

My Chinese Blue Wisteria Tree – No Blossoms, Poor Support

Summary

I have a Chinese Blue Wisteria trained to grow as a tree. Over the 8 years, it's been on our front lawn, it has grown from a single stick-like plant from the nursery to the vibrant, fast growing plant shown in *Figure 1*.

However, I have two major problems with this plant:

(1) No Blossoms.

It has never bloomed over those 8 years. A number of YouTube videos say that one must prune the Chinese Blue Wisteria at certain times of the year to a certain number of buds, but this guidance is usually given for the wisteria vine. I am not quite sure what to prune.

(2) Support.

Twice, I have lost approximately half of the plant due to storm damage, and need a proven support solution for the tree to prevent this from happening again. The most recent damage was just a month ago, when a thunderstorm caused two large branches of the tree to break, and I had to have them completely removed.

Some Background on Our Chinese Blue Wisteria “Tree”

I planted the tree in our front yard in Bowie, Maryland USA in 2018. This is in US Department of Agriculture Zone 7b, where the average annual extreme minimum winter temperature ranges from -15 to -12 degrees Celsius. The tree gets plenty of direct sunlight and is on well-drained and watered soil. It grows like crazy and requires weekly pruning.

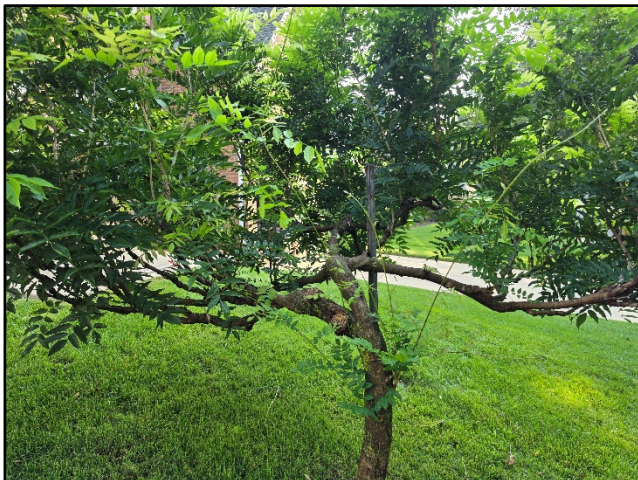


Figure 1 – Our tree after 8 years of growth, today in 2026.

Big Question #1

Exactly What Needs to be Pruned to Encourage Blossoms?

The YouTube videos I have seen focus on pruning the Chinese Blue Wisteria growing as a vine. They say, sometime in late summer or early fall, prune certain tree growths down to 5-7 buds, but the big question I have is this - Exactly what needs to be pruned?

The Constantly Growing Shoots - Grown as a tree, the wisteria constantly puts out vertical shoots at the top of the tree. There is no way you cannot prune this growth continuously throughout the growing season. If you let it continue for even a month, the shoots wrap around each other, and the tree starts to look like it's having a bad hair day as shown in *Figure 1* below.



Figure 2 – Wisteria's vertical shoots can give it a bad-hair-day appearance.

So, what is the best-practice manner of pruning such shoots during the growing season? And are these shoots included in the late summer blossom-encouraging pruning? That is, should they be pruned to 5-7 buds also during such pruning?

Which Tree Growths Should be Pruned?

Of the next few photos, which shoots or young branches should be pruned?



Figure 3 – Should the shoot marked with the yellow arrow be pruned?

The next photo and video are companion shots. Should the young branch, which grew from the older branch, be pruned?



Figure 4 – Should the younger shoot attached to the older branch be pruned? See the companion Video 1 below.

Copy and paste the following link into your browser to view the companion video to the above photo: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/1Joft6ymQ2ooNP6s7>

Should the young branch marked with the yellow arrow be pruned in the photo below?



Figure 5 – Should the young branch marked with the yellow arrow be pruned?

The Bottom Line - So, I guess my question boils down to – Is it ever appropriate to prune a wisteria's woody branches even if they appear to be younger than the branch from which they grew?

Stems with Leaf Pairs but no Buds - And what about the stems that have no buds such as the one shown in *Figure 4* below. Should these be pruned down to 5-7 leaf pairs as part of the blossom-encouraging pruning?



Figure 6 – Stems with leaf pairs, but no buds. Does one prune these?

Long Green Stems with Buds Growing from Other Long Green Stems with Buds - Then there are the longer green branches that extend from other long green branches that extend from relatively old wood on the tree such as the one shown in *Figure 5* below.



Figure 7 – Stems with buds growing from other green stems with buds.

The Best Procedure for Blossom-Encouraging Pruning? – I’m guessing one should *start* from the relatively older, relatively larger, small and large woody branches of the tree, identify younger green branches growing from the older wood, and then prune those younger green branches. Is that correct?

And, in starting from the older wood, are there certain types of buds (i.e., leaf buds vs flower buds) on or near the older wood that can help indicate which green branches should be pruned first? See the circled item in *Figure 6* below.



Figure 8 – Should one look for a certain type of bud as circled in the photo above?