

# ORNAMENTALS

• H O T L I N E •

## INSECTS

May 20, 2016

Brian Kunkel  
Ornamental IPM Specialist

HONEYLOCUST plant bugs are active as nymphs from 94 - 958 [329 peak] GDD<sub>50</sub> and 202 - 1248 [637 peak] GDD<sub>50</sub> for our region. Damage has been found nearby in Maryland. Honeylocust plant bugs frequently overwinter on twigs underneath the tree bark as eggs. Eggs hatch shortly after the tree starts producing foliage in the spring. Nymphs are yellowish to pale green and have a distinct orange spot in the middle of their abdomen. Nymphs and adults have piercing/sucking mouthparts; thus they remove plant juices and contents from cells. Their toxic saliva causes a small yellowish spot that eventually turns brown. The damage may appear as leaf rolling, stunting, distortion or chlorosis. The damage may be severe enough to cause complete defoliation; however, tree death rarely occurs. About 30 days are needed for nymphs to complete development to adults. Adults are about 3/16" in size and are pale green to yellow with wings held flat over their back. Adults are also found beginning around the time *Cornus florida* is in bloom. There is one generation per year with populations declining by early July.

This insect can be monitored by tapping foliage onto a white notepad, marker board, etc. Green-leaved varieties of honeylocust are less susceptible to this insect pest and could be an option. A strong stream of water may dislodge nymphs as a non-chemical method of reducing damage and managing their populations. Insecticide options include: neonicotinoids, pyrethroids, horticultural oil, insecticidal soap, or carbaryl.

## DISEASES

Nancy Gregory  
Plant Diagnostician

AZALEA LEAF GALL can occur on young leaves or flowers, and shows up as a large distorted mass, often following wet weather. Due to infection by a fungus, *Exobasidium*, plant cells begin to multiply and become larger and distorted. These swollen plant outgrowths usually start out green or pink. As the disease progresses, spores of *Exobasidium* are produced on the surface of the galls, leaving a white powdery look. Old galls shrivel and get hard, and the fungus survives in that tissue, or in bud scales or under bark. Rhododendron, camellia, and blueberry may also be affected, although there are some resistant cultivars of both azalea and rhododendron. Control is best accomplished by pruning out the galls before the white spores are produced.

AZALEA PETAL BLIGHT (*Ovulinia* petal blight) can also infect azalea flowers, which decay into a slimy mass. Azalea petal blight can shorten the flowering time of azalea when wet weather occurs during flowering if the fungus is present. Early infections can be

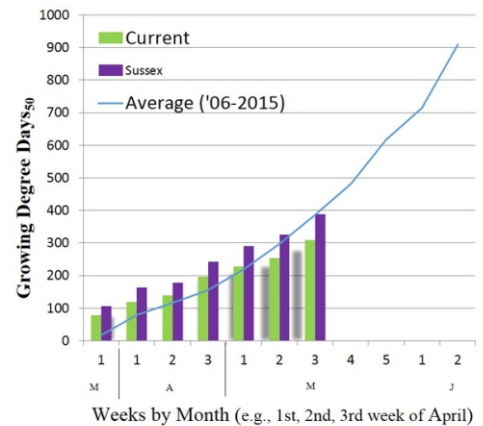
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Issue 9

## What's Hot!

Ash rust is visible on white ash leaves in the UDBG. This fungal rust disease is seen almost every year on white ash and green ash in our area, to varying degrees. The alternate host for ash rust is *Spartina* marsh grass, and spores blow in every year, so ash rust is difficult to control with fungicides. Rake up and discard leaves that fall.

SPRING started out like gangbusters in March but has cooled significantly; thus when we look at growing degree days for the year we are behind our historical average. Sussex GDD are included on the chart, but it is in comparison to the historical average for New Castle County. Sussex GDD are also behind what is normal for this time of year.



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://sites.udel.edu/ornamentals/>

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

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Diseases (Continued)

seen as small water soaked spots on the petal before a quick collapse of the flowers. The fungus produces many spores that spread rapidly to nearby flowers. It's too late for control this year, but preventative fungicide applications can be applied when flowers first expand if the disease has been a problem in the past.

MONILINIA BLIGHT has been observed on flowering cherry, especially on Kwanzan types. This blight of twigs is caused by the fungus *Monilinia*, which also causes brown rot on peach, and a similar blight on flowering quince. Terminals that flowered about two weeks ago were infected during flowering by spores of *Monilinia* produced in response to rains. Infections begin on the senescing flowers and progress back, causing leaf blight and twig death. The fungus overwinters in twigs and branches. Control by pruning twigs and branches 10 inches below any affected areas, when weather is dry. Clean pruners between cuts and discard trimmed material. These are the same recommendations as for controlling fireblight on pear and apple, and bacterial blight on cherries. Fruit bearing trees such as cherry, plum, and apricot with *Monilinia* infections should be on a regular preventative fungicide spray program.



Azalea leaf gall. Photo credit: N. Gregory

Editor: Susan Barton  
Extension Horticulturist

**GROWING DEGREE DAYS**  
AS OF May 17, 2016

- Swarthmore College (Delaware County, PA) = 372 ('15 = 498)
- Fischer Greenhouse (New Castle County) = 310 ('15 = 455)
- Research & Educ. Center, Georgetown (Sussex County) = 388 ('15 = 495)



Honeylocust plant bug adult. Photo credit: John A. Weidhass, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Bugwood.org



Camellia leaf gall. Photo credit: N. Gregory



Honeylocust plant bug damage. Photo credit: Daniel Herms, The Ohio State University, Bugwood.org