

ORNAMENTALS

• H O T L I N E •

April 13, 2018

Issue 4

INSECTS

Brian Kunkel
Ornamental IPM Specialist

Warm weather this weekend should kick start our insect activity, and eastern tent caterpillars are one of earliest insects we see in the landscape.

EASTERN TENT CATERPILLARS (ETC) typically emerge from egg masses during 13 - 160 [59 peak] GDD₅₀. The neonate (first instar) caterpillars migrate to forks in tree branches, form their tents, and lay down silken trails to nearby emerging foliage. They have a black background with tan-colored hairs, irregular blue markings, a white stripe down the back with a yellowish-tan stripe on either side. Preferred food is wild cherry leaves, but they also readily eat crabapple, ornamental apple, plum, peach, and occasionally birch or ash leaves. Female moths emerge and mate during the summer, and lay eggs in small gray foam-like masses onto small diameter branches or twigs.

A number of natural enemies such as assassin bugs, parasitoids, and birds help keep the insect under control. A naturally

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DISEASES

Nancy Gregory
Plant Diagnostician

SNOW MOLD ON TURFGRASS is caused by two different fungi, one causing pink snow mold and one causing gray snow mold. Snow molds are severe when there has been snow cover that is long-lasting or when soil has been compacted by foot traffic. Although the disease is unsightly, it rarely kills the turf grass. Gray snow mold (*Typhula* blight) appears as roughly circular light tan patches 8 to 20 inches in diameter. The affected grass may be matted and bleached, with white to gray fungal growth evident. The fungus *Typhula* produces sclerotia to survive the summer, and the small, round brown structures (sclerotia) may be seen on infected leaves. In late fall, these sclerotia produce spores or mycelial growth that infect grasses under cover of snow during the winter. Pink snow mold is caused by a *Microdochium* species, and the fungal growth has a pink color. In areas where snow mold has occurred, it is likely to recur, but can usually be managed with cultural methods. Avoid late fall applications of high nitrogen fertilizer that stimulate new growth, which is more susceptible to infection. Keep turf mowed in the fall. Avoid piles of snow that may linger over the lawn. If turf is matted after snow melt, rake the matted grass to encourage new spring growth, and over-seed if necessary. In areas where snow molds have been a problem, preventative fungicide applications may be useful. Fungicides should be applied in late fall before snow cover is expected.

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What's Hot!

April 20, 2018 - Turfgrass Management Program, UD Newark, DE and Research and Education Center, Georgetown, DE. Registration-\$15. One nutrient management credit. To register contact Terra Eby at (302)-730-4000 or terra@udel.edu

April 25, 2018 - Christmas Tree Production Workshop, 4-6 pm, DE Department of Agriculture. Brian Kunkel and Nancy Gregory. For more info contact ngregory@udel.edu.

April 26, 2018 - Tree Planting Demonstration, 4-6 pm, Sussex County Extension Office, 16483 County Seat Highway, Georgetown. \$15. One nutrient management credit. Contact wootten@udel.edu.



Snow mold on turfgrass showing bleached and matted blades. Photo credit: N. Gregory

For more information

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

Helpful numbers to know:



Garden Line	831-8862
(for home gardeners only)	
New Castle County Extension	831-2506
Kent County Extension	730-4000
Sussex County Extension	856-7303

View more pictures at <http://extension.udel.edu/ornamentals/>

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