

Commercial Horticulture

August 28, 2026

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**Integrated Pest Management
for Commercial Horticulture**
extension.umd.edu/ipm

If you work for a commercial horticultural business in the area, you can report insect, disease, weed or cultural plant problems (**include location and insect stage**) found in the landscape or nursery to sklick@umd.edu

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Annual Cicadas are Singing Away

By: Paula Shrewsbury, UMD

Annual cicadas, also known as dog-day cicadas, have been active for a while now. I'm not sure if it is me or the cicadas, but it seems like in the last week or two male cicadas are singing their hearts out and louder than ever. Male cicadas sing to attract mates. Females do not sing. Males have structures called tymbals, small, ridged membranes, on their abdomens. The cicadas use their muscles to vibrate the membranes which make loud echoing sounds.

Surprisingly, 14 species of annual cicadas are found in MD. Annual cicadas get their name because they emerge annually, not because they develop in one year. The life cycle of annual cicadas takes anywhere from 2-5 years to complete from egg to adult; however, the generations overlap so every year some annual cicadas emerge. Annual cicadas are active in the summertime (~late June to September), whereas periodical cicadas are active in the spring. Annual cicadas are large with green eyes and have a green venation in their wings. They have sucking mouthparts and use their saw-like ovipositor to insert eggs into tree branches. They occur in much lower numbers than periodical cicadas resulting in far less oviposition scars to trees and far less "noise" from the males calling the females. Some people like the sound of annual cicadas because "it means it is summertime". Oviposition activity from annual cicadas does not usually result in the need for control measures.

We have had numerous reports of cicada killer wasps in the last month or so, which are active when adult annual cicadas, their main prey, are active.

To learn more about the 14 species of annual cicadas in MD, and hear their songs, go to: <https://www.cicadamania.com/cicadas/common-cicadas-of-maryland/>

See Mike Raupp's [Bug of the Week blog](#) for more images and videos of annual cicada emerging, singing, and more.



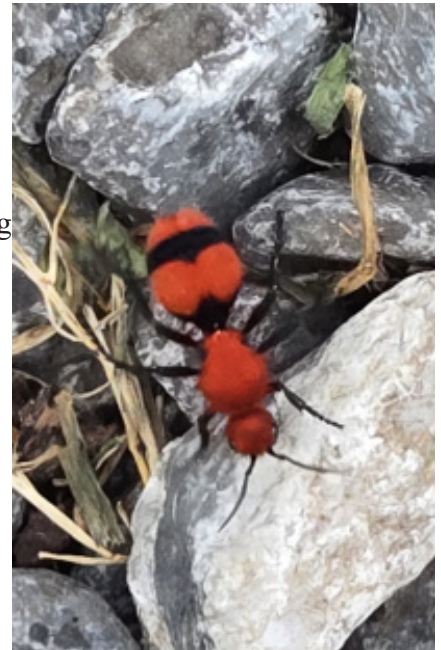
Annual cicada adult showing off its beautiful green colors.
Photo: Mike Raupp, UMD

Velvet Ants – Ant or wasp?

By: Paula Shrewsbury, UMD

Marie Rojas, IPM Scout, found a female velvet ant, also known as cow killer (*Dasymutilla occidentalis*) in Beallsville, MD this week. Although velvet ants look like beautiful hairy ants, they are not ants. They are wasps in the family Mutillidae (order: Hymenoptera) whose adult females are wingless and mimic ants (see image), which are also in the order Hymenoptera. However, male velvet ants have wings (see image). Velvet ants are not aggressive, but the sting is quite painful, so it is best to avoid handling the females. Males do not have stingers. In the Hymenoptera, stingers are modified ovipositors, hence only females sting.

Velvet ants are commonly found in habitats that are relatively dry with sandy soil. They are usually active as adults July through September. The life cycle of this omnivorous insect is interesting. Adult velvet ants feed on nectar. After feeding and mating, the female sneaks into a nest of ground nesting bees or wasps. The female velvet ant proceeds to oviposit one of her eggs near each larva or pupa in the nest of its prey. The velvet ant egg hatches and the larva feed on the young and pupa of the bees / wasps in the nest that their mother had invaded. When coming across a velvet ant, be sure to admire its beauty, but pay heed to its aposematic, warning coloration.



