



**TPM/IPM Weekly Report for Arborists,
Landscape Managers & Nursery Managers
University of Maryland Cooperative Extension**

August 21, 2009

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Pest and Beneficial Insect Information: Stanton Gill and Paula Shrewsbury (Extension Specialists) and Brian Clark (Extension Educator, Prince George's County)

Disease Information: Karen Rane (Plant Pathologist) and David Clement (Extension Specialist)

Weed of the Week: Chuck Schuster (Extension Educator, Montgomery County)

Cultural Information: Ginny Rosenkranz (Extension Educator, Wicomico/Worcester/Somerset Counties)

Fertility Management: Andrew Ristvey (Regional Specialist, Wye Research & Education Ctr)

Design, layout and editing: Suzanne Klick (Technician, CMREC)

Please call us if you are a commercial horticultural business finding insect, disease, weed or cultural plant problems in the landscape or nursery. Send submissions to Sklick@umd.edu or call Stanton Gill at 301-596-9413.

Weather

What a strange summer – at least weather-wise, strange. We had extreme moisture early in the season, followed by 3 weeks of drought followed by downpours of rain that were spotty in the state, and then some of the coolest weather we have had in July in a very long time. As a result we are seeing all sorts of diseases and unusual insect activity this season. Leaf spots caused by fungi and bacteria are common as well as leaf scorch from the hot, dry period in July. Mites were flourishing in late July and early August following the hot period but many landscape managers are reporting they have died down as the rains have shown up in early to mid August.

Cherries – Leaf Spots and Leaf Drop

We have received many e-mails, calls and samples this week reporting leaf spotting and yellowing of ornamental and fruit bearing cherry tree foliage. The rainy weather back in April through June encouraged leaf spot diseases and we are seeing yellowing and premature leaf drop in August. There is not much you can do at this time of year. Fungicide sprays would have had to be applied preventatively in the spring and early summer. When fruit bearing cherries defoliate in August it severely weakens the tree resulting in more winter damage to flower buds.



Thank you to the Maryland Arborist Association, the Landscape Contractors Association of MD, D.C. and VA, the Maryland Nursery and Landscape Association and FALCAN for your financial support in making these weekly reports possible. Photographs by Suzanne Klick, Stanton Gill or Shannon Wadkins unless otherwise noted.

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Tangle Top – An Unusual Disease

We received samples of the ornamental grass little bluestem (*Schizachyrium scoparium* ‘The Blues’) in the clinic showing leaves that failed to unfurl completely, resulting in a bunchy appearance (as shown in photo below on left). When examined closely, a black fungal stroma could be seen “gluing” the leaves together (as shown in photo below on right). The fungal stroma is due to the fungus *Myriogenospora atramentosa*, which causes the disease with the descriptive name of “tangle top”. This disease is relatively common on several wild grass species, but this is the first time we’ve seen it on a cultivated ornamental grass. The fungus survives the winter as hyphae in the buds of infected plants, and will infect new shoots the following spring. Because so little is known about managing this disease in nurseries, discarding infected plants is the best method of disease control. We’re interested in knowing how extensive this disease may be in nursery production, so if you’ve seen symptoms like those in the photos, please contact Karen Rane (301-405-1611, rane@umd.edu).

Photos by Karen Rane



Grass with leaves that have not unfurled completely



Fungal stroma ‘gluing’ the leaves together

Bagworms – Round Two

We saw it in 2008 and we are seeing it again in 2008! Bagworms hatched back in June and have been actively feeding for the last 2 months. Marie Rojas, Professional IPM Scout, found bagworms hatching in the Frederick area this week. The bagworms do not have to go through a winter cold period before they hatch. It is interesting that we are seeing at least two years in which bagworms appear to have 2 generations in a summer.

Control: If you have early instar bagworms you can use Bt or Conserve or Acelepyrn to control them. Acephate (Orthene) and permethrin (Astro) also works on bagworms.

Photo shows early instar bagworm found in late July in the Frederick area.



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Pears and Fireblight

Several landscapers have had customers who planted oriental pears in the last few years. One of the problems we're seeing increasing is fireblight. One of the worst one has been '20th Century'. It's infecting branches in the first year and by the second year it's often killing the tree. Unfortunately, the most that can be done is to prune out the damaged branches 12 – 18" below the canker area.

Boxelder Bugs

Nymphs of boxelder bugs are being reported on boxelder in August. This bug does not kill or significantly damage boxelder trees but the bugs accumulate on these trees and then migrate to your customers' houses in the fall when the cold weather blows in.



Annual Cicadas Are Very Active in August

While biking on the canal this week I heard pockets of male annual cicadas drumming on their abdomens to attract female mates. The dog day cicada was given this common name because they are active during the celestial occurrence of the dog star formation in the sky. These large, greenish cicadas are an annual event and really do not cause the extensive damage that the 17-year female cicada does to tree branches. In late August your customers will find the annual cicada on the ground dying after mating and egg laying. Control is not necessary for the dog day cicada.



