University of Georgia Cooperative Extension

Hort Depot

edited by James Morgan & Teresa Myler

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LAWNS- Scout your St. Augustinegrass for signs of chinch bug damage that begins as irregular spreading patches of brown dead grass in open, sunny area. To control with a pesticide, the desired threshold level is **20 to 25 chinch bugs per square foot**. You can check this by taking a large coffee can or a similar sized can, with its ends cut way, and pushing it two to three inches down into the turf in a suspected area of chinch bug infestation. Fill the can with water and keep full for about five to seven minutes by adding more water if necessary. All stages of chinch bugs if present will float to the top. Treat with bifentrin or carbaryl. Irrigate the lawn prior to application for better control.

To apply green color to Centipede grass without stimulating excessive shoot growth, apply ferrous sulfate at a rate of two ounces for every three to five gallons of water per every 1,00ft²

The **stacked slime molds** are seen on turfgrass blades. They appear during wet and warm periods. From afar it appears that you have bluish-black circular patches or greasy patches in the yard. Up close it appears as if the leaf blades are covered with this grayish powder. Just like other slime molds, they are not harming the plants they are growing on and they will dry up and disappear with time. In the meantime just spray the area with water, sweep off with a broom or simply cut your lawn

FLOWERS- If you have been pinching back your mums this summer, mid-July is the time to stop so that they will be able to develop flower buds for the fall.

If you are going to be **applying pesticides**, especially during dry weather, **water plants several hours before** hand. Drought-stress plant plants have less water in their plant tissues, and the chemicals that enter the leaves consequently will be more concentrated and may burn the leaves.

ORNAMENTALS- If any of your shrubs suffer from **powdery mildew or black spot**- cut out immediately or collect and destroy the leaves as they hit the ground. Spray new growth with Immunox during the cool part of the day. If it is too dry water you plant hours before applying the fungicide.

You may notice a black mold on your crape myrtles and gardenias. This is call **sooty mold** and is a fungus that occurs when insects such as aphids or scale secrete a substance called honeydew. The mold grows on top of the honeydew. Simply wash of the leaves and treat the insect with an insecticidal soap.

FRUIT AND VEGETABLES- Clean off harvested rows immediately to prevent insect and disease buildup.

Plant the following vegetables no later than July 20 to allow time to mature before frost: tomatoes, okra, corn, pole beans, and lima beans; also plant cucumbers squash and snap beans.
Make sure the garden is well mulched to prevent weeds and conserve moisture.
Plant the following no later than the dates indicated below:

August 15 – snap beans and Irish potatoes (seed can be sprouted two to three weeks before planting).

August 31 – Cucumbers and squash; plant varieties resistant to downy mildew

Resources http://www.richard-seaman.com/USA/States/Illinois/VoloBog/

A LITTLE WILDLIFE KNOWLEDGE WILL HELP YOU DETERMINE WHO'S EATING LANDSCAPE PLANTS

University of Georgia Cooperative Extension wildlife expert Michael Mengak says correctly knowing who is causing the damage is key to preventing and controlling wildlife in landscapes."Deer don't chew below ground. If your damage is below ground, you have voles or rabbits," he said. All animals leave signs or evidence that they've been in the area.

Droppings- Fresh droppings are black and shiny while old droppings are dry and brown or gray.
"Black and white droppings can be from a bird, snake or lizard," Mengak said. "The size of the droppings will also tell you a lot."
Rats, mice, chipmunks and toads leave droppings the size of a grain of rice. Rabbit droppings are pea size and deer droppings are large and oval.

Digging- A dirt mound could be a sign of a groundhog, turtle, armadillo or coyote.
If there is no dirt mound, the digger is likely a chipmunk, skunk, mole or vole. Tunnels are also signs of moles and voles. Armadillos dig inverted, cone-shaped holes 3 to 4 inches deep and 1 to 2 inches in diameter, Mengak said.

Gnawing- If leaves are clipped or bitten in a clean, sharp manner, the pest is likely a rabbit, squirrel or woodrat. If branches are cut, squirrels or rabbits are probably the cause. Deer lack upper incisors, so they leave a ragged cut on leaves.

Time of day- Raccoons, skunks, opossums and woodrats move at night, while squirrels, chipmunks and woodchucks are active during the day.

UGA's Extension experts offer some tips on controlling wildlife in your landscape.

To discourage deer from munching on your marigolds, Mengak recommends using Liquid Fence, Deer Off or Deer Away. All of these products are available as a spray from local home gardening centers. "These products should never be applied to food crops, and read labels carefully," he said.

To treat for voles and rabbits, use milorganite, also available at most home improvement and gardening centers.
Like their rodent cousins, **voles and chipmunks should be trapped using mousetraps** baited with peanut butter. "Not much else will be effective," he said. "Chipmunks are primarily seedeaters. They might chew a woody shrub, but that would be unusual." If trapping doesn't appeal to you, modify your landscape to discourage voles and chipmunks. Clear existing mulch and apply gravel instead of bark or pine straw, Mengak said.

Use the HERL method- When fighting critters in your landscape, follow the HERL method: habitat modification, exclusion, removal or repellents, and lethal control.

"Unfortunately, it's hard to create a habitat that attracts the wildlife you want and discourages the nuisance species," Mengak said.

He recommends following these steps:
~ Modify your landscape so it's not the perfect habitat for the pest animal.
~ Remove anything that could be used as cover.
~ Mow tall grass and remove piles of brush, logs, rocks and other debris.
~ Build a fence to exclude wildlife. A deer fence should be 8 feet tall or higher, while chicken wire fences can be just 2 feet high.
~ Use a net or a trap to remove the pest or a repellent to discourage the animal from coming into the area. Effective repellents work through taste, fear or odor.
~ Lethal traps can be used to control a small number of pests, but may require permits from a state or federal wildlife agency. Use live traps with extreme caution. Raccoons, skunks and other animals that may carry rabies should not be caught in live traps.
~ Use poison baits to control rats, mice and other small rodents. Keep out of reach of children and pets. Baits are best used in out buildings or under careful observation.

For further assistance, call your local UGA Extension office at 1-800-ASK-UGA1.

It Looks like Grease on my Lawn By James Morgan

I am almost beginning to think about what having grass in the landscape means just as my best friend does. Managing grass in the landscape takes time, effort and money. A healthy lawn just does not appear naturally. Issues such as insects, diseases, weeds, fertilization, watering and culture problems are all factors in whether you qualify for Lawn of the Year or remembered for when you had the best lawn on block.

As we progress through the growing season all of the factors are going to seem difficult to control or prevent. However with proper fertilization, watering, and correct mowing heights, most of these problems can be solved. On the other hand, various fungal spores are active certain times of the year and with the right environment can cause a homeowner to have to treat the lawn.

One such fungal spore is very active now and calls for no chemical control. Over the past month I have received several calls or visits to my office from homeowners all wanting to know what is that grayish-black stuff on my leaf blades. It appears in the morning and looks likes ashes have been poured on the lawn.

Well that stuff is nothing more than **stacked slime mold.** Usually after heavy rains and watering you may notice these tiny bluish-gray, black or white balls on grass blades. If this powdery covering is heavy enough it can shade grass from the sunlight causing it to turn yellow.

Normally slime molds are white, gray or yellow masses on the soil that are feeding on decaying organic matter in the soil. When they reproduce, they get onto the grass blade and form powdery balls of spores. At this point you will start to notice them.

There is no need for chemical sprays. They cause little if any damage to lawns. Usually it will go away during warmer dry periods. You can also wash it way with a strong stream of water or sweep it off with a broom.

So the next time you walk out your door to find grayish-black areas in your lawn that you notice was not there yesterday, just step back and attack it with water or a broom. Make sure that if you are using an irrigation system to water your lawn, that you are applying at least one inch of water per week or as needed.

For more information on slime mold or any other horticulture topic, please contact me at morganjl@uga.edu

The Dougherty County Cooperative Extension Office is offering the full Master Gardener Course this Fall

Sponsored by James Morgan; taught by Master Gardener Extension Volunteers and Cooperative Extension Professionals

September 5 through November 14 (Tuesdays & Thursdays 9 am –12 pm) with some Wednesdays being used for local and day-long field trips.

$130.00 class fee covers the Master Gardener Handbook, Badge, one year membership in GMGA (Georgia Master Gardener Association), all class materials and refreshments.

If you are interested please contact us and we will send you an application packet.

