Cooperative Extension

ORNAMENTALS

• H O T L I N E •

April 3, 2020

Issue 2

INSECTS

Brian Kunkel
Ornamental IPM Specialist

Spring temperatures started a little earlier this year; however, we have had some cool periods, which has kept growing degree days in the normal range. Hopefully, this year will have more typical rainfall and temperatures than the past two. Insects are becoming more active so watch for early springtime insects such as aphids, bees, and eastern tent caterpillars.

EASTERN TENT CATERPILLARS (ETC) emerge from egg masses during 13 – 160 [59 peak] GDD_{50}. We have 96 GDD in Sussex County and close to 50 in Kent and New Castle counties. 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 and the white stripe has a yellowish-tan stripe on either side. Their preferred food is wild cherry leaves, but also readily eat crabapple, ornamental apple, plum, peach, and occasionally birch or ash leaves. Female moths emerge and mate during the summer, and they lay eggs in small gray foam-like masses onto small diameter branches or twigs.

Natural enemies such as assassin bugs, parasitoids, and birds help keep the insect under control. A naturally occurring virus also helps reduce their populations. Tearing the tent to expose larvae to birds and insect predators or parasitoids provides some control. Pruning out or scratching off egg masses is an effective cultural method to control eastern tent caterpillar for the next year. Some compounds used to control eastern tent caterpillar include insecticidal soap, *B. thuringiensis* (Dipel), spinosad (Conserve), chlorantraniliprole (Acelepryn), or pyrethroid products such as bifenthrin. Applications when the larvae are small increases efficacy and applications should cover both the foliage and the tent.

WEEDS

John Emerson
Nutrient Management Agent

LET'S TALK TURF WEEDS! Pre-emergent herbicides help keep your turf weed free throughout the growing season. Timing is critical. The weeds will begin to germinate once the soil temperature starts to warm-up, so we need to apply this product BEFORE seed germination. Using Growing Degree Days is the best way to track the timing of the application. Typically, the 1st or 2nd week in March is the ideal time. We are currently on the tail end of the window of opportunity to put out the pre-emergent. NOW is the time to do this if you haven't already. Remember, a thick, healthy stand of grass is the best weed control! Here is the link for the GDD Tracker for turfgrass pest. http://www.gddtracker.net/

What's Hot!

Spring annual weeds have sprung. Hairy bittercress and garlic mustard can be pulled out easily now. Once garlic mustard starts to flower, it must be pulled and removed from the site as it will still mature seeds even if pulled. Another early weed is lesser celandine but control is much more difficult. Hand digging a small infestation is possible, but the entire bulb mass must be removed. You can treat with glyphosate, but you'll need to add a surfactant. Directed spras of glyphosate work better before flowers have expanded (too late). Herbicides containing triclopyr have some effectiveness.

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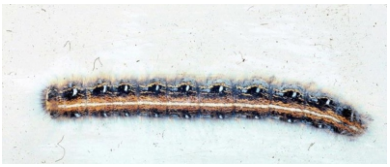

ETC.
Photo credit:
L.L. Hyche, Auburn Univ. bugwood-org

Lesser celandine. 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 (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/

Norway maple girdled by wire. Photo credit: T. Wootten

What's Hot (Continued)

There has been some downy mildew reported in shipments of impatiens plugs, even in new "resistant" cultivars! A reminder to do mixed plantings of annuals, not all one type of plant.

Colletotrichum species can be found now in leaf spots on liriope (especially variegated varieties). Look for reddish brown spots on brown and green tissue. The disease is sometimes called anthracnose. Cut plants back and removing the cut symptomatic tissue (so it doesn't serve as an inoculum source for infection of the new foliage).

Be careful to always remove wires at planting or if used in staking after one year. The photo below shows what can happen to a tree (at least it was a Norway maple and is not great loss) if wires are not removed - the tree died!

Editor: Susan Barton
Extension Horticulturist

GROWING DEGREE DAYS

AS OF March 31, 2020

- Swarthmore College (Delaware County, PA) = 43 ('19 = 31)
- Fischer Greenhouse (New Castle County) = 47 ('19 = 31)
- Research & Educ. Center, Georgetown (Sussex County) = 96 ('19 = 55)

ETC tent. Photo credit: R.L. Anderson, USDA Forest Service, bugwood-org

Japanese maple scale. Photo credit: T. Wootten

Horned oak gall on willow oak. Photo credit: T. Wootten