INSECTS

Brian Kunkel Ornamental IPM Specialist

Warm weather this weekend should kick start our insect activity, and eastern tent caterpillars are one of earliest insects we see in the landscape.

April 13, 2018

EASTERN TENT CATERPILLARS (ETC) typically emerge from egg masses during 13 – 160 [59 peak] GDD_{50} . 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 with a yellowish-tan stripe on either side. Preferred food is wild cherry leaves, but they also readily eat crabapple, ornamental apple, plum, peach, and occasionally birch or ash leaves. Female moths emerge and mate during the summer, and lay eggs in small gray foam-like masses onto small diameter branches or twigs.

A number of natural enemies such as assassin bugs, parasitoids, and birds help keep the insect under control. A naturally

DISEASES

Nancy Gregory Plant Diagnostician

SNOW MOLD ON TURFGRASS is caused by two different fungi, one causing pink snow mold and one causing gray snow mold. Snow molds are severe when there has been snow cover that is longlasting or when soil has been compacted by foot traffic. Although the disease is unsightly, it rarely kills the turf grass. Gray snow mold (Typhula blight) appears as roughly circular light tan patches 8 to 20 inches in dimaeter. The affected grass may be matted and bleached, with white to gray fungal growth evident. The fungus *Typhula* produces sclerotia to survive the summer, and the small, round brown structures (sclerotia) may be seen on infected leaves. In late fall, these sclerotia produce spores or mycelial growth that infect grasses under cover of snow during the winter. Pink snow mold is caused by a Microdochium species, and the fungal growth has a pink color. In areas where snow mold has occurred, it is likely to recur, but can usually be managed with cultural methods. Avoid late fall applications of high nitrogen fertilizer that stimulate new growth, which is more susceptible to infection. Keep turf mowed in the fall. Avoid piles of snow that may linger over the lawn. If turf is matted after snow melt, rake the matted grass to encourage new spring growth, and over-seed if necessary. In areas where snow molds have been a problem, preventative fungicide applications may be useful. Fungicides should be applied in late fall before snow cover is expected.

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Issue 4

What's Hot!

April 20, 2018 - Turfgrass Management Program, UD Newark, DE and Research and Education Center, Georgetown, DE. Registration-\$15. One nutrient management credit.To register contact Terra Eby at (302)-730-4000 or terra@udel.edu

April 25, 2018 - Christmas Tree Production Workshop, 4-6 pm, DE Department of Agriculture. Brian Kunkel and Nancy Gregory. For more info contact ngregory@udel.edu.

April 26, 2018 - Tree Planting Demonstration, 4-6 pm, Sussex County Extension Office, 16483 County Seat Highway, Georgetown. \$15. One nutrient management credit. Contact wootten@udel.edu.



Snow mold on turfgrass showing bleached and matted blades. 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) New Castle County Extension Kent County Extension

831-8862 831-2506 730-4000

Sussex County Extension 856-7303 View more pictures at http://extension.udel.edu/ornamentals/

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Diseases (Continued)

CALLERY PEAR such as 'Bradford' are blooming in the landscape, although many blooms look brown from frost and freezing temperatures. Roadsides are populated with volunteer flowering pears, more numerous and invasive over time. These ornamental pears are weak trees, invasive, and the seedling trees that come up often have thorns. Consider other small native flowering trees for planting. See the blog post: http://extension.udel.edu/blog/in

vasive-flowering-pear/

Insects (Continued)

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

ETC for the next year. Some

compounds used for control include: insecticidal soap, B. thuringiensis

(Dipel), spinosad (Conserve),

chlorantraniliprole (Acelepryn), or

pyrethroid products such as

bifenthrin. Apply when larvae are

small to increase efficacy and cover both the foliage and the tent.

Editor: Susan Barton Extension Horticulturist



Eastern tent caterpillar nest. Photo credit: Robert Anderson, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood

