Cooperative Extension

ORNAMENTALS

• H O T L I N E •

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Issue 18

INSECTS

Brian Kunkel
Ornamental IPM Specialist

FLATIDS are a type of plant hopper prevalent this summer. They sit on stems or branches and suck out plant juices. Some common hosts have been roses, sunflowers, hostas, coneflowers, and many others. Waxy filaments stuck to the twigs, stems, branches or other parts of plants often indicate their presence. Investigation of the waxy areas causes the insect to "shuffle" to the other side of the stem to avoid being spotted or they jump away until the investigator leaves. The wax may cover much of the stem, but rarely causes lasting injury or negative impact to plant health. Treatments for are not typically warranted; however, if control is desired insecticidal soap, a contact insecticide such as a pyrethroid (active ingredient ends in –thrin), or an insecticide with some systemic properties could be used. A stream of water or wiping clean with a hand works but the insects will likely return.

SHARPSHOOTERS (*Cicadellidae*), a type of leafhopper (related to flatids and also abundant this year) are associated with vectoring bacteria leaf scorch (*Xylella fastidiosa*). They use piercing-sucking mouthparts to feed on xylem fluid and obtain bacteria from an infected host plant. The bacteria become lodged within the foregut of the insect and within an hour or two could be vectored to a new host plant.

(continued)

DISEASES

Jill Pollok
Plant Diagnostician

ASTER YELLOWS. Coneflowers (*Echinacea* spp.) are susceptible to aster yellows, which is a disease caused by a phytoplasma. The phytoplasma is vectored by piercing-sucking insects, most commonly, the aster leafhopper. In Echinacea, this disease presents as leaf chlorosis early in the season, pale veins, and most notably, can cause witches-brooms, bushy growth, and distortion of flowers. It can also cause green flower parts and poorly developed petals. This disease can affect many ornamentals such as daisy, aster, marigold, zinnia, petunia, snapdragon, and chrysanthemum. Symptoms are more pronounced in hot weather. This disease affects all parts of the plants, and once a plant is infected it cannot be cured. Because of this, an accurate diagnosis is important. The coneflower rosette eriophyid mite can cause similar symptoms in Echinacea flowers. If aster yellows is diagnosed, remove and dispose of plants completely. Composting plant material is an acceptable control for this disease. Keep the garden weed-free as a preventative measure, as aster yellows can infect a number of perennial weed

(continued)

What's Hot!

HOT-HOT-HOT and DRY-DRY-DRY - Remind clients to water anything planted this year weekly and in some cases other landscpe plants will require water. Water infrequently and deeply. Even though we have had a few thunderstorms, when it is this hot, the water evaporates quickly.

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Monarch caterpillars and adults are active.

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Hot and dry weather continue to favor spider mite activity.

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Watch for the beginning of the second generation of fall webworm activity. It is a tad early, but they will likely re-infect trees they fed on during June.

Insects (continued)

Some of the shade trees affected by bacteria leaf scorch include, flowering dogwood, sweet gum, many oaks, red maple, and London plane tree and others. Alterative hosts include goldenrod, buckeye, English ivy, Oriental bittersweet, mugwort, wild grape and others. The role these alternative hosts play in the spread of the disease or source of inoculum for potential vectors is unknown. Vectors of BLS in shade trees is also unknown; however, it is known that some of the insects capable of vectoring *X. fastidiosa* diseases in other crops (e.g., grapes) have been found in shade trees

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/

Diseases (continued)
species. Controlling leafhoppers by using reflective mulch or floating row covers can help protect plants but managing leafhoppers in a home garden is generally not feasible.

Aster yellows on Echinacea. Photo credit: N. Gregory

Adult flatid with wax. Photo credit: B. Kunkel

Editor: Susan Barton
Extension Horticulturist

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

GROWING DEGREE DAYS
AS OF July 21, 2020

- Swarthmore College (Delaware County, PA) = 1782 ('19 = 2093)
- Fischer Greenhouse (New Castle County, DE =1728 ('19 =2108)
- Research & Education Center - Gorgetown (Sussex County, DE) = 1884 ('19 =2289)

Hidden flatid. Photo credit: B. Kunkel

Aster yellows on Echinacea. Photo credit: N. Gregory