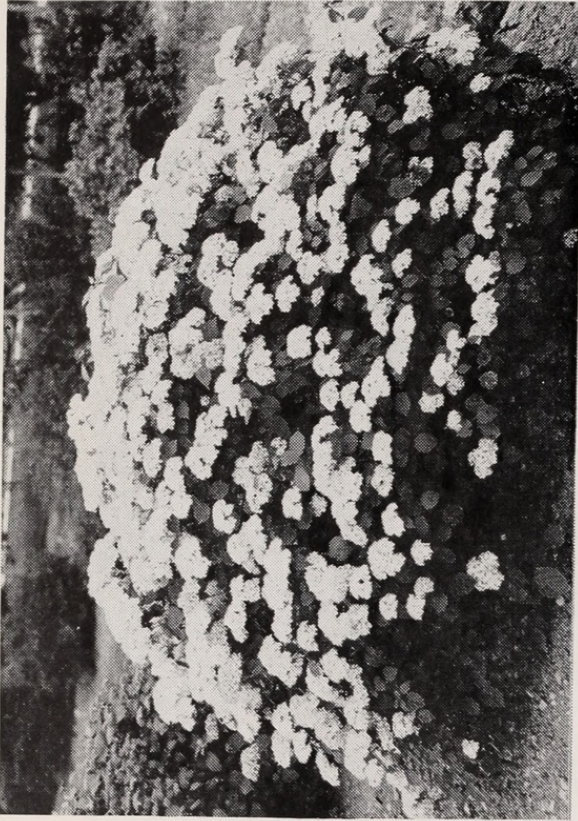


PLATE XIX

Top: Even though *Elsholtzia stauntonii* and *Hydrangea arborescens grandiflora* are not winter-killed to the ground every winter in southern New England, they perform best when cut to the ground each spring. Bottom: *Hydrangea quercifolia* and *Stephanandra incisa* are valued more for their foliage than their flowers, so the loss of bloom following winter-killing of stems does not destroy their usefulness as ornamentals.



Wyman, Donald. 1966. "Seasonal Hardening in Trees and Shrubs Useful Even Though Not Winter-hardy." *Arnoldia* 26(10), 61–64.

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