

ORNAMENTALS



• H O T L I N E •

July 10, 2020

Issue 16

INSECTS

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Ornamental IPM Specialist

REDHEADED FLEA BEETLE adults have been found in nurseries, box stores, garden centers and in the landscape the past few weeks. This flea beetle has recently become a pest in both retail and wholesale nurseries in the eastern U.S. Larvae feed in May and emerge as adults around 575 - 785 GDD50. Adults then feed through June and the second generation of eggs start hatching around the end of June with larger larvae active around 1500 GDD50 or when *Cerastigma plumbaginoides* (blue leadwort) begins to bloom or *Lagerstroemia indica x fauriei* 'Hopi' (crape myrtle 'Hopi') is in full bloom.

Adult redheaded flea beetles are black with brick red to blackish red heads - with the red easiest to see on clear sunny days. Although they will fly, they prefer to move by jumping or dropping below the plant canopy into the pot or the ground next to the potted plant. Damage caused by adults appears as either holes chewed into developing leaves or 'divots' chewed into thicker skinned or succulent leaves which turn brown as the leaf dries out. Larvae are small creamy white and thin with a brownish tan head capsule, visible legs and a fleshy appendage on the last abdominal segment that sticks out. They are found in root balls and their feeding does not cause noticeable damage to the plant.

Their host range is large and includes *Itea*, asters, *Forsythia*, *Hydrangea*, *Hibiscus*, *Weigela*, *Ilex*, ninebark, azaleas, buttonbush, Pennsylvania smart weed, Joe pye weed, Salvia, blueberries, corn and many others. Flagship, Safari, Mainspring, Scimitar, acephate, PreFeRal, Beetlegone, and Talstar have reduced feeding damage in our trials but residual protection (continued)

DISEASES

Jill Pollok
Plant Diagnostician

FIRE BLIGHT. We are seeing fire blight on apple and pear trees, and especially on ornamental pear (*Pyrus calleryana* 'Bradford') right now. This is a bacterial disease caused by *Erwinia amylovora*. The first symptoms are necrotic brown shoot tips, blossoms, and brown/black leaves that wilt and die, and stay hanging on the branch. Twig tips may also develop a "shepherd's crook" which can aid in diagnosis. Multiple affected shoot tips might make the tree appear burnt, hence the name. Cankers eventually form on twigs and branches. Trees become infected during wet spring weather when bacteria oozes from cankers (continued)

What's Hot!

Caterpillars have been seen attacking/feeding on flower heads of Monarda. Plant and flower seems to be fine with no damage-treatment not warranted.

Fall webworm first generation caterpillars are active. Break open nests or prune out-no insecticide needed.

Commercial cut flower educational summer session on Tuesday, July 28 at The Perennial Farm in Glen Arm, MD from 8 AM - 1 PM. For more information (<https://mnlga.memberclicks.net/assets/Cut%20Flower%20Program%20-%20Chelsea%20FINAL.pdf>)

Insects (continued)

does not seem to last much more than a week for many of these products. Mainspring works better if applied prior to adult activity. This insect has continued to expand its range in the US and this week we had a virtual working group meeting to discuss the pest. Please complete the survey (link below). Be vigilant for this insect if you work in landscape maintenance and let us know if you think this pest needs management.

https://ugeorgia.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6WG07A3VeC1Wvwf

For more information

on pests and 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 photos at <http://extension.udel.edu/ornamentals/>

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COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Diseases (continued)

and is spread primarily by insects, especially pollinators. Secondary spread can happen throughout the growing season via splashing rain, birds, insects, and humans. Many plants in the Rosaceae family are hosts for fire blight but vary greatly in their susceptibility. Damage to Callery pear is generally minor.

To prevent this disease choose resistant cultivars. Do not fertilize heavily because that promotes new growth, which can then succumb to the pathogen. If fire blight is present, prune infected branches 8-12 inches below any visible symptoms, and sterilize pruners between cuts to avoid spreading the bacteria. Do not prune shoots back to the next healthy branch; leave a stub that can be pruned off over the winter when the disease is dormant, to be sure you caught all the infection. Chemical control can be effective for fire blight, but it must be timed correctly. In commercial operations, copper materials applied during dormancy followed by streptomycin applications starting at bloom have been effective.



Fire blight on Callery pear. Photo credit: N. Gregory

Editor: Susan Barton
Extension Horticulturist



**GROWING
DEGREE DAYS**
AS OF July 7, 2020

- Swarthmore College (Delaware County, PA) = 1365 ('19 = 1668)
- Fischer Greenhouse (New Castle County, DE) = 1316 ('19 = 1697)
- Research & Education Center - Georgetown (Sussex County, DE) = 1459 ('19 = 1846)



Red headed beetle damage. Photo credit: B. Kunkel



Lilac borer in ash in Georgetown. Photo credit: T. Wootten



Red headed beetle adult. Photo credit: B. Kunkel