



HOME COMPOSTING

Woody prunings

Shredding

This is the best and simplest way to deal with woody stuff, providing you with good cheap material to mulch round your shrubs. Do remember that shredded branches from bushes and trees are not suitable for composting and should be used for mulching or pathing. If the shreddings are prunings from the herbaceous border, they can be added to your composter, provided you mix in sappy material.

If you have a lot of branches to shred but don't have a shredder, you might find it worth hiring one for a weekend and would be well rewarded by the large heap an afternoon's work can produce.

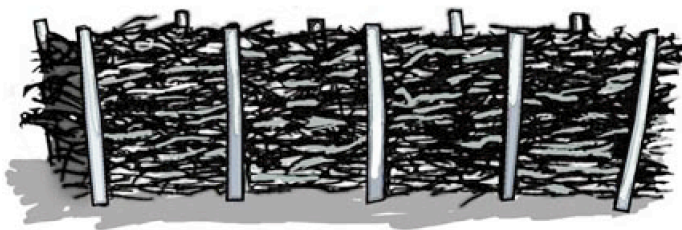
If you don't want to use a shredder, or if lots of your prunings are prickly or hard to put through a shredder, [like clematis or ivy] build an ideal wildlife sanctuary - a dead hedge.



A Dead Hedge

Choose a secluded part of the garden to construct your dead hedge, because while it's neat, it can't be described as pretty! The size is up to you, but for a 2-metre hedge, knock 5 poles into the ground, in a line with 1/2m between each pole, and leave a 1/2m gap between this and a second line of poles. Place the prickly prunings and ivy in the gap, filling it up as the materials come to hand. Insects will shelter in the hedge and this will attract lots of birds, who are the first to appreciate the shelter while dining on the insects.

Your wonderful wildlife hedge will gradually rot down over the years, giving succour to your wild visitors and residents, while solving a waste disposal headache.



You can make a more elaborate Dead Hedge by weaving some of the less prickly branches between the upright posts to make an attractive windbreak or barrier to conceal any untidiness. This will last longer and the prickly nasties will be hidden between the woven walls.

For further information about home composting:



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Printed by Meigle Printers, Galashiels