

INCREASE THE LIFESPAN OF YOUR SHRUBS

formal vs. seasonal pruning

THE DEBATE BETWEEN FREQUENT SHEARING OF SHRUBS VERSUS SEASONAL PRUNING CAN GET AS HOT AS THE SUMMER SUN BUT FANS OF SHEARING DIMINISH AS THEY COME TO UNDERSTAND THE NUMEROUS HEALTH, ENVIRONMENTAL AND AESTHETIC BENEFITS OF SEASONAL PRUNING. YOU PROBABLY SEE EXAMPLES OF BOTH PRACTICES EVERY DAY BUT MAY NOT BE FAMILIAR WITH THE SPECIFICS.

HEALTH BENEFITS

Shearing is detrimental to the long-term health of a shrub and eventually may lead to its death but proper seasonal pruning can enhance a plant's health over time. Shearing stimulates growth of a twiggy outer layer that shades the interior of the plant and becomes full of dead wood and leaves. The shaded interior is more prone to insect attack, dieback and damage from frost or drought. Because the outermost shell is woody rather than leafy, shearing also inhibits the shrub's ability to produce nutrients through photosynthesis. Fighting off attack and disease while working harder to produce nutrients depletes the plant of energy and causes sheared shrubs to die faster than rejuvenated shrubs. The natural growth pattern of a rejuvenated shrub allows light and air to reach the plant's interior reducing dead wood and disease and encouraging nutrient absorption.

ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Frequent shearing promotes rapid growth and requires constant upkeep to maintain a desirable shape. This constant upkeep can create an environmental strain since gas-powered hedge trimmers and blowers necessary to clean up debris generate exhaust fumes and emissions, more green waste must be hauled off site requiring additional trips to the landfill, and the unnecessary waste takes up additional landfill space. Sheared shrubs also burn more energy requiring considerably more water to stay alive. Rejuvenating instead of

shearing uses less gasoline and irrigation water, generates less air pollution and requires fewer trips to landfills.

AESTHETIC BENEFITS

As shrubs are frequently sheared, it becomes difficult to achieve a consistent shear on every shrub resulting in many different shapes and looks. Frequently sheared shrubs will also appear inconsistent as they try to flower (see picture). Over time, the constant shearing will show unsightly dead wood on the shrub. Since most landscapes are designed by a landscape architect taking into consideration many different physical and aesthetic factors, formal pruning sacrifices the vision that the architect originally intended. The natural shape of seasonal pruning not only increases the lifespan of shrubs but it also provides a look that is more consistent with current landscape design trends.



FORMAL PRUNING

Also known as shearing; consists of shaping or shearing shrubs every month during the summer growing season. Sheared shrubs will look mostly green year round with minimal or inconsistent

flowering. Frequent shearing is a practice that was started to remedy the problem of shrubs outgrowing their allotted space but became popular as many people like the tight, "manicured" look.



SEASONAL PRUNING

Consists of pruning or rejuvenating shrubs based on the individual plant species' natural flowering cycle. Rejuvenative pruning is completed after a plant has flowered. The

frequency of pruning depends on the planting density of the landscape; usually every 1-3 years. After the flowering cycle is complete, pruning is accomplished by reducing the crown of the plant by approximately 30-50% and allowing it to grow back naturally during the next growing season. Some plants need to be cut back further, almost to the ground.



Some shrubs will need to be seasonally pruned back to their base in order to regrow properly in a given space while others only need to be reduced by 30-50% and will retain foliage during their dormant period.



The Islands Community Association Monthly Outline

January

Turf Care

- Rye lawn should be cut at 3.0"
- Fertilize rye lawn with Calcium Nitrate (15.5-0-0)
- Do not mow or walk on turf that is frosted, it will cut the blades of grass and leave footprints or tracks
- Rye lawn should be watered 3 to 4 times a week
- Perform Soil Sample in Turf Areas

Shrubs and Trees

- Birds of Paradise should be cut back no more than 12" above ground
- Continue selective cutbacks to Texas Rangers no more than 12" above ground
- Continue selective cutting backs to Brittle Bush no more than 12" above ground
- Continue selective cutting backs to Cassias no more than 12" above ground
- Continue trimming, thinning, and raising deciduous trees up to 12' clearance
- Shrubs and trees should receive one good soaking weekly

Annuals

- Fertilize annuals as needed with All Purpose 20-20-20 or Super Bloom
- Keep old blossoms pinched off and cultivated monthly
- Annuals should be watered 3 to 4 times a week (keep moist, but don't over water)

Irrigation

- The Irrigation Tech will inspect property and submit an irrigation log at the end of the month

Weed Control

- Spot spray all decorative granite as needed with post-emergent

Porter Services

- Daily Removal of all Landscape areas, walkways, gutters, and streets
- Cleaning of sidewalks and streetscapes weekly
- Changing out of trash can receptacles weekly

