

Perennials to Prune in the Spring

- ❖ **Artemisia** Most Artemisia don't like being pruned in the fall. The growth that results is too tender to survive the winter and the dieback is often **enough to kill the whole plant**. Clean in early spring. (USDA Zones 5 - 9)
- ❖ **Blue Mist Shrub (Caryopteris)** Caryopteris bloom on new growth. Cut back to 6-8 inches in the spring. Newer varieties, especially, **can be very sensitive to cold** and shouldn't be cut back until buds begin to green. (USDA Zones 5 - 9)
- ❖ **Butterfly Bush (Buddleia davidii)** To lessen winter kill, wait for signs of green at the base and then cut back to 6 - 10 inches. (USDA Zones 6 - 9)
- ❖ **Butterfly Weed (Asclepias tuberosa)** Although Asclepias is a prolific self-seeder and should be deadheaded if dozens of new plants are not wanted, **it winters better if the foliage is allowed to protect the crown**. (USDA Zones 4 - 9)
- ❖ **Cardinal Flower (Lobelia cardinalis)** Although Cardinal Flower likes moist soil, it doesn't like sitting in cold, wet soil all winter. **Leaving the foliage and flower stems in tact protects** Cardinal Flower from some of the ravages of winter, so hold off clean-up until spring. At that point, you can trim the damaged areas or simply cut back to the ground. (USDA Zones 3 - 9)
- ❖ **Coral Bells (Heuchera)** Heuchera are prone to heaving in soils that freeze and thaw. **Leaving the foliage intact helps to mulch the plants through winter**. (USDA Zones 4 - 9)
- ❖ **Dianthus** Most Dianthus can remain somewhat evergreen throughout the winter and nothing is gained by cutting back in the fall. They will still need some clean-up in the spring. (USDA Zones 5 - 8)
- ❖ **Gay feather (Liatris spicata)** Liatris is another plant that is more sensitive to cool, wet soil than to cold temperatures. When left standing over winter, the seed heads **provide food for the birds** and may provide some self-seeding, to make up for any plants that don't survive. (USDA Zones 3 - 9)
- ❖ **Globe Thistle (Echinops ritro)** Much like coneflowers, Echinops will respond well to a pruning in July, producing more flowers and sturdier plants that will stand for the winter and **feed the birds**. The plant's winter survival seems improved if not cut back hard in the fall. (USDA Zones 3 - 8)
- ❖ **Lavender (Lavandula)** Many areas have a hard time over-wintering lavender. The problem is more often moisture than cold, but cold is a factor. Don't prune lavender late in the season, as **new growth is extremely cold sensitive**. Wait until new growth appears in the spring before removing winter die back. (USDA Zones 5 - 9)
- ❖ **Lupine (Lupinus)** Lupines are temperamental, short-lived perennials and they do not enjoy winter. **Leave the foliage on for protection** and hope for the best come spring. (USDA Zones 4 - 6)
- ❖ **Purple Coneflowers (Echinacea purpurea)** Coneflowers don't look terribly attractive in winter, but they do attract and **feed birds**. If you'd like both birds and aesthetics, you can always prune your coneflowers in July and get squat, sturdy plants that will provide seed and remain standing. (USDA Zones 3 - 8)
- ❖ **Red-Hot Poker (Kniphofia)** You can trim back the foliage as it begins to decline, but don't cut it back entirely. **The crown is very sensitive to cold and leaving a clump of foliage will help protect it**. Trimming by ½ will keep the foliage from completely flopping over and retaining too much moisture around the crown. (Zones 5 - 9)
- ❖ **Russian Sage (Perovskia atriplicifolia)** Like its cousin Lavender, Perovskia **doesn't like to be trimmed back in the fall**, because it's tender growth is too sensitive to cold. Wait until new growth appears in the spring and then cut back to about 6 - 8". If the only new growth is from the base of the plant, the entire top woody section has died back and it can be pruned to the ground. (USDA Zones 5 - 9)