Welcome to our new newsletter for current issues in the landscape and garden. This newsletter is aimed at the home horticulture/master gardener audience. Mary Kay Malinoski and Dave Clement are coordinating it and please send any contributions to us.

Insects and Other Pests by Mary Kay Malinoski, Extension Specialist, Home and Garden Information Center

Contrary to popular belief, woolly bear caterpillars do not forecast the winter weather by the width of their stripe.

A reminder to seal up your house for brown marmorated stink bug and the kudzu bugs which are spreading in Maryland. Many of the bugs have already moved into sheltered areas and in that case, they can be removed with a vacuum. Check in your sheds, attic, and believe it or not under the spare tire compartment in your vehicle!

Brown marmorated stink bugs in the spare tire compartment of a car.

Stink bugs inside the door of a fireplace insert
Detailed information on the kudzu bug can be found at mdkudzubug.org. Keep an eye on the kudzu and report any sightings at the web site just mentioned.

This bug is coming to a neighborhood near you soon!

Kudzu bugs are attracted to white surfaces and mass on them in the fall

**Grubs, grubs everywhere!** Grubs are the larvae (young) of a number of beetles including Japanese beetles, Oriental beetles, masked chafers, etc.

This is a close-up of a masked chafer

Grub in turf and typical damage
Scout for grubs in the lawn by using a garden trowel to lift or dig dead areas in the lawn. In heavy infestations, the turf can be pulled up easily, like a carpet. Keep an eye out for bird activity as their digging can indicate a grub problem.

It is too late to treat for grubs, wait until late May or June and follow the directions on the product that you are using.

What are those annoying little pellets falling all over my deck and sidewalk? If you have a large oak tree, they are probably galls. Galls are abnormal swellings of plant tissue, usually on leaves and twigs. Insects, mites, bacteria, fungi, or nematodes may cause them. Chemicals produced by the egg laying and feeding activities cause most insect and mite galls. The chemicals cause the affected plant cells to swell. Aphids, midges, wasps, psyllids, beetles and eriophyid mites can cause galls. Galls may disfigure twigs and foliage, but they do not seriously affect the health of trees and shrubs.

Here are just a few galls that we found on some various oaks.
Lace bugs are still feeding on sycamore. Lace bugs are small plant-feeding bugs. Most species are about 3/16 inch long when mature. Lace bugs are named for their lace-like wings. The immatures or nymphs, lack wings and are usually spiny.

Lace bug damage appears on the upper surface of the leaf as fine yellow spots or stipples. The lace bugs feed on the lower surface of the leaves. Notice the black fecal spots and the dark cast skins of the nymphs.
It’s getting late in the season, but you may still see spiders at work or evidence of their work.

Here are egg cases from an orb weaver in an abandoned web

Here is a “string” of victims of a spider dangling in a web

It’s just about the end of the season for mantids. They are laying their egg cases on various plants and other places to spend the winter. The young mantids will hatch next spring.

Carolina mantid egg case

Chinese mantid egg case
Diseases and Weeds by David Clement, Extension Specialist, Home and Garden Information Center.

Bacterial leaf scorch on oak is still visible on many red and pin oaks that still have their leaves. For an interesting video on the problem check out Dave Clement talking about it at this link: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UvtDpMq2kLg&feature=player_embedded

Bacterial leaf scorch is a disease of shade trees. We see it mostly on pin and red oaks. The pathogen is a bacterium that grows inside the plant’s vascular tissue.

That white stuff is still on my plants and trees. It’s still powdery mildew! Powdery mildew is the common name for the disease and symptoms caused by a closely related group of fungi. It is too late in the season to worry about managing the disease.
Lawn fertilizer reminder! The last day to fertilize home lawns is November 15th!

Vegetable tip by Jon Traunfeld, Extension Specialist, Home and Garden Information Center.

I just got some garlic in the mail, now what do I do with it? Check out this video with Jon Traunfeld on how to plant garlic for a great crop next summer!

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WuqKQFfBe7s&feature=player_embedded
Just for fun! Here is the latest newsletter quiz. If we have more than one right answer, we will have a drawing to determine the prize winner.

What causes the spots on lambs ear

Here is a hint!

Send your possible answers to mkmal@umd.edu.