



Topic: Pruning Orange Bird of Paradise (*Strelitzia reginae*)

Question: We have an orange bird of paradise which has been let go for a while. It is full of grass and old dead leaves. There is even a tree growing in the middle of it. I want to thin out this bush but it's more than this 75 plus ole boy can do on his own. Can I take a hedge trimmer and cut it down to say 12 inches so we will have all new growth on it? Will it hurt the plant?

- Bud, Lehigh Acres

Answer: Using a hedge trimmer, you can cut it down to 12 inches or lower without killing it. The plant is bounded together by a large underground rhizome which is the source of its strength. While razing it is not particularly recommended, it will allow one to more easily clean up the interior including the removal of the unwelcomed tree. New growth is sure to follow. Under normal circumstances, however, pruning this severely is not recommended.

Useful Links

[Hedge Selection Fact Sheet](#)

[Stephen's Webpage](#)

Stephen Brown is a horticulture agent with the Lee County Extension Service. Submit questions by calling the horticulture desk at 533-7504 between 9 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. or by brownsh@leegov.com.
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