

ORNAMENTALS

• H O T L I N E •

INSECTS

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Issue 26

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EVALUATION. With cooling temperatures, most insects will be entering diapause soon. Now is a good time to observe plants to record which plants had pests, and to evaluate the efficacy of management programs. Pesticide efficacy against armored scale is easily observed at this time of year. Scouting plants in the landscape now or shortly after leaf senescence may reveal insect populations that have not caused serious problems, but whose populations warrant monitoring. A list of problems encountered this year will allow you to be better prepared for those pests next year. Some pest populations may warrant cultural management options (e.g. pruning) or dormant oil applications. Equipment maintenance and a late season calibration are useful activities to perform prior to storing tools for winter. I have included a link for a survey:

https://delaware.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8Akmwi7cwpxiHz that asks a few brief questions regarding the value of receiving Ornamentals Hotline and about the insects and arthropods encountered during the past year.

NUISANCE PESTS. Some insects are about to become a nuisance pest for homeowners. Common invading insects include: multicolored Asian lady beetle, boxelder bugs, brown marmorated stink bugs, leaf-footed bugs, crickets, and grasshoppers to name a few common ones. The best management technique for these home invaders is exclusion through winterizing the home. Caulking or sealing gaps and crevices closes most of the access points into a home. New screening for windows or doors also limits access points.

DISEASES

Nancy Gregory
Plant Diagnostician

FALL PANSIES do well in southern Delaware, but can be affected by cold weather and diseases such as root rot. Some nursery and garden centers had trouble with pansies this year due to wet weather and poor soil mix. Saturated soil can promote root rot infections and high humidity favors Botrytis blight on the aerial portions of the plants. With high disease pressure, preventative treatment with a fungicide such as chlorothalonil can be used until bloom. After bloom, use a strobilurin such as azoxystrobin. Fungicides will not cure root rot, and disposal of affected plants is usually the best management strategy.

POINSETTIAS are popular holiday plants, and greenhouses are full of them now. Watch for wilting of plants, indicative of Pythium root rot, favored by excess water. Botrytis blight and whiteflies

(Continued)

What's Hot!

Don't forget spruce spider mites and southern red mites are cool season mites, and damage they cause shows up the following summer. If you have had spruce spider mite damage on Christmas trees this past summer, now is the time to apply miticides to limit that damage.

Scout trees around your property for spotted lanternfly adults. They are feeding and producing lots of honeydew now.

Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*), an invasive grass from Asia, is common in the Mid-Atlantic, spreading rapidly in shady areas. Control early by mowing and avoid seed set. Use preemergence herbicides in the spring, followed by professional post emergence weed control applications for large areas.



Flats of pansies with irregular growth.
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 pictures at <http://sites.udel.edu/ornamentals/>

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Diseases (Continued)

can also be problematic on poinsettias. Clean cuttings, quick rooting, pinching for strong growth, proper watering, low humidity, and sanitation are key to a good poinsettia crop. Although traditional red is still the most popular, there are pink, white, and yellow cultivars along with some new color and leaf shape novelty cultivars. Some to look for are 'Christmas Magic', 'Prima Bella', 'Lyra', 'Mirage' and the compact 'Princettia' hybrids.

FALL is a good time to review what worked and what didn't in your garden and landscape this season. Make some notes on a calendar for spring pesticide applications. Prune damaged and overhanging limbs before winter storms. Clean and repair tools.

Editor's note: This is the last issue of Ornamentals Hotline for 2018. Enjoy the rest of fall and hope to be communicating with you again next spring.

Editor: Susan Barton
Extension Horticulturist



Wilted poinsettia with Pythium root rot. Photo credit: N. Gregory

GROWING DEGREE DAYS
AS OF October 23, 2018

- Swarthmore College (Delaware County, PA) = 3905 ('17 = NA)
- Fischer Greenhouse (New Castle County) = 3883 ('17 = NA)
- Research & Educ. Center, Georgetown (Sussex County) = 4229 ('17 = NA)