

Frozen Plants

By: Melinda Sperl

It is hard to look our yards with the brown plants and winter damage. Many of our favorite perennials should be naturally dormant right now anyway and, unless they were covered, will have frozen back to the stalk. Most will recover easily enough unless we get some more hard freezes this year. One big key factor is to leave your plants alone and let nature do its own recovery. Do not start trimming the brown off your plants unless it is absolutely necessary.

Many plants growing in the Houston area are perennials, which have extensive underground root systems and while the top growth may go dormant or freeze, most of the roots will recover and regrow. Couple the freeze with the stress of summer and realize that many plants were barely making it only to be frozen. What is needed now is patience, which is asking a lot of gardeners as we want to get out and get our hands dirty at the first sight of sun. Remember that we usually get another good freeze around Valentine's Day so hold off until after that.

This is an excellent time of year to trim trees. The sap is dormant now, which is what attracts insects. By trimming your tree now it should recover well and not be as prone to insects and disease.

Happy Gardening!

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