Cicada Killer

We received a call at CMREC from a landscape manager who reported that his customer has 50 or 60 cicada killer nests in their landscape beds. The customer was concerned that these large wasps were a threat and felt he had to control them. After a little conversation with the landscape manager I hope that the manager will convince the customer to leave this beneficial wasp alone. The female can sting if she is provoked but the females are so busy collecting cicada, grasshoppers, caterpillars and other bugs that they really are not a threat to humans. If your customers see this large black and yellow wasp (**as shown on the right in the photo**) in their landscapes encourage them to leave them alone. Chuck Kinsey, The Brickman Group, found both a cicada killer and annual cicada this week in Anne Arundel County.



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Saddleback Caterpillar

Chuck Kinsey found a saddleback caterpillar this week. It's one of the caterpillars that we have in this area with stinging hairs. If you accidentally brush up against one causing some of its hairs to break, it releases a substance that causes a strong stinging sensation.



Beneficial of the Week-Scoliid Wasps, Brian Clark

Adult Scoliid wasps have been active in the Upper Marlboro area for over a week. These wasps will occur in large numbers over lawns looking for white grubs, especially the green June beetle larvae. There were large numbers of these wasps in my herb and cut flower trials (especially the basil) and cruising back and forth over the turf (ok, they were weeds). The wasp is about 1" in length and dark in color with a pair of yellow spots in the middle of the abdomen. The wings are dark blue to purplish black.



Like many parasitoids, the female locates a grub in the soil through chemical cues, then stings it and attaches an egg to the grub. The still living green June beetle larva provides a fresh food supply for the developing wasp larva for about two weeks. The larva then spins a cocoon to overwinter and pupates in spring. The adult wasps emerge from May through October, with the population reaching its peak in August.

They can sting if handled, but control is not necessary. Large numbers indicate a white grub population is high, and turf areas should be monitored for grub control.

Weed of the Week, Chuck Schuster

Nimblewill (*Muhlenbergia shreberi*) is a warm season perennial grass. This grassy weed is often mistaken for Bermudagrass, having a similar growth pattern and because it will become dormant in the fall. It reproduces through seed and short stolons and will root at nodes. The blue-green short leaves are up to two inches long, and it produces a long slender flower stalk in late summer. It is tolerant to sun and shade, liking shade more and prefers moist growing conditions. Nimblewill differs from Bermudagrass. The difference can be determined by checking for rhizomes,



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(Bermudagrass only); and nimblewill has a narrower leaf blade and is wirier than Bermudagrass. It does not tolerate cold temperatures and turns brown leaving a brown patch in fall and winter as does Bermudagrass. Control of this weed can be done culturally by maintaining a dense healthy turf, mowing at an appropriate height for the desired turf, by increasing drainage of the site and maintaining proper soil fertility. Do not allow nimblewill to go to seed. If seed is present, collect grass clippings. Chemical control is difficult and usually requires the use of non selective herbicides (glyphosate) when the plant is actively growing and then reseeding the site. For golf courses and sod farms Tenacity is labeled for Nimblewill control.

Plant of the Week, Ginny Rosenkranz

Some native trees can be more trouble than treasure, but the cultivars can be exceptional. That is the case with the black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) ‘Lace Lady’, also known as Twisty Baby™. Twisty Baby™ grows 6 to 10 feet tall and 12-15 feet wide with curling, twisting branching and clusters of foliage that cascade downwards, giving the plant the appearance of wisteria. This grafted cultivar continues to produce new terminal growth all summer, creating bright green leaves that twist and curl to show the soft grey underside. The older leaves are a deeper blue green and combined with the new growth, give the tree a multi-tone effect. Fall color is a clear yellow. The leaves are alternate, pinnately compound creating a lacy look. Twisty Baby™ can be grown as a standard or as espaliered against a wall where the architecture of the branches can be highlighted. Unlike the parent, the cultivar doesn’t produce the sharp spines on the branches nor does it produce many of the cascading, fragrant white flowers in the spring. Like the parent, Twisty Baby™ is very drought, heat and salt tolerant, growing in dry to medium well drained soils. Hardy to zone 4, the most common pest is the locust borer, but the locust leafminer, locust twig borer and scale can also be major problems. Diseases include canker, leaf spot, powdery mildew, wood decay and witches broom.



What’s in Bloom

| Plant | Plant Stage (Bud with color, first bloom, full bloom, first leaf) | Location |
|---------------------------|--|---------------------------|
| <i>Aralia spinosa</i> | First bloom | Ellicott City (August 19) |
| <i>Sedum</i> ‘Autumn Joy’ | Bud | Ellicott City (August 21) |

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Degree Day Information (as of August 20):

| | |
|---------------------|------|
| Baltimore, MD (BWI) | 2620 |
| Dulles Airport | 2774 |
| Frostburg, MD | 1641 |
| Martinsburg, WV | 2438 |
| Mechanicsville, MD | 2526 |
| National Arboretum | 3286 |
| Reagan National | 2918 |
| Salisbury | 2745 |

Upcoming Programs

September 16, 2009 LCA 2009 Practical Diagnostic Techniques for Landscape Managers

Location: Dave & Busters, White Flint Mall (top level)

Go to <http://www.lcamddcva.org/conferences/monthly.cfm> for the announcement

October 2, 2009 Sustainable Nursery Field Day

Location: D. R. Snell Nursery, Inc, 9001 Dollyhyde Rd, Union Bridge, MD 21791
(not the garden center in Mt. Airy)

Topics and registration information will be available later in the month.



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Chuck Schuster



Paula Shrewsbury



Ginny Rosenkranz



Karen Rane
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