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FOLLOW TIPS FROM UGA EXTENSION TO GET A HEALTHY SUMMER LAWN

By Clint Waltz, UGA Cooperative Extension and Becky Griffin, University of Georgia

Having a healthy, attractive lawn is an integral part of a beautiful home landscape. University of Georgia Cooperative Extension experts say following these five steps can help you achieve an awe-inspiring lawn this summer.

Identify your grass. Make sure you know what turfgrass species makes up your lawn. You may have inherited a lawn and not know which grass you have. Since each grass type requires different care, it is important to correctly identify that grass.

Over the last several years there are increasingly more St. Augustinegrass and centipedegrass lawns in the area. Caring for a bermudagrass lawn is very different from caring for a centipedegrass lawn. For help with grass identification, contact your local UGA Extension agent at 1-800-ASK-UGA1.

Mow at the correct height. Turfgrass is healthiest and most attractive when it is mowed at the right height. That varies for each species. Tall fescue performs better when kept at a taller height than zoysiagrass. Bermudagrass can be kept rather short.

Mowing heights are especially important for homeowners in subdivisions where tall fescue was seeded in the backyard and bermudagrass was sodded in the front. This means halfway through mowing, the mower blade height needs to be adjusted. Although this extra step can be inconvenient, it will make a difference in how healthy the grass is and how each section looks.

Common turfgrass cultivars and their recommended mowing heights are as follows: bermudagrass, 1 to 1.5 inches; centipedegrass, 1 to 2 inches; St. Augustinegrass, 2 to 3 inches; zoysiagrass, 1 to 2 inches; and tall fescue, 2 to 3 inches.

Keep mower blades sharp. Lawn mower blades should be sharpened at least once a year. Each time the lawn is mowed, the grass blades are being cut. With a sharp mower blade this cut seals quickly, keeping out troublesome fungus.

A dull mower blade tears grass blades. This type of wound heals slower and gives fungus an opportunity to enter the blade and cause disease. Also, a lawn of ragged, torn blades does not look as appealing as a lawn with neatly cut grass.

Water intentionally. A lawn will give clues when it needs water. If footprints are left when you walk across the lawn, the grass probably needs water. Turfgrass wilts by turning in on itself creating a drinking-straw-like appearance. This is another clue your lawn should be watered. Turfgrass needs approximately 1 inch of water per week, ideally given in two applications.

A common problem for homeowners who use irrigation systems is overwatering. Overwatering a lawn encourages disease and can hamper root function. Make sure your irrigation system is functioning properly and consider adding a rain shutoff sensor. Inspect sprinkler heads regularly for mower damage. Also, be aware that the 2010 Georgia Water Stewardship law allows landscape irrigation any day between the hours of 4 p.m. and 10 a.m.

Aerate, aerate, aerate. Soil compaction is a problem in Georgia's clay soils. Additionally, all the rain received this winter and spring could lead to compacted soils. So aerating early this summer may be more prudent this year than others.

A compacted soil means that the soil spaces underground that allow water, nutrients and air to move freely are limited. To get healthy, thick turfgrass on top of the soil, the grass needs healthy well-developed root systems under the soil.

Aeration opens up airways and relieves soil compaction. It can be done as often as needed, as long as the root systems are actively growing. For warm-season turf, such as zoysiagrass and bermudagrass, that means soil temperatures 65 degrees and above. Many public gardens are aerated several times a season. For homeowners, an economical way to do this is to rent an aerator with a neighbor.

For more information on caring for Georgia turfgrasses, see the website www.Georgiaturf.com.

Kudzu Bugs use Landscape Plants as Rest Areas on Their way to the Kudzu Patches

by Merrit Melancon

Kudzu bugs' diets consist of mostly kudzu and soybeans, but more and more often they're getting blamed for devouring all sorts of plants. The sight of swarming, invasive stinkbugs gives homeowners the impression that the voracious insects will decimate their vegetable gardens and shrubs, but that's just not the case, said Wayne Gardner, an entomologist with the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences.

Kudzu bugs, technically called Megacopta cribraria, were first seen in Georgia in 2009. A member of the stinkbug family, they have green to brown bodies, stipples on their wing covers and wide back ends.