February

Turf Care

- Rye lawns should be cut at 3.0"
- Rye lawns should be water 3 to 4 time a week

Shrubs and Trees

- Yellow, Purple and Volcano Lantanas should be cut back no more than 3" above ground
- Selectively cut back Red Fairy Dusters no more than 6" above ground

- Selectively cut back Yellow Bells no more than 12” above ground
- Selectively cut back Orange Jubilees no more than 12” above ground
- Selectively cut back Torch Glow Bougainvilleas no more than 6” above ground
- Selectively cut back Bougainvilleas no more than 12” above ground
- Continue selective cutbacks to Texas Rangers and Cassias no more than 12” above ground
- All frost damage should be cut from shrubs
- Continue trimming, thinning, and raising deciduous trees
- Shrubs and trees should receive one good soaking weekly

Shrubs in Bloom

- Cassias, Valentines and Brittlebush

Annuals

- Fertilize annuals as needed with All Purpose 20-20-20 or Super Bloom
- Keep old blossoms pinched off and cultivate monthly
- Annuals should be watered 3 to 4 times a week

Irrigation

- The Irrigation Tech will inspect the entire property and submit an irrigation log at the end of the month

Weed Control

- Spot spray all decorative granite as needed with post-emergent
- Spray broadleaf weeds in turf with pre-emergent

Porter Services

- Daily Removal of all Landscape areas, walkways, gutters, and streets
- Cleaning of sidewalks and streetscapes weekly
- Changing out of trash can receptacles weekly

March

Turf Care

- Rye lawns should be cut at 3.0”
- Lawn should receive an application of Disper-Sul (A natural acidifier that dissolves caliche and neutralizers alkaline soil) or Gypsum (which will improve the water absorption and penetration)
- Lawns should be fertilized with 21-0-0 to promote the greening up of the Bermuda
- Increase water to Rye grass as temperatures increase (watered 4 to 5 days a week)

Shrubs and Trees

- Ornamental Grass should receive a flat cut 3 to 4 inches above ground
- Selectively cutback Pink Oleanders no more than 12” above ground
- Selectively cutback Baja Ruellias no more than 6” above ground
- Continue selective cutbacks to Texas Rangers, Cassias, Yellow Bells, Orange Jubilee, and Bougainvilleas no more than 12” above ground
- Continue selective cutbacks to Red Fairy Dusters and Torch Glow Bougainvilleas and Bougainvilleas no more than 6” above ground
- Finish removing frost damage shrubs
- Continue selectively pruning shrubs

- Deciduous tree pruning needs to be completed before sap starts flowing (early March)
- Non-Deciduous trees should be trimmed, thinned, and raised
- Treat shrubs that have red spider mites with soap and water
- Shrubs and trees need to be watered 3 times a week (average 60 min)

Shrubs in Blooms

- Cassias, Valentines, Brittlebush, Birds of Paradise, Torch Glow Bougainvilleas, Fairy Dusters, Baja Ruellia, Yellow Bells, Orange Jubilees, Texas Rangers, Pink Oleanders, Yellow, Purple and Volcano Lantanas and Red Yuccas

Annual

- Fertilize annuals and shrub beds with All Purpose 20-20-20 or Super Bloom (should be fertilized every other week)
- Keep old blossoms pinched back. This will encourage additional flower production
- Watch for Aphids on annuals such as pansies and snap dragons. Treat with orthene in the early morning
- Annuals should be water them 3 to 4 times a week

Irrigation

- The Irrigation Tech will inspect property and submit an irrigation log at the end of the month

Weed Control

- Spray pre-emergent to all decorative granite
- Spot spray all decorative granite as needed with post-emergent
- Spot broadleaf weeds in Turf with pre-emergent

Porter Services

- Daily Removal of all Landscape areas, walkways, gutters, and streets
- Cleaning of sidewalks and streetscapes weekly
- Changing out of trash can receptacles weekly

April

Lawn Care

- Rye lawns should be cut progressively lower from 2.0"
- Lawns will start to transition from rye to Bermuda.
- Aerate turf this month
- Rake out and dead Rye thatch in order to promote Bermuda growth.
- Treat soil with Carbo-Boost (15oz per 1,000 sqft)
- Be on the lookout for grubs. They are little white C shape insects. You will notice an area that looks dry but is receiving water. Notify your supervisor immediately so that they can be treated
- Water demands will increase due to higher temperatures (approximately 5 days a week)

