Ivy Topiary Maintenance

1. Wash ivy topiaries off frequently with spray from a

hose or under the faucet in a sink. Keeping the leaves

free of dust helps prevent insect infestations,

especially spider mites.

2. Let the top inch or so of the soil dry out between watering. Too much

water is the cause of many an ivies death! Frequency of watering depends

on many factors; the season, the kind of pot (clay or plastic), the soil, and

the size of the pot. Try to keep it evenly moist.

3. Repot the topiary when the root system fills the container. The first sign

of this is roots protruding from the drainage holes. The topiary can be

moved to a slightly larger container. Any roots that are circling should be

loosened. If the larger container seems out of proportion with the topiary,

the same container can be used by trimming the roots and adding fresh

soil. A topiary that is root bound will decline in health, the leaves may

become lighter green, and water runs thought the pot quickly.

4. Ivy topiaries and topiaries made of vining plants require a little different

training then shrub topiaries. The vines can be would around the wire if it’s

an open frame (such as wreath), until the wire is full. At that point the vine

can be trimmed, always cutting right behind a leaf node. If the topiary is not

open and the result is a solid look (such as a three dimensional duck), then

weave the vine across the open areas, securing it under previously woven

vines. When the effect is achieved, just trim the excess off. This results in a

fuller topiary with time.

5. If aphids, spider mites, or mealy bugs are found, first try washing off the

plant with a hose. Doing this repeatedly will often dislodge the pests. You

can also use a light-weight horticultural oil according to directions on the

label. Other products available are safer soap, pyrethrums, malathion, or a

systemic. Keeping the plant healthy is the best defense against pests.

6. Fertilize the topiary bi-weekly or monthly. Fertilize during periods of

active growth.