A velvet ant adult female, which is a wingless wasp.
Photo: Marie Rojas, IPM Scout



Adult velvet ant males have wings.
Photo by Lyle Buss, Univ. of Florida

Box Tree Moth Quarantine Expansion and Understanding the Compliance Agreement

By: Laura Nixon

Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) announced a quarantine expansion for box tree moth (*Cydalima perspectalis*) this week. The newly quarantined counties are Caroline, Cecil, Kent and Queen Anne's counties. Box tree moth (BTM) has been confirmed in Caroline, Cecil and Queen Anne's counties, although not yet in Kent county. These counties are adjacent to Delaware counties with known moth populations. As a reminder, Allegany, Frederick, Garrett and Washington counties are also in quarantine, with box tree moth confirmed and spreading in Washington County.

Any businesses growing and moving boxwoods in the listed counties are required to have a certificate of inspection and complete a compliance agreement; see MDA's website to begin this process: <https://mda.maryland.gov/Pages/Box%20Tree%20Moth.aspx>

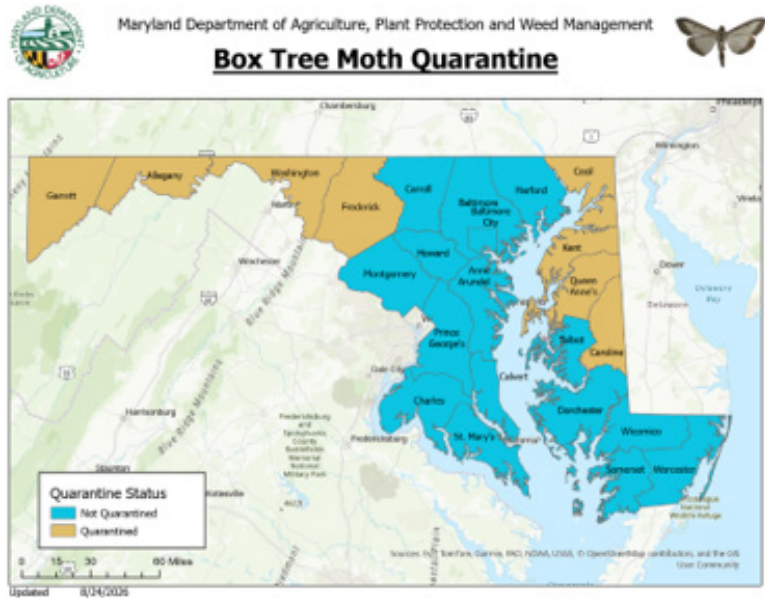


Photo 1: Cluster of three BTM eggs (Credit: Holly Greenburg, UME). Photo 2: Newly hatched 1st instar BTM caterpillar (Credit: Holly Greenburg, UME). Photo 3: A handful of mixed instar BTM caterpillars pulled from one boxwood hedge, plus three pupae (Credit: Laura Nixon, UME). Photo 4: BTM pupa surrounded by webbing, attached to boxwood (Credit: Laura Nixon, UME). Photo 5: Box tree moth adult (Credit: USDA APHIS). Photo 6: BTM adults pulled from a trap (Credit: Laura Nixon, UME).

To prepare your business for complying with these regulations and minimizing box tree moth spread, it is important to understand four major items:

- 1) Monitoring traps for BTM: Bucket traps can be purchased for BTM, they must be equipped with a BTM pheromone lure and an insecticidal strip. All components are readily commercially available. These traps should be deployed ~5 feet off the ground and within 10 feet of your boxwoods.
- 2) Inspecting for and identifying all life stages of box tree moth: Box tree moth has four distinct life stages: eggs (usually laid on the underside of boxwood leaves), caterpillars (found defoliating the boxwood), pupae (often within webbing and attached to boxwood leaves and stems), and adult moths (easiest found in traps). However, the caterpillar stage has additional life stages, growing from 3 mm (0.1 inch) pale green with a black head to 25 mm (1 inch) bright green with black stripes and spots.
- 3) Treatments: Acquire insecticides specifically listed in the compliance agreement and apply at the rates listed **pre-shipment**. These are the materials and rates which have been tested and confirmed with robust data to be effective against box tree moth.
- 4) Record keeping: Records of training, inspections, treatments, and plant movement are vitally important, so start a system of record keeping and ensure all your staff are using it.

