

# ORNAMENTALS

• H O T L I N E •

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Issue 22

## INSECTS

Brian Kunkel  
Ornamental IPM Specialist

PINE WEBWORMS are one of the caterpillar pests in the mid-Atlantic with two generations per year. The range for this pest includes New England to Florida and as far west as Minnesota. Pine webworms are often first noticed by the silken threads on branches filled with frass and dead needles. The second generation of larvae have been found feeding around the eastern shore of Virginia this week.

Adult moths emerge from overwintering cocoons in the soil from early June until July. Adults are small and brownish in color. They lay cream to yellowish colored eggs along the needles of the host. The eggs hatch and the early instar caterpillars are needle miners. Older larvae share a frass-filled nest anchored to a branch or main stem by silk. This nest may be 5 to 15 cm in size and is often located on terminals. Larvae may leave a nest to clip needles, and then return to the nest to eat. Larvae molt five times before they drop to the soil to pupate.

This caterpillar is rarely a significant pest because the natural enemies usually keep the population suppressed. Some of their natural enemies include parasitic wasps, lady beetles, lacewing larvae, assassin bugs and birds. Pruning out damaged sections or parts of the plants with a nest is a good method of mechanical

(Continued)

## DISEASES

Nancy Gregory  
Plant Diagnostician

DOWNY MILDEW ON BASIL has been diagnosed in plants that were purchased at retail outlets and planted this season in New Castle County. Symptomatic plants will show yellowing and black irregular leaf spots on the top leaf surface. Characteristic sporulation of the oomycete pathogen will appear on the undersides of leaves as dark gray fuzz. Plants with downy mildew are not toxic to the consumer, but appear unattractive. Affected plants should be rogued out to reduce spores that may start new infections. Spores are air-borne and the pathogen is favored by high humidity and water on leaf surfaces. Plants grown for sale may be treated with a fungicide such as phosphorus acid salts products. Check product labels, especially for use in greenhouse situations. Common sweet basil (*Ocimum basilicum*) is the most susceptible of commonly grown varieties. Some of the more exotic types such as *O. citriodorum* and *O. americanum*, the red types, lemon basil and Thai basil are more resistant. Breeding for resistance programs are ongoing at Cornell University and Rutgers.

## What's Hot!

Bacterial leaf scorch on red oaks is dramatic in the landscape now. Apparently having adequate moisture this season did not help to prevent symptom development. Anthracnose is also showing up on maples due to recent rains.

Even though we've had a great season for regular rainfall, there have been a few limited dry spells. It is important for customers to understand when and how to water. They should water newly establishing plants (could be more than a year after planting) when it doesn't rain for over a week. Apply water slowly, using drip irrigation, hose set at a trickle or gater bags (or 5 gallon bucket with holes in the bottom). They should always test the soil (finger test or use a trowel) before they water since overwatering (roots actually rot) is a bigger problem than underwatering.



Downy mildew on basil. Photo credit: Nancy Gregory

For more information

on pests & practices covered in this newsletter, call your County Extension Office

Helpful numbers to know:



Garden Line (for home gardeners only)	831-8862
New Castle County Extension	831-2506
Kent County Extension	730-4000
Sussex County Extension	856-7303
View more pictures at <a href="http://sites.udel.edu/ornamentals/">http://sites.udel.edu/ornamentals/</a>	

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

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Insects (Continued)

control. Apply products to the terminal ends of branches in late June and July using abamectin, *Bacillus thuringiensis* kurstaki, spinosad, acelepryn, carbaryl, or one of the pyrethroids to provide control, if necessary.



Pine webworm larvae. Photo credit: Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station Archive [www.forestryimages.org](http://www.forestryimages.org)



Pine webworm nest. Photo credit: Robert L. Anderson, USDA Forest Service, [www.forestryimages.org](http://www.forestryimages.org)

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Editor: Susan Barton  
Extension Horticulturist

**GROWING  
DEGREE DAYS**  
AS OF August 25, 2015

- Swarthmore College (Delaware County, PA) NA = ('14 = 2461)
- Fischer Greenhouse (New Castle County) = 2772 ('14 = 2481)
- Research & Educ. Center, Georgetown (Sussex County) = 2869 ('14 = 2467)