

# ORNAMENTALS

• H O T L I N E •

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Issue 13

## INSECTS

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COTTONY SCALES produced their ovisacs earlier in the year, and currently crawlers are moving on the underside of leaves. The *Pulvinaria* scales are evident because of their cottony ovisacs. We have three common cottony scales including: cottony maple scale, cottony maple leaf scale and cottony camellia/taxus scale. To identify the species simply identify the host plant.

Cottony camellia/taxus scale (*Pulvinaria floccifera*) is the most commonly reported *Pulvinaria* soft scale. In the early spring, this small oval tan scale produces copious honeydew as it feeds. You can find this species on sweet box, *Hydrangea*, *Rhododendron*, *Cephalotaxus*, and its namesake hosts. After the female lays her eggs in the cottony mass, she dries up - leaving only the cottony egg mass on the leaf. Crawler activity occurs over a wide time period: 145 - 1365 (830 peak) GDD<sub>50</sub>.

Cottony maple scale (*Pulvinaria innumerabilis*) favor silver maple and hickory, however they also appear on red maple, other maples, dogwood, birch, elm and willow. The crawlers are active from 462 - 2362 (1388 peak) GDD<sub>50</sub>. Adults and eggs are almost always found on stems and branches, with crawlers settling on leaves for the summer until they migrate back to the stems to overwinter as female scales. Egg masses may contain greater than 1,000 eggs.

Cottony maple leaf scale (*Pulvinaria acericola*) occurs on many plants, but most often on maples, dogwoods, black gum, and  
(Continued)

## DISEASES

Nancy Gregory  
Plant Diagnostician  
Jen Rushton, Intern

DOWNY MILDEW on impatiens can leave a landscape planting flowerless quickly. It initially causes leaves to curl downward, and results in yellow spotting on the upper surface of leaves with white sporulation on the underside. Infected plants are stunted, with defoliation or loss of leaves and stems. The disease is a result of a fungus-like microorganism, *Plasmopara obducens*. The pathogen prefers shaded, moist, cool conditions but will persist even in hot weather. Once infected, there are no management measures that can cure downy mildew. As a result, prevention and resistant varieties are suggested. Most cultivars of *Impatiens walleriana* are very susceptible when compared to others such as 'Bounce' impatiens. This new cultivar is a New Guinea hybrid that has been very successful in withstanding the pathogen, meaning colorful flowers all season.  
(Continued)

## What's Hot!

Botrytis blight on flowering annuals and some flowering shrubs is still rampant.

Slime mold growth can be found now on top of mulch, commonly called dog vomit slime mold. Harmless and related to fungi, these organic decomposers can be raked or removed with a shovel and discarded.

### Insects (Continued)

*Pieris*. Adults and egg masses can be all over the plant, but usually on the leaves. This is the least common of the three species we find in Delaware.

Many predators and parasites feed on and control these scales. Our past winter did not appear to reduce populations of cottony camellia/taxus or cottony maple scales. Dormant oil treatments may provide some control; however, treatments targeting crawlers are more efficacious. Horticultural oil, insect growth regulators (Distance or Talus), neonicotinoids, insecticidal soap, abamectin, and pyrethroids are other options.



Cottony maple scale. Photo credit: B. Kunkel

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 <http://extension.udel.edu/ornamentals/>

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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Diseases (Continued)

MUSHROOM FRUITING BODIES are coming up recently due to rainfall, though they usually fruit in the fall. Growth of threadlike fungal mycelium spreads underground and when it has stored up enough energy, it produces mushrooms above ground. We are seeing *Laetiporus sulphureus*, the edible chicken of the woods and *L. cinninatus*, white pored chicken of the woods. These fungi have a saprophytic/parasitic lifestyle, often growing on old stumps and decaying roots underground, so it appears to be growing on the ground. If so, there must have been a tree in that location, perhaps years ago. Mushrooms are mostly water, so they can be raked to dislodge and break up. Occasionally there may be another fungal mold growing on the top surface of a fruiting body. Due to humidity, dusky gray fungal overgrowth makes *Laetiporus* inedible and not delicious. We recommend you never eat a mushroom or fungal fruiting body unless you have it positively identified in person by an expert.



*Laetiporus*, chicken of the woods. Photo credit: N. Gregory

Editor: Susan Barton  
Extension Horticulturist

**GROWING DEGREE DAYS**  
AS OF June 12, 2018

- Swarthmore College (Delaware County, PA) = 835 ('17 = 862)
- Fischer Greenhouse (New Castle County) = 844 ('17 = 884)
- Research & Educ. Center, Georgetown (Sussex County) = 948 ('17 = 1061)



Impatiens downy mildew. Photo credit: N. Gregory



Cottony camellia scale. Photo credit: B. Kunkel



Slime mold on mulch. Photo credit: B. Mulrooney