The compliance agreement has more extensive and specific details, but if you prepare yourself and your staff with the information mentioned here, you will be well equipped to go into this process. If you see box tree moth on your plants (whether you are in or out of the quarantine zones) report it immediately to MDA (btm.inbox@maryland.gov) or to us (Lnixon1@umd.edu) and be assured, we will keep your business name private.

This week, we had new reports of box tree moth near Sharpsburg (Washington County), which led to a few new discoveries as we scouted nearby. Over the river in West Virginia (Jefferson and Berkeley counties), we had numerous reports of new caterpillar populations and some people losing their boxwoods completely within a week of discovery. This week we are seeing caterpillars ranging from the 2nd instar all the way to 7th instar, and many pupae. This means we are seeing high feeding damage from the caterpillars whilst also expecting to see large numbers of adult moths flying over the next week. Keep inspecting your boxwoods as these adults disperse and lay eggs in new locations.

White Flannel Moth Caterpillars

By: Suzanne Klick

Candice Burt, Virginia Master Gardener, found white flannel moth caterpillars in her garden this week. Candice noted they were devouring a redbud tree in Great Falls, VA. They were also on the ground on fallen leaves, so in this situation you have to be careful where you step. These caterpillars have stinging hairs, so do not handle them. They feed on a variety of woody plants. Redbud has been a regularly reported host of this caterpillar in the IPM report over the years.



Keep an eye out for this brightly colored white flannel moth caterpillar because it has stinging hairs.
Photo: Candice Burt, Virginia Master Gardener

Asimina Webworm on Pawpaw

By: Paula Shrewsbury, UMD

This week Marie Rojas, IPM Consultant, reported Asimina webworm and damage on Pawpaw in Frederick County, MD. Asimina webworm is the caterpillar stage of the Asimina webworm moth, *Omphalocera munroei*, which is in the family Pyralidae. The native range of Asimina webworm closely matches the natural habitat and distribution of its major host, pawpaws (*Asimina* species). The caterpillars feed on the leaves, buds, and twigs of pawpaw species. The larvae use silk to web leaves together to build a protective shelter from where they feed. Monitor your pawpaws now. Pruning out the webbed shelters when caterpillars are inside is the best control tactic.



A pawpaw tree with several webbed protective cases made by Asimina webworm.

Photo: Marie Rojas, IPM Scout



Close up Asimina webworm caterpillars and its webbed shelter. Note the brown leaf parts, silk, and frass.

Photo: Marie Rojas, IPM Scout

Oak Vein Pocket Gall

By: Laura Nixon

This week, we got photos sent of oak vein pocket gall. This particular leaf gall is formed by a gall midge (*Macrodidiplosis quercusoruca*). The adult midge lay their eggs on developing oak leaves and the larvae hatch and feed along the leaf midrib, causing the plant to form this protective gall around them. This does not have any lasting effect on plant health and affected leaves can be picked or pruned away.



Oak vein pocket gall found on pin oak.

Photo: David Keane

Destructive Beetles on White Pine

By: Laura Nixon

Last week, we received a beetle ID request from a stakeholder with an almost dead white pine. This request included good clear photos of adult beetles, beetle larva from inside the tree, and a wide shot of the tree decline. This is great for us to begin assessing the situation.

The adult was easily identifiable as a “bark beetle”, but that is as far as I was able to go. Luckily, we have a bark beetle expert in our network; Bob Rabaglia (MDA and former USFS) was able to identify that the adult is, in fact, an Ips beetle, but the larvae are those of the pine sawyer beetle, which is a long-horned beetle. Both species are attracted to stressed and potentially dying trees, stressors including drought, disease, or mechanical damage could have been causing this white pine to decline.

Concerningly, pine sawyer beetles (*Monochamus sp.*) can vector pine wilt nematodes (*Bursaphelenchus xylophilus*). This nematode is pathogenic when it enters the vascular system of pine trees, where it feeds and reproduces in the tree’s resin ducts. Infected trees become unable to produce resin and branches begin to “dry up” and die. Once the tree is infected, there are no treatment options; if there is isolated branch dieback, those branches can be pruned away and removed, otherwise tree removal is the only recommendation to prevent spread. Presence of the beetle does not guarantee that the nematode is present, so be sure to test for nematode presence before taking drastic action; if you see this beetle and are concerned, commercial stakeholders can contact us or the UMD Plant Diagnostics lab for help with diagnosis.



