

THE PLEASURES & PERILS OF PRUNING PERENNIALS

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Zilker Botanical Garden, City of Austin Parks & Recreation

Welcome!

The mission of Zilker Botanical Garden is to promote and provide for the educational, cultural, and aesthetic enrichment of the community through signature gardens and exhibits.



We are 100% Organic!



Rainwater & Compost Displays



To Prune or Not to Prune



Camellia of Ten Thousand Flowers

Jade Peak Yufeng Temple



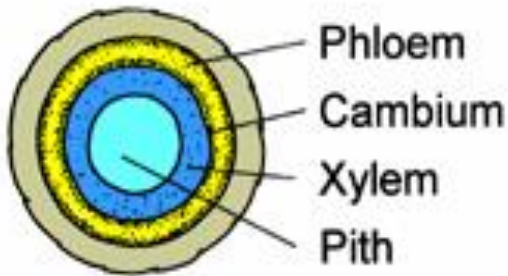
Perennials

- Comes from the Latin term meaning “enduring”
- Refers to all plants persisting for two or more years
- Could be woody, semi-woody or herbaceous
- Can be short or long-lived
- Refers to trees as well as herbaceous perennials

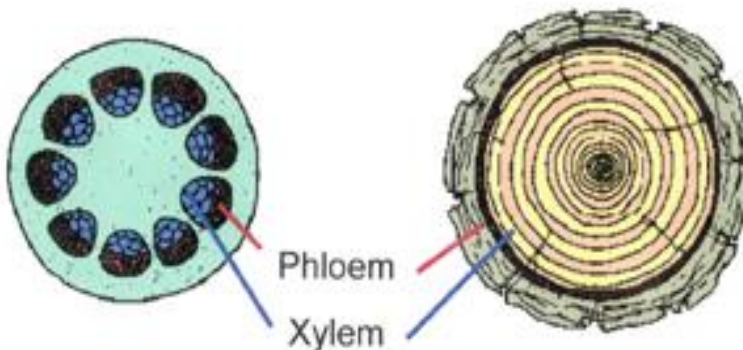
Native Annual Wildflowers



Stem Cross Sections

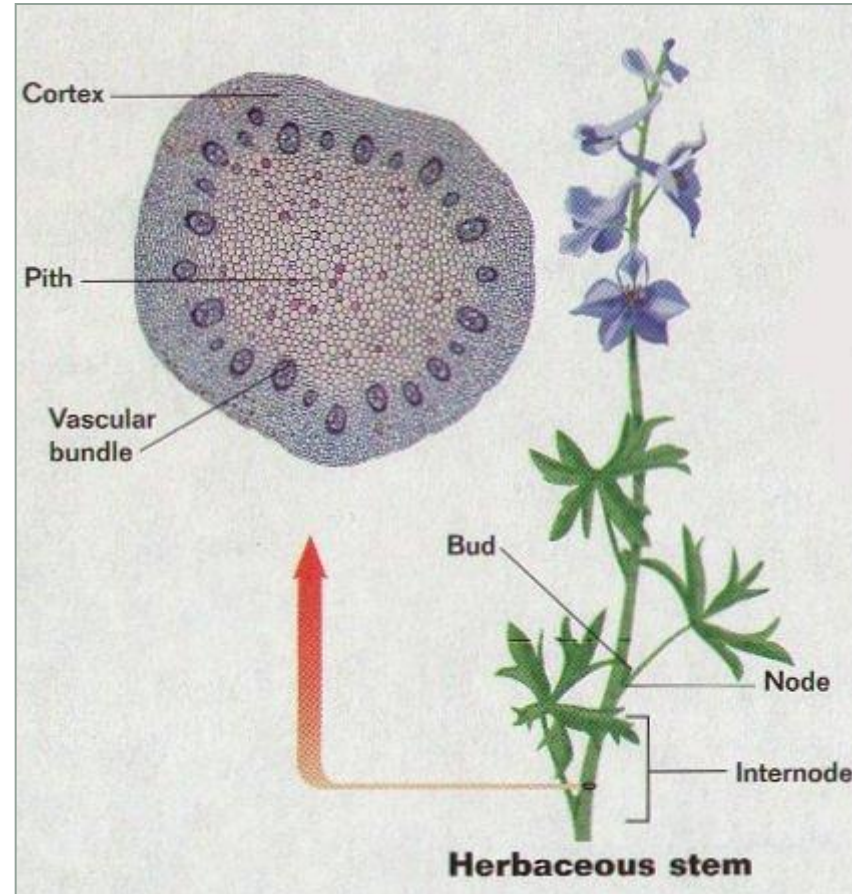


- Phloem tissues distribute sugars
- Xylem tissues distribute water and minerals from the roots

