UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND EXTENSION

Advanced IPM Conference for the Commercial Horticulture Industry in Maryland

December 16, 2026

Central Maryland Research and Education Center
4240 Folly Quarter Road, Ellicott City, MD 21042

8:00 – 8:30 Check-in (space is limited, pre-registration is required)

8:30 – 9:20 From the Prairie to the Putting Green: Building biodiversity benefits into turf management

Decades of research on wild grasslands has demonstrated that increasing plant biodiversity increases resistance to invasion from noxious weeds and helps maintain desirable landscape functions in the face of environmental stress. How can these benefits of biodiversity discovered in wild ecosystems be realized in turfgrass systems? Join this session to find out more.

Speaker: Dr. Dan Buonaiuto, Assistant Professor, Department of Plant Science and Landscape Architecture, University of Maryland

9:20 – 10:10 Particularly Pesky Pests Present in Maryland

Box tree moths (BTM) are an invasive pest whose larvae severely defoliate boxwoods, posing a significant risk to the popular ornamentals. UME continues to monitor the distribution and phenology of BTM to better understand their biology and inform management strategies. Crapemyrtle bark scale remains an invasive and significant pest of crape myrtle street trees. Phenology and predator interaction studies continued this last year; we have been able to show that there are at least three generations per year and that there is significant natural enemy pressure on this pest. Japanese maple scale remains a significant pest of many host plants in Maryland. Inconspicuous and cosmopolitan, it can creep up in a landscape or nursery and cause damage before detection. Effective scouting and early detection will help you get ahead of this pest before you have an outbreak.

Speakers: Sheena O'Donnell, Ag Technician, and Holly Greenberg, 2026 Summer Intern, University of Maryland Extension

10:10 – 10:20 BREAK

10:20 – 11:10 Bullying Spotted Lanternfly by Taking its Lunch: Updates on biological control of tree-of-heaven

Tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*; ToH) is a devilish invasive species and the preferred host of spotted lanternfly (*Lycorma delicatula*). Several biological controls have been proposed for ToH and a few - the *Ailanthus* trunk weevil (*Eucryptorynchus brandti*), Eriophyid mites, and the fungus *Verticillium nonalfalfae* - are of heightened interest. This talk will discuss global research on these agents, other candidate biological controls, and the importance of ToH suppression to spotted lanternfly IPM.

Speaker: Harrison Miles, PhD Student and Researcher, Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation, Virginia Tech

11:10 – 12:00 Landscape Plant Diseases: Prepare and prevent

We will discuss common diseases of landscape plants, signs and symptoms, and the factors that influence disease development. We will also discuss how to prepare your "toolbox" to prevent and manage diseases.

Speaker: Dr. Ana Cristina Fulladolsa, Director, Plant Diagnostic Laboratory, University of Maryland

12:00 – 1:00 LUNCH

1:00 – 1:50 Amendment Mentality: Data to decision making and how to feed your landscape soils

This talk will discuss the science of making soil-amendment decisions for increasing soil fertility, emphasizing the use of data from soil analyses. The talk will cover how best to choose products whether organic or non-organic based on the soil tests and how to apply the amendments to properly feed your landscapes and turf.

Speakers: Dr. Andrew Ristvey, Extension Specialist in Horticulture and Nutrient Management, and Chuck Schuster, Senior Agent Emeritus, University of Maryland Extension

2:00 – 2:50 Chemical Ecology Tools: Using insect pheromones against them

Insects and plants release chemicals for communication. By tapping into this, we can improve our management strategies and reduce pesticide inputs. In this talk, we will discuss chemical ecology tools for pest monitoring, aggregating, and disruption of damaging behaviors.

Speaker: Dr. Laura Nixon, Extension Specialist in Entomology and IPM, University of Maryland Extension

3:00 – 3:50 Critical New and Old Diseases of Landscape Plants in Maryland

This talk will cover new invasive disease updates, such as Beech Leaf Disease and Laurel wilt, and critical to management methods as well as addressing management of older diseases, such as boxwood blight, rose rosette, powdery mildew diagnostic models with drone technology, wood decay, and root issues, that continue to cause issues in the landscape.

Speaker: Dr. David Clement, Plant Pathologist, University of Maryland Extension

4:00 – 4:20 MDA Pesticide Update

Speaker: Zachary Safford, MDA

4:20 Sign-up sheets

Pesticide Recertification and CEUs:

Maryland Pesticide Recertification: Categories 2 - Forest, 3A - Ornamentals Exterior, 3C - Turf, 6 - Right-of-Way and Weed, 10 - Demonstration and Research, PVT, CORE
Maryland Nutrient Management CEUs: 2 CEUs for PFAs, vouchers and CFOs

Submitted to the following for recertification approval or CEUs: Virginia and D.C. (pesticide), ISA and MD LTE (CEUs).

University programs, activities, and facilities are available to all without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, age, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, religion, protected veteran status, genetic information, personal appearance, or any other legally protected class. If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in any event or activity, please contact Suzanne Klick at sklick@umd.edu on or before December 2, 2026.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Space is limited; first come, first served. Pre-registration is required.

Cost: $90.00 per person. Includes lunch if registered by December 7, 2026.

No refunds after December 7, 2026. Eventbrite fees are not refundable.

To register with a credit card go to the IPM Conferences page for the Eventbrite link.

If you have questions, contact Suzanne Klick at sklick@umd.edu or Laura Nixon at 301-226-7620 or Lnixon1@umd.edu.

PAYING BY CHECK? Use This Form

Please make checks payable to: "University of Maryland"
Send to: 2026 Advanced IPM Program, 4240 Folly Quarter, Ellicott City, MD 21042

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