Severely declining white pine.
Photo: Chris Kanarr

The best way to combat both Ips and pine sawyer beetles is to keep your tree healthy and happy!



Pine sawyer beetle larva.
Photo: Chris Kanarr



Ips beetle adult, with beetle larvae galleries through the tree tissue.
Photo: Chris Kanarr

Rose Rosette Disease and the Associated Mite

By Laura Nixon and Ana Cristina Fulladolsa

This week, I received a request from a landscaper whose client had multiple rose bushes infected with rose rosette disease, but multiple healthy bushes nearby. They had already removed the symptomatic bushes. Rose rosette symptoms include reddening of the stems and leaves, stunted growth, clustering and proliferation of stems with excessive soft thorns. Flowers may also abort, and severe infections can lead to the death of plants within two years. The disease is caused by rose rosette virus, which is vectored by an eriophyid mite (*Phyllocoptes fructiphilus*) or spread through grafting of infected plant material. There is no cure for the disease so early detection is critical to prevent further spread within a planting. Infected roses should be uprooted and removed promptly, and remaining roses should be monitored for symptoms.



Rose rosette symptoms.
Photo: David Clement, UME

The eriophyid mites are microscopic and can be spread by wind from plant-to-plant. These particular mites are difficult to treat with miticides, as many labeled miticides are shown to have low efficacy. This low efficacy could be related to the small body size and habit of feeding in concealed areas of the rose flowers. If you decide to treat **non-symptomatic** roses after removal of infected bushes, be aware of this low efficacy and monitor regularly for symptoms. Broad spectrum miticides, such as abamectin or spiromesifen, can be applied, then reapplied 2 weeks later; there is data to show that this combined with monitoring can be somewhat effective. The recommendation for minimizing spread of rose rosette disease is to interplant roses with barrier plants between which are non-hosts of the mite.

Aphid Activity

By: Suzanne Klick

Dave Keane reported aphids covering leaves and stems of Jerusalem artichokes in Frederick, MD this week. Look for aphids on various plants at this time of year. Check to see if predators and parasitoids are present to determine if control measures are necessary. When applying control materials, choose insecticides such as Endeavor or horticultural oil that have minimal impact on beneficials.



Aphids are in high numbers on this artichoke leaf.

Photo: Dave Keane

Beneficial of the Week

By: Paula Shrewsbury

Spotted orb-weaver: large spider makes large web

Last Monday just around dusk, I observed a spotted orb-weaver, *Neoscona crucifera*, making a large circular web on the side of a shed in Sharpsburg, MD. This web looked like it was going to be around 3' in diameter. This is the first orb-weaver I have seen this year. Spotted orb-weavers are large spiders and females can reach $\sim 3/4$ " in length, males are a little smaller. Like most orb-weaver spiders, spotted orb-weavers make quite large "orb" or round shaped webs (~ 2 feet or greater in diameter) that are commonly seen in the late summer / early fall. Orb-weavers have spent most of the season devouring prey and are now large and mature spiders. At this time of year, these spiders will be mating and making egg sacs loaded with hundreds of eggs, which is how they overwinter. Spotted orb-weavers are seen in landscapes, nurseries, and natural habitats. Orb-weavers are cosmopolitan in their distribution, and they are in the family Araneidae, which is the 3rd largest family of spiders with over 3,500 named species worldwide. What this means is... lots of big webs!

Many members of the orb-weaver clan spin a web with radial threads like the spokes of a wheel; spirals of sticky capture-threads are placed around the radial threads (see image). Capture-threads are quite remarkable, evolutionary products of millions of years of spider bioengineering. Each capture-thread has a core of silk supporting scores of tiny droplets of viscous glycoproteins. These glycoproteins give the web its stickiness. The sticky silk traps unsuspecting insects that blunder into the web and the vibration on the silk alerts the spider food is nearby. Orb-weaver webs are often found near night-time light sources since lights attract many insects. High insect traffic increases the likelihood of catching prey in your web. That is pretty good urban adaptation! Also interesting, many orb-weaver spiders consume the circular part of their web, with the dew that collects on it, nightly and rebuild it with new silk every morning. That seems like a lot of work!

