Welcome to our new newsletter for current issues in the landscape and garden. This newsletter is aimed at the home horticulture/master gardener audience. We will try to get it out twice monthly during the growing season. Mary Kay Malinoski and Dave Clement are coordinating it and please send any contributions to us. Jon Traunfeld will be contributing fruit and vegetable tips.

Current Observations in the Landscape:

Insects and Other Pests by Mary Kay Malinoski, Extension Specialist, Home and Garden Information Center (unless otherwise noted).

Japanese Beetles are back in a big way! We haven’t had much of a problem with Japanese beetles in the last few years, but they are out in droves now! The Japanese beetle is a major pest of lawns and ornamental plants in Maryland. Adult beetles feed on more than 275 species of plants, but especially like plants in the rose family. Grubs (larvae) feed on the roots of turfgrasses such as Kentucky bluegrass, fine fescues, ryegrasses, or bentgrasses. Although several species of birds feed on adult beetles, their efforts are insufficient to prevent injury to ornamental plants, and even the best insecticides will only provide temporary relief when adult populations are heavy. Unfortunately, most pesticides remain toxic only for a few days and any new plant growth will not be protected. Due to the continuous migration of beetles, 2 or 3 spray applications may be needed to prevent serious injury to plants like roses and grapes. Fortunately, many foliage plants will tolerate moderate defoliation.

Beetle Control Options:

- Hand pick beetles and drop them into soapy water.
- Plant non-favored host plants.
- Currently registered insecticides. Check with local garden centers for available insecticides.
- The best way to reduce adult populations for next year is by controlling beetles in the grub stage. Look for products containing acelepryn which is very safe.
Emerald Ash Borer is still out flying!! Keep an eye out for them around ash trees and report any sightings to us at 1-800-342-2507 or the Maryland Department of Agriculture at 410-841-5920.

Emerald Ash Borer adult feeding on ash leaf

Fresh D-shaped exit hole 1/8” across

Small Beaked Wonder – Wheel Bugs the Ultimate Assassins Steve Allgeier,
Extension Educator, Carroll County.

It appears to have been a good year for this beneficial insect –

Arilus cristatus

Plenty of live samples and pictures of the wheel bug nymphs have come into the University of Maryland, Carroll County Extension office this past month. These small critters have a spider like appearance and tend to alert or scare many people because of the red antenna tips and red abdomens. Not completely harmless, this beneficial insect can “poke” people with its long beak. According to University of Florida, “its bite usually is more severe than a bee sting, and both nymphs and adults should be avoided or handled with caution.”

However: “The wheel bug belongs to a family of insects commonly referred to as assassin bugs. Assassin bugs are some of the most important beneficial insects in our gardens. They feed on a wide variety of pests including caterpillars, plant hoppers, sawfly larvae, aphids, and beetles. In autumn, the well-fed female wheel bug lays 10-40 barrel-shaped eggs in a cluster usually on the bark of a plant.”

7/10/2013
From Bug of the Week, Michael J. Raupp, Professor, Department of Entomology, University of Maryland

Wheel Bug adult  Assassin bug looking for prey

For more information about Wheel Bugs
http://entnemdept.ufl.edu/creatures/trees/wheel_bug.htm - the University of Florida
http://www2.ca.uky.edu/entomology/entfacts/ef426.asp - University of Kentucky Entomology
Or other insects see (http://www.bugoftheweek.umd.edu/)

Something is eating the mile-a-minute vine (aka tear-thumb)! It’s a tiny weevil that was released to control it. They were initially released by the Maryland Department of Agriculture in 2007. The weevil is Mile-a-minute weed (MAM) weevil (Rhinoncominus latipes). For detailed information check out the University of Delaware web site: http://ag.udel.edu/enwc/research/biocontrol/mileaminute.htm.
There are plenty of beneficial spiders and insects out in the landscape now. Here are just a few and don’t harm them!

Here’s some cool stuff in the landscape!

Spider in turf

Here’s looking at you!

Hummingbird moth on Monarda

Really cool young grasshopper!
Unusual and very cute warty leaf beetle larvae on blackberry make cases of their frass for protection.

Here is a beetle larva with the case removed.

Green June beetles are flying all over the place! They feed on thin-skinned fruit and plant sap.
Brown patch is very active in turf in Maryland! Brown patch, or Rhizoctonia sheath and leaf blight, is a common summertime disease of cool-season turfgrasses in Maryland, usually caused by the fungus *Rhizoctonia solani*. Another species, *R. zeae*, is more common on perennial rye grasses on golf courses. Even though zoysiagrass is susceptible it's not commonly infected in Maryland. The general recommendation for homeowners is to tolerate a certain amount of brown patch damage to their lawns in the summer because with proper maintenance most of the recommended turfgrass cultivars will exhibit some recovery during the fall. Under severe conditions overseeding will be needed to thicken the affected turf.

Brown patch leaf symptoms

Brown patch mycelia

Wet weather has encouraged mushrooms and other fungi in lawns.

Mushrooms in turf

Slime mold on turf
Rust is active on many landscape plants. Here are a few examples:

![Rust on goldenrod](Image)

**Rust on goldenrod**

![Rust on crabapple](Image)

**Rust on crabapple**

**Southern blight is active in the landscape now!** Southern blight is caused by the fungus *Sclerotium rolfsii*. This fungus can attack probably all herbaceous perennials. It is active only during hot weather, so plants can grow well in infested soil during most of the growing season, and only become damaged during the hottest part of the summer. The first symptoms seen are wilting and collapse of individual stems or entire plants. Close inspection of the stem at the soil line reveals white mycelium (strands of fungus growing on the stem and mulch or soil surface), and small (1/8 to 1/16 inch), tan spherical sclerotia, that resemble mustard seeds (They are white when first formed, and gradually over several days turn brown). Roots of infected plants are unaffected. Cortical decay of the stem at the soil line is common during hot, humid weather. Southern blight is commonly found on *Lysimachia*, *Ajuga*, sage and ground cover thymes. It is capable of blighting most herbaceous perennials, vegetables, annuals, herbs and even turf and woody plants.

![Southern blight on Lysmachia. Arrow indicates the tan spherical sclerotia](Image)

**Southern blight on Lysmachia. Arrow indicates the tan spherical sclerotia**

![Southern blight symptoms on sage](Image)

**Southern blight symptoms on sage**
Rose Rosette is turning up on landscape roses.

**Symptoms on leaves**

**Symptoms on flowers and new growth**

*Rose rosette* is caused by a virus, and infects multiflora as well as ornamental roses. The initial symptoms are reddening of the stems and stunted growth. Sometimes there is a proliferation or clustering of stems with excessive soft pliable thorns. The flowers may also abort. Infected roses may die within two years. Early detection is critical to prevent further disease spread within a planting. Infected roses should be uprooted and removed promptly. Remaining roses should be closely monitored for symptoms.

Please send all submissions, including photos to Mary Kay Malinoski, mkmal@umd.edu or to David L. Clement, clement@umd.edu, by Tuesday of each week so that we can get the newsletter out by Thursday. Thanks and please contribute!