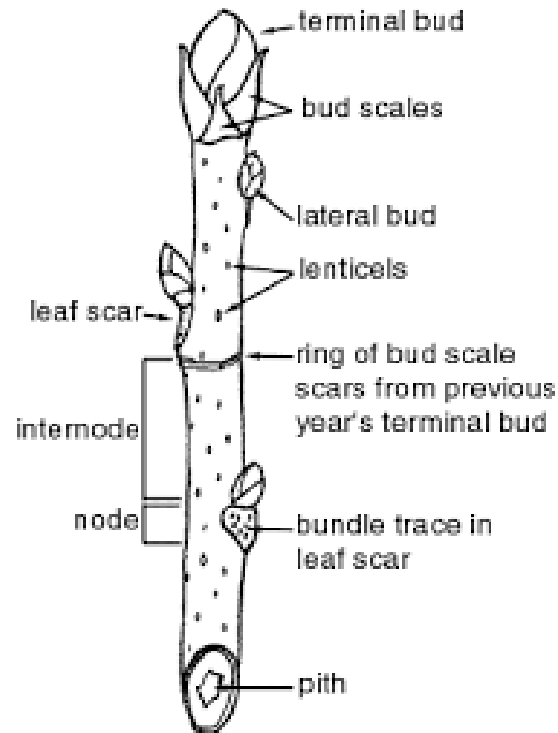


- Cross-section of herbaceous compared to woody dicot

Tissue Type: Herbaceous



Nodes & Internodes



When to Prune

- Cut back herbaceous and semi-woody perennials before they start new growth in Spring
- Early Spring (late February) generally best: Roses, Buddelia, Abelia, Salvias, Althea, Crape Myrtles, Lantana
- Prune Spring flowering shrubs after bloom: Quince, Climbing Roses, Spirea, Viburnum, Azaleas
- Avoid pruning Live Oaks February-June

Reasons for pruning

- Train the plant
- Maintain plant health
- Improve quality of flowers, fruit, foliage or stems
- Restrict or redirect growth
- Repair storm, insect and disease damage
- Improve visibility for entryways or street intersections

- Never top a tree!

Pruning Basics

- Keep tools clean and sharp
- Sterilize tools between trees, shrubs or after cutting diseased wood
- Make clean, directional cuts
- Prune for a good reason!