Spotted orb-weavers have a clever strategy to capture prey while limiting exposure to its own enemies. After constructing its amazing web of death, the spotted orb-weaver hides in a retreat near the edge of its web. The



A fine morning mist reveals the beautiful web of an orb-weaver spider.

Photo: Mike Raupp, UMD



A spotted orb-weaver spider, *Neoscona crucifera*, hanging head down in her web.

Photo: Paula Shrewsbury, UMD

retreat might be a cluster of dead leaves or a piece of loose bark. The spider runs a strand of silk called a signal thread from the web to the retreat. When a potential victim is snared by the sticky web, vibrations travel along the signal thread and alert the orb-weaver to the presence of its prey. The spider swiftly scurries to its future meal and delivers a lethal paralyzing bite, and then quickly spins the dead prey wrapping it in silk. The silk comes from structures called spinnerets at the end of the spider's abdomen and the spider uses its legs to maneuver the silk and neatly wrap its dinner. This all happens amazingly fast (often seconds, not minutes) and is quite exciting to watch! The spider may devour the prey immediately following wrapping or wait and eat it later. Prey include a range of insects such as aphids, flies, bees, wasps, moths, spotted lanternfly, stink bugs, or other flying insects.



Spotted orb-weaver with spotted lanternfly prey entrapped in her web that she wrapped in silk.
Photo: Paula Shrewsbury, UMD

Be careful as you are walking along paths between rows of nursery trees or among landscape trees and shrubs. It is a little disturbing to get an orb-weaver's web in your face, and the spider had to work hard to make that web!

To **see a video** of a female spotted orb-weaver silking her prey [click here](#).

To **see a video** of a female spotted orb-weaver feeding and working on her web [click here](#).

Weed of the Week

By: Dr. Dan Buonaiuto

Autumn-olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*) is not related to olives, nor does it wait until autumn to produce copious amounts of fruits that allow this invasive shrub to spread rapidly in the landscape. Autumn-olive was introduced to the United States in the early 1800's. It was valued for its aesthetic appeal and planted widely for erosion control and mine reclamation. It is now an aggressive invader of a variety of habitats including roadsides, agricultural fields, pastures and woodland edges.

Autumn-olive Identification:

- **Habit:** Autumn-olive is a tall, multi-stemmed shrub, growing 10-20 feet tall with a lateral spread of up to 30 ft (Figure 1).
- **Foliage:** Leaves are alternately arranged, entire (i.e., smooth margins) ovate to lanceolate in shape. The underside of the leaf appears silver in color.
- **Flowers:** Fragrant white, four petaled flower clusters that are visible in the mid-spring.
- **Fruit:** The fruit is a red berry on a short stalk (Figure 3) that matures in the late summer (i.e., now!).



Figure 1: Autumn-olive habit.
Photo: Chris Evans, University of Illinois, Bugwood.org

- **Defining characteristics.** The leaves, stems and fruits of autumn olive have a subtle, metallic silvery-gold speckledness to them (Figure 3). It was once described to me to look as if someone sprayed a can of gold spray paint on this shrub from a moderate distance.

Autumn-olive Ecology:

Autumn-olive is most often found in full sun but is tolerant of partial shade. It can grow in harsh environmental conditions and is tolerant of drought, heavy metals, salt, and acidic soils. Autumn-olive fixes nitrogen in the soil, and can rapidly alter soil chemistry and nutrient cycling. It produces a large quantity of viable seeds that are dispersed widely by birds and mammals. While autumn-olive is a source of food for wildlife, its fruits are low in proteins and fats and high in carbohydrates, making it less nutritious than the native shrubs it outcompetes.

Autumn-olive berries are technically edible and can be made into jams or served as a tart, tangy trailside snack. Just be careful—autumn-olive is a hyper-accumulator of heavy metals, some of which can be translocated into the fruit, so make sure you aren't snacking in an old mine or industrial site.