Most of the plants on which kudzu bugs congregate during the spring are simply rest stops on the way to the nearest soybean field or kudzu patch buffet. "Often times, at this time, they're just sitting around waiting for the kudzu to get tall enough where they can find it," said Gardner, who helps lead kudzu bug research at UGA. "If homeowners will just be a little bit patient, the bugs will leave."

Adult kudzu bugs have been known to snack on the leaves of fig trees, hydrangeas and green bean plants — but there's been no proof that they cause major damage. They'll leave as soon as kudzu or soybeans become available to munch on because those are the only plants where their young can survive.

Kudzu bug nymphs inherit two digestive tract bacteria that allow them to digest kudzu or soybeans, but nothing else. Consequently any eggs laid on alternate plants won't develop into adult insects. "They're not going to spend a lot of time where their young have no chance of survival. These guys are very focused on eating and reproducing," Gardner said.

Gardner's team helps operate a kudzu bug website — www.kudzubug.org — with all sorts of information on the kudzu bug and its occurrence. The public can even report where they've seen the insect and help scientists track the spread of the invasive species.

A lot of the reports come in with notes about what people have tried to use to kill the insect. This worries Gardner. "(Homeowners) get alarmed by the number of insects that they're seeing because they will just flood you," Gardner said. "We get reports with notes about what people are doing to get rid of them saying, 'We're putting Sevin dust out over all our bushes. And we're thinking, 'Holy mackerel. If they would just wait a little while, these swarms will move over to the kudzu.'"

One plant that seems to attract more kudzu bugs then others is the fig tree. "We're getting a lot of reports this spring of people being concerned about the kudzu bugs on their fig trees, from Georgia as well as North Carolina, South Carolina and Alabama," he said. Entomologists have known about the fig tree swarm phenomenon since 2010, and they haven't heard of anyone loosing figs to the insects.

"If you're not getting any loss of any of your product, there's no need for spraying," he said. "All you're doing is adding an insecticide to the environment and directly to a food product that you want your family to enjoy … If you're looking for a threat to your figs, the biggest fig problem we have in Georgia is birds."

Woody Ornamental Diseases Word Search

T W O O B E P O T H G I L B G I W T X R P O C P
P O W D E R Y M I L D E W Q U N Z Y E X A F E O
T O P S F A E L L A I R E T C A B K J K B I D T
O Y C S C Z H A F L T W O P Z Q N D L P F R A A
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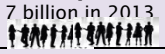
V L Z Z G C E D A R Q U I N C E R U S T F V E P
A I R E A H P S O Y R T O B L E A F G A L L N V

ANTHRACNOSE
BACTERIAL LEAF SPOT
BLACK ROT
BLACK SPOT
BOTRYOSPHAERIA
CEDAR APPLE RUST
CEDAR QUINCE RUST
CROWN GALL
CYTOSPORA CANKER
DIE BACK
FIRE BLIGHT
FLOWER GALL
FUNGAL LEAF SPOT
LEAF GALL
OAK LEAF BLISTER
PHYTOPHTHORA TOP
POWDERY MILDEW
SCAB
TWIG BLIGHT
VERTICILLIUM WILT

Dog Days are the name ancient people gave to the hottest part of the year. In the summer, Sirius, the "dog star," rises and sets with the sun. During late July Sirius is in conjunction with the sun, and the ancients believed that its heat added to the heat of the sun, creating a stretch of hot and sultry weather. They named this period of time, from 20 days before the conjunction to 20 days after, "dog days" after the dog star.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 Dog Days Begins (7/3-8/11)	4 	5 National Recreation & Parks Month	6 National Visit a Park Day
7 National Farriers Week 7-13	8 New Moon ●	9 	10 Don't Step on a Bee Day 	11 World Population Day 7 billion in 2013 	12 Simplicity Day 	13 George Washington Carver Day 
14 	15 National Blueberry Month	16  First Quarter ◐	17 National Lettuce Month	18 July 11, 1987 the 5 Billionth child was born on Earth	19 National Mango Month	20 Moon Landing Day (1969) 
21 Celebration of the Horse Day	22 Full Moon ○	23	24 	25 National Carousel Day	26 Lumberjack Day 	27
28 National Garlic Month 	29 Last Quarter ◑	30 National Eggplant Month 	31	JULY 2013		