Shrubs and Trees

- Selectively cut back Valentines no more than 12" above ground
- Continue selective cutbacks to Texas Rangers, Cassias, Yellow Bells, Orange Jubilee, Bougainvilleas, Pink Oleanders, Yellow Oleanders, and Cape Honeysuckles no more than 12" above ground
- Continue selective cutbacks to Red Fairy Dusters, Torch Glow Bougainvilleas, Bougainvilleas and Baja Ruellia no more than 6" above ground

- Shrubs and groundcover should be fertilizer with a soil drench or foliar fed and water-soluble fertilizer
- Trees on drip system can be fertilizer with a fertilizer tab insert
- Most tree pruning should be lifting branches that are along pedestrian walkways, near road signs, or automobile clearance
- Shrubs and trees need to be watered 3 to 4 times per week

Shrubs in Blooms

- Cassias, Valentines, Brittlebush, Bird of Paradise, Torch Glow Bougainvilleas, Fairy Dusters, Baja Ruellia, Yellow Bells, Orange Jubilees, Texas Rangers, Pink Oleanders, Yellow, Purple and Volcano Lantanas and Red Yuccas

Annuals

- This is the time to change from winter flowers to summer flowers, therefore old flower material and debri must be removed
- Cultivate all planter and add approximately 2” of mulch over the entire bed and lightly sprinkle with slow-release fertilizer
- All annuals need to be moist prior to installation
- Make sure that the new plants are watered immediately after installation. The water must penetrate at least 6” in depth to achieve a satisfactory result

Irrigation

- The Irrigation Tech will inspect property and submit an irrigation log at the end of the month

Weed Control

- Spot spray all decorative granite as needed with post-emergent

Porter Services

- Daily Removal of all Landscape areas, walkways, gutters and streets
- Cleaning of sidewalks and streetscapes weekly
- Changing out of trash can receptacles weekly

May

Lawn Care

- As the Bermuda starts to establish in over seeded lawn, the mowing height can be raised from 2.0”
- Continue to rake out Rye thatch in order to promote Bermuda Growth.
- Apply Bermuda seed in bare areas and top dress it with a Sand/Mulch Mix
- Fertilize turf with All Purpose Fertilizer 21-7-14 or 16-4-4 + 3% iron
- Turf needs to be watered 5 times a week (PGP’s 30 to 60 min. and Pop-Ups 10 to 30 min.)

Shrubs and Tree

- Continue selective cut back to Texas Rangers no more than 12” above ground
- Selectively cut back all Cassias no more than 12” above ground now that they have dropped all their flowers and the seed pods are starting to come out.
- Most tree pruning should be raising lower hanging branches due to clearance
- Shrubs and groundcover should be fertilizer with a soil drench or foliar fed and water-soluble fertilizer
- Trees on drip system can be fertilizer with a fertilizer tab insert
- Shrubs and trees need to be watered 3 to 4 times per week

Shrubs in Blooms

- Bird of Paradise, Torch Glow Bougainvilleas, Fairy Dusters, Baja Ruellia, Yellow Bells, Orange Jubilees, Texas Rangers, Pink Oleanders, Cape Honeysuckles, Yellow, Purple and Volcano Lantana and Red Yuccas

Annuals

- These are newly planted annuals therefore they must be watched very closely to make sure that they are getting sufficient water
- Make sure that the flowers are being foliar fed every 3 weeks as well as treated for fungicides every three weeks
- The new annuals need to be kept moist. Water 4 to 5 times a week

Irrigation

- The Irrigation Tech will inspect property and submit an irrigation log at the end of the month

Weed Control

- Spot spray all decorative granite as needed with post-emergent

Porter Services

- Daily Removal of all Landscape areas, walkways, gutters and street
- Cleaning of sidewalks and streetscapes weekly
- Changing out of trash can receptacles weekly

June/July/August

Lawn Care

- Bermuda lawns should be cut at 2.0"
- Fertilize Bermuda lawn in July with 21-7-14 or 16-4-4 + 3% iron
- Treat soil with Borra-Plex (15oz per 1,000 sqft)
- Bermuda lawns will require a good soaking about 5 days a week (PGP's 30 to 60 min. and Pop-Ups 10 to 30 min.)
- Dethatch turf in August

Shrubs and Tree

- Continue selective pruning schedule
- Remove Seed Pods from Red Yucca's
- Most shrub pruning during the summer will be selective pruning of fast-growing shrubs
- Perform one last trim of shrubs before winter overseeding
- Most tree pruning should be raising lower hanging branches due to clearance
- Aphid will be most active when the humidity is high
- Red spider mites will be most active under hot dry condition
- Shrubs and trees will need 3 to 5 watering per week (Average 1hour)

Shrubs in Blooms

- Bird of Paradise, Torch Glow Bougainvilleas, Fairy Dusters, Baja Ruellia, Yellow Bells, Orange Jubilees, Texas Rangers, Pink Oleanders, Yellow, Purple and Volcano Lantana and Red Yuccas