Autumn-olive Control:

- The best way to keep Autumn-olive off the landscape is not to plant it. While sale of Autumn-olive is currently being assessed under the Maryland Prohibited Invasive Plant Law, it is currently still legally sold in trade and should be avoided.
- Small plants can be dug or pulled, but cutting autumn-olive will not control it, and may even stimulate its growth, so mechanical treatments should only be used in conjunction with herbicide.
- Foliar applications of triclopyr or triclopyr/glyphosate tank mixes from mid-June until the start of leaf coloration are effective for controlling autumn-olive, but glyphosate alone is reported to be less effective. Other herbicides that can be used for autumn-olive control are 2,4-D (with triclopyr), imazapyr, and dicamba following label instructions.



Figure 2: Autumn-olive in flower.
Photo: Richard Gardner, Bugwood.org



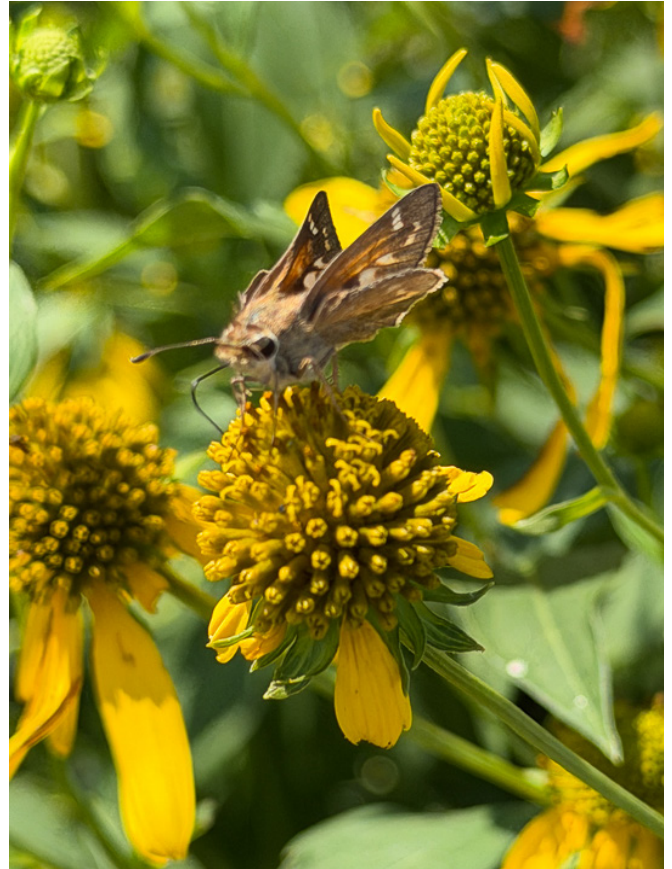
Figure 3: Autumn-olive fruit and leaves.
Photo: Emma Erler, University of New Hampshire, Bugwood.org

- For larger patches, it may be necessary to mow or cut autumn-olive before applying herbicide to the cut stems. Oil-based mixes can be applied any time after cutting while water-based mixes should be applied immediately after cutting. Additionally, basal-bark treatments of a concentrated mixture of the triclopyr ester in oil can be applied year round for effective control.

Plant of the Week

By: Ginny Rosenkranz

Rudbeckia subtomentosa 'Henry Eilers', also known as the fragrant coneflower 'Henry Eilers', sweet coneflower and sweet black-eyed Susan, is a unique, long blooming and reliable Rudbeckia. Like other coneflowers, 'Henry Eilers' is a clump herbaceous perennial that produces a profusion of charming golden yellow quilled flowers adorned with dome-shaped chocolate cones. These lovely natives bloom from July to frost, providing color and texture in the garden for a long time. The plants are cold tolerant in USDA zones 4-8 and thrive in medium moist soils that are well drained, preferring to grow in full sun. The plants are non-rhizomatous and grow 3-5 feet tall on stiff, upright leafy stems, spreading 2-3 feet wide. The subtle vanilla fragrant dark green leaves emerge in the spring and grow in a basal clump made of 3-6 inch long tri-lobed leaves. The strong, branched stems emerge in the center. Flowers form strong branching stems that create lovely floral bouquets. The flowers are very similar to the species, except the golden yellow ray flowers are rolled instead of flat, giving the flowers a quilled appearance. When in bloom, the flowers attract many varieties of butterflies, moths, skippers and other pollinators. When the center cones mature with seeds, it is a favorite of many species of songbirds. Another wonderful attribute of this lovely summer to fall favorite is that it is resistant to deer and rabbits.