Proper Pruning Angles

TAMU Earthkind Landscaping Doug Welsh

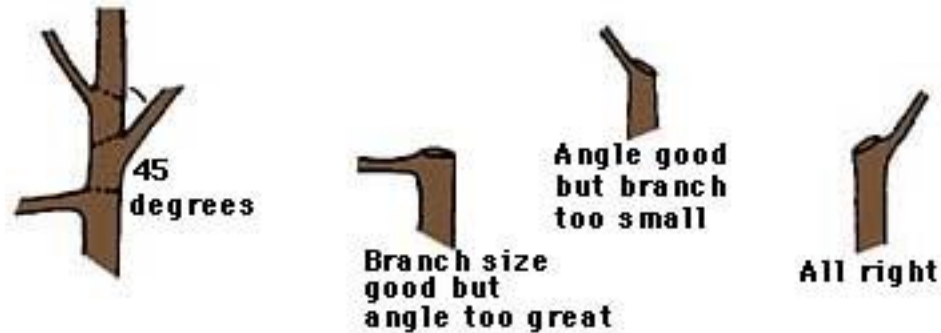
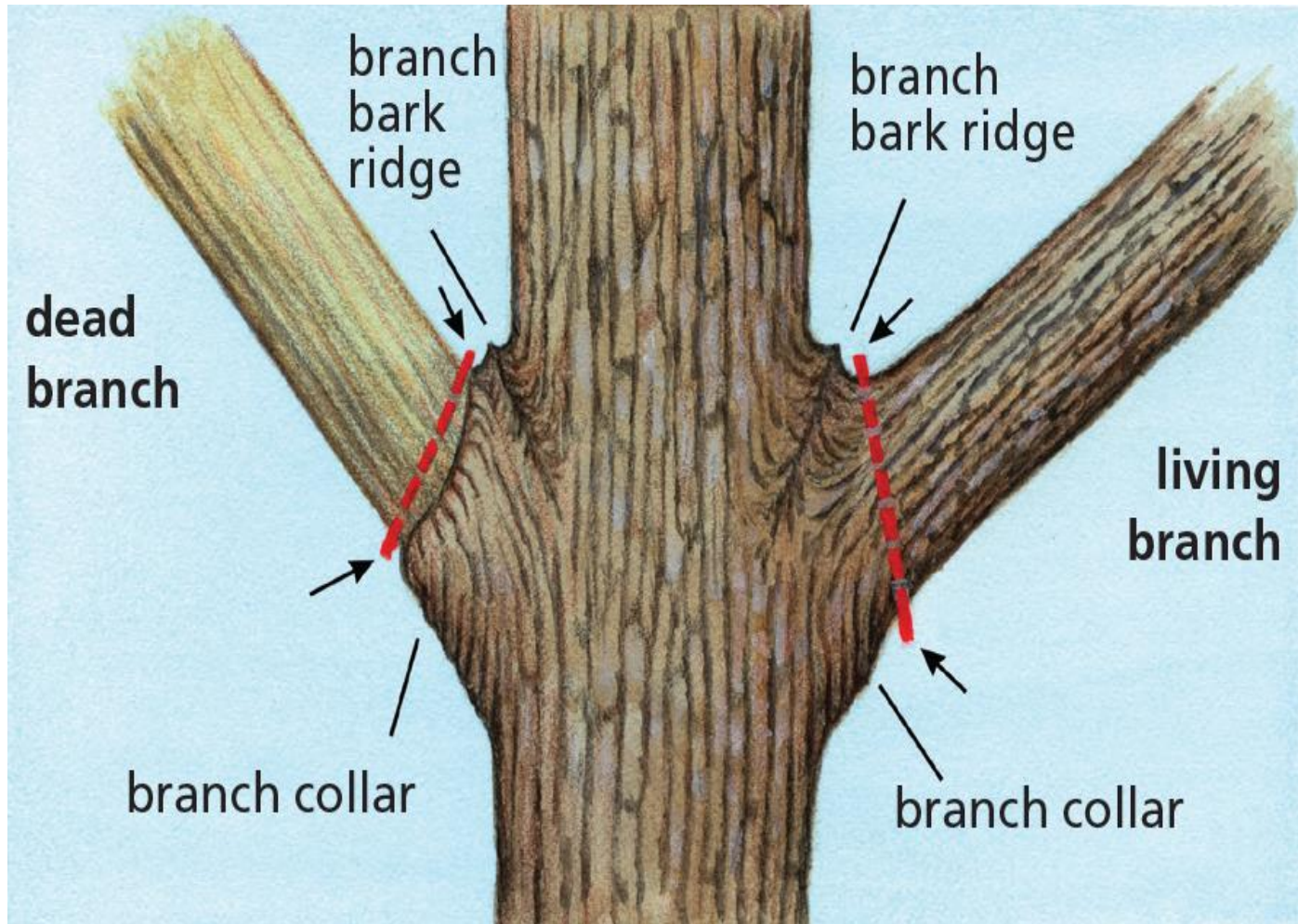


Figure 5. Pruning back to an intersecting lateral branch



Stop the Madness!!!



Stop Crape Murder!

Photos by Greg Grant





Sage Slaughter



Bunchgrass Butchering



(Not) Pruning for Wildlife



Semi-Woody Perennial: Lantana



Evergreen Perennial: Blackfoot Daisy



Evergreen Perennial: Crossvine



Evergreen Perennial: Pink Skullcap



Evergreen Perennial: Rock Penstemon



Evergreen Perennial: Zexmenia



Herbaceous Perennial: Mexican Bush Sage



“No one can do everything, but everyone can do something”
- Helen Keller





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