Annuals

- Annual flowers and shrub beds need to be fertilized in early mornings with a water-soluble fertilizer at monthly
- Annuals will need to be watered 4 to 6 days a week depending on the

Irrigation

- The Irrigation Tech will inspect property and submit an irrigation log at the end of the month

Weed Control

- Apply pre-emergent to all decorative granite in July
- Spot spray all decorative granite as needed with post-emergent

Porter Services

- Daily Removal of all Landscape areas, walkways, gutters and streets
- Cleaning of sidewalks and streetscapes weekly
- Changing out of trash can receptacles weekly

September

Turf Care

- Turfs should be cut down to 1.5” by the end of the month
- Lawns that will be over seeded will not need to be fertilized this month
- Turf will still need to be watered 4 to 5 day a week

Shrubs and tree

- Selectively cutbacks Texas Rangers, Cassias, Yellow Bells, Orange Jubilee, Bougainvilleas, Pink Oleanders, Yellow Oleanders, and Cape Honeysuckles no more than 12” above ground
- Selectively cutbacks to Red Fairy Dusters, Torch Glow Bougainvilleas, Baja Ruellias, Yellow, Purple and Volcano Lantanas no more than 6” above ground
- Tree trimming should be completed, we should know just be keeping an eye out for low branches
- Non-desert shrubs that are susceptible to frost can be fertilized with 16-20-0. This will help them build some cold tolerance and develop a strong root system.
- Shrubs and trees will need to be watered about 3 to 4 times a week

Shrubs in Blooms

- Birds of Paradise, Torch Glow Bougainvilleas, Fairy Dusters, Baja Ruellia, Yellow Bells, Orange Jubilees, Texas Rangers, Pink Oleanders, Yellow, Purple and Volcano Lantana.

Annuals

- Summer annual flowers will be getting changed out next month
- Annuals will need 4 to 5 watering per week

Irrigation

- The Irrigation Tech will inspect property and submit an irrigation log at the end of the month

Weed Control

- Spot spray all decorative granite as needed with post-emergent
- Apply pre-emergent to all turf areas

Porter Services

- Daily Removal of all Landscape areas, walkways, gutters, and streets
- Cleaning of sidewalks and streetscapes weekly
- Changing out of trash can receptacles weekly

October

Turf Care

- Bermuda Turf should be cut down to 1.0" (only mow ½ inch lower each week)
- Before over seeding turf need to be scalped down to .05"
- Before applying seed all irrigation repairs and adjustments to turf must be made
- Over seeding of the lawn will be done this month

Shrub and Tree

- The growth on the shrubs should slow down this month therefore, less pruning will need to be done
- Continue to keep an eye out for low tree branches
- Shrubs and trees should receive two good watering per week

Annuals

- Time to change out summer with winter flowers
- Fertilize new annuals about two weeks after install
- Continue fertilizing every 3 to 4 weeks
- Newly installed annuals will need to be watered twice daily until they are establish (approximately 2 weeks) then dropped down to one a day

Irrigation

- The Irrigation Tech will inspect property and submit an irrigation log at the end of the month

Weed Control

- Spot spray all decorative granite as needed with post-emergent

Porter Services

- Daily Removal of all Landscape areas, walkways, gutters and streets
- Cleaning of sidewalks and streetscapes weekly
- Changing out of trash can receptacles weekly

November/December

Turf Care

- Rye law should be established by now and on a regular mowing schedule @ 2.5" to 3.0"
- Fertilize rye lawns first with Start Up fertilizer 6-20-20 then use Calcium Nitrate 15.5-0-0
- Do not mow or walk on frozen grass. This will cause the blades of grass to break and leave footprints or leave tracks in the lawn
- Water time should be 3 to 4 times per week

Shrub and Tree

- Selectively cut back Texas Rangers, Cassia, and Brittlebush no more than 12" above ground
- Plants that are sheared may need one more trimming before the winter months
- Start reducing the sizes of the Red Yucca's
- Start removing Red Yucca flower stakes
- Begin thinning trees around December, once they become dormant
- Deciduous trees will be dropping their leaves, make sure that we address this issue every service
- Shrubs should receive one good watering a week

Annuals

- Fertilize annuals with water soluble fertilizer before the freezes hits so that they will be strong, healthy, and make it through the winter
- Keep pinching off the dead blossoms weekly
- Water annuals 3 times per week

Irrigation

- The Irrigation Tech will inspect property and submit an irrigation log at the end of the month

Weed Control

- Apply pre-emergent to all decorative granite
- Spot spray all decorative granite as needed with post-emergent

Porter Services

- Daily Removal of all Landscape areas, walkways, gutters, and streets
- Cleaning of sidewalks and streetscapes weekly
- Changing out of trash can receptacles weekly