A skipper butterfly visits a *Rudbeckia* 'Henry Eilers' flower.

Photo: Ginny Rosenkranz, UME



***Rudbeckia* 'Henry Eilers' flower will continue blooming through the late summer and fall.**

Photo: Ginny Rosenkranz, UME

Pest Predictive Calendar “Predictions”

By: Nancy Harding and Paula Shrewsbury

In the Maryland area, the accumulated growing degree days (DD) this week range from about **2652 DD** (Clarksville) to **3607 DD** (Nat'l Arboretum/Reagan Nat'l). The [Pest Predictive Calendar](#) tells us when susceptible stages of pest insects are active based on their DD. Therefore, this week you should be monitoring for the following pests. The estimated start degree days of the targeted life stage are in parentheses.

Fern scale – egg hatch / crawler (2nd gen) **(2813 DD)**

White prunicola scale – egg hatch / crawler (3rd gen) **(3238 DD)**

Banded ash clearwing borer – adult emergence **(3357 DD)**

Tuliptree scale – egg hatch / crawler **(3472 DD)**

Spotted lanternfly – egg laying **(Sept.)**

See the [Pest Predictive Calendar](#) for more information on DD and plant phenological indicators (PPI) to help you better monitor and manage these pests.

Degree Days (as of August 26, 2026)

Annapolis Naval Academy (KNAK)	3236
Baltimore, MD (KBWI)	3206
Belcamp (FS836)	3107
Clarksville (001MD)	2652
College Park (KCGS)	3309
Dulles Airport (KIAD)	3224
Ft. Belvoir, VA (KDA)	3356
Frederick (KFDK)	2931
Gaithersburg (KGAI)	3084
Greater Cumberland Reg (KCBE)	2866
Martinsburg, WV (KMRB)	2964
Millersville (MD026)	3209
Natl Arboretum/Reagan Natl (KDCA)	3607
Perry Hall (C0608)	3000
Salisbury/Ocean City (KSBY)	3206
St. Mary's City (Patuxent NRB KNHK)	3388
Westminster (KDMW)	3257

Important Note: We are using the [Online Phenology and Degree-Day Models](#) site. Use the following information to calculate GDD for your site: Select your location from the map Model Category: All models Select Degree-day calculator Thresholds in: Fahrenheit °F Lower: 50 Upper: 95 Calculation type: simple average/growing dds Start: Jan 1

Conferences

2026 Urban Tree Summit

September 23, 2026

Location: Silver Spring Civic Center, Silver Spring, MD

2026 Cut Flower Program

September 29, 2026

Location: CMREC, Ellicott City, MD (lectures), and Tanglewood Flower Farm, Ashton, MD (tour)

UME IPM Pest Walk at Salisbury University

October 14, 2026 (11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.)

Location: Salisbury University's Glenda Chatha Clarke Arboretum, Salisbury, MD

FALCAN Truck & Trailer Safety Seminar

October 14, 2026

Location: Urbana Fire Hall, Urbana, MD

Registration opens in July.

2027 Advanced Landscape IPM PHC Short Course

This is a recertification short course for arborists, landscapers, IPM consultants, horticulturalists, professional gardeners, and others responsible for urban plant management. The course lectures will be held over four days at the University of Maryland, College Park, MD. In addition, there will be a hands-on lab following lecture (available to a limited number of course attendees). Coordinators: Drs. Paula Shrewsbury and Mike Raupp, Dept. of Entomology, University of Maryland

Lecture dates: Monday, January 4 - Thursday, January 7, 2027 from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm

Lab dates: Monday, January 4 - Thursday, January 7, 2027 from 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm (space limited)

Course information: <https://landscapeipmphc.weebly.com/>

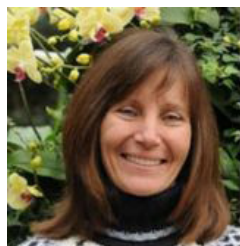
Registration: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2027-advanced-landscape-ipm-phc-short-course-tickets-1992372702386?aff=oddtcreator>

Questions contact: Amy Yaich, 301-405-3911, umdentomology@umd.edu

Commercial Ornamental IPM Information

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