

Commercial Horticulture

Special Alert

February 29, 2024

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**IPMnet**  
**Integrated Pest Management for Commercial Horticulture**  
[extension.umd.edu/ipm](http://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 [sgill@umd.edu](mailto:sgill@umd.edu)

**Coordinator Weekly IPM Report:**

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**Regular Contributors:**

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Disease Information: Karen Rane (Plant Pathologist), David Clement (Extension Specialist) and Fereshteh Shahoveisi (Turf Pathologist)

Weed of the Week: Chuck Schuster (Retired Extension Educator), Kelly Nichols, Nathan Glenn, and Mark Townsend (UME Extension Educators)

Cultural Information: Ginny Rosenkranz (Extension Educator, Wicomico/Worcester/Somerset Counties)

Fertility Management: Andrew Ristvey (Extension Specialist, Wye Research & Education Center)

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**Peach Leaf Curl: Control is Needed When the Leaves Have All Fallen**

By: Kari Peter, Penn State University

**Article in *Fruit Times*, Fall 2023:**

Some areas experienced a higher incidence of peach leaf curl this year since the fungus had plenty of time to cause disease on the leaves. When we have warm springs, the leaves unfurl fast, and the fungus does not have time to do much damage; it is the opposite during a cold spring. You can treat trees in the fall or spring, or both. You must wait until all the leaves have fallen off peach trees before treating them to control for peach curl. Peach leaf curl spores are exposed when the leaves are no longer on the trees. This is your only time to manage the disease. If any remaining leaves are present, these leaves will continue to protect the spores in the buds. If you wait until late dormancy to apply the fungicide, monitor temperatures closely and be mindful of warm spikes (80°F) in temperature during February and March. This warmth has been enough to encourage bud swell in early varieties, such that late winter fungicide applications were ineffective in successfully controlling peach leaf curl. The following fungicides can be used: copper, ziram, lime sulfur, or chlorothalonil.

**February 2024 Email Comments from Kari Peter:**

There is no set temperature that's appropriate – you want to be sure it doesn't get too warm so the buds swell. Once the buds swell, it's too late for control

because the spores hang out in the buds. Honestly, they should not be waiting so late in winter considering the warm ups we have had and continue to have yearly in January and February– this should be done very late fall when there is complete defoliation. Complete defoliation – this is what is most important; not the temperature you are applying the fungicide. So, yes, they need to be getting out there ASAP to control for leaf curl, if it's not too late already.

Any fixed copper will do – the higher the metallic copper content the better. Cueva is not recommended because it has such a low copper content. They could also apply ziram or Bravo (chlorothalonil), too, instead of copper.

### **Boxwood Leafminer Stage**

Mallory Filar, Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks, sent photos of the current stage of boxwood leafminer in Elkridge. If you see discolored, puffy areas on the underside of leaves, open the leaf to confirm that there are boxwood leafminer larvae inside. They are yellow to slightly orange. As we move through March into early April, they will become orange and pupate within the leaf. No control is necessary at this time.



**Puffy, discolored areas on the undersides of boxwood leaves are a good indication of boxwood leafminer. Cut into the leaves to look for the larvae at this time of year.**

**Photos: Mallory Filar, Howard County Department of Recreation and Parks**

### **North Central IPM Center IPM Survey**

Katie Hartmann, Director of Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access (DEIA) for the North Central IPM Center at Iowa State University, is conducting a national needs assessment of IPM professionals to understand their efforts regarding DEIA topics. The purpose of this study is to understand the IPM programs being facilitated in the country and IPM professionals' level of comfort and/or needs in regards to incorporating DEIA into their work.

Here is the link to the survey. Link to survey: [https://iastate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_5pCwVUIwDcACUxE](https://iastate.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5pCwVUIwDcACUxE)

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me directly at kh4@iastate.edu. Thank you for your assistance.

## Drone Programs

### Two-day Winter Drone Training

On February 20 and 21, we conducted a two-day drone program with a focus on mapping. Four participants listened to lectures and had hands-on instruction on flying drones and setting up mapping flights.

### Summer School ...with Drones

This spring, we will send out the announcement with dates and registration information on our summer drone program. It is an introductory course that will be 4 or 5 days of lectures and hands-on training.



**Participants and Instructors at the February 20 and 21, 2024 Drone Training Program at the Central Maryland Research and Education Center.**

Photos: UMD Extension

## Birds as Part of an IPM Approach in Nurseries

By: Stanton Gill

We are moving into March and this is the time of year that purple martins begin to migrate back to Maryland from the south. This is the time of year you can step up your IPM efforts and attract these insect predators. Several years ago, we put up a purple martin house on our farm using the plastic gourd houses on a pole, in one of the open fields, and they now have become yearly visitors consuming a large number of insects. This winter we constructed a new aluminum purple martin house which we put up in early February. This one has two levels and will house up to 12 nesting pairs. We will leave the entrances plugged until mid-April.

When purple martins migrate back north it is the mature pairs that show up first, usually mid to late March and they go back to the nesting sites they used in previous years. The yearlings arrive about 4 - 6 weeks later and are looking for new nesting sites. They are the "newbies" you want to attract to your nursery. Just like teenagers, they arise late and show up well after the older martin returns. The aerial antics of purple martins is a real treat to watch as they consume large numbers of aerial insects moving into your nursery. It has been very effective at our farm and I would highly suggest putting up a house to attract the yearlings in March and early April. The University of Maryland has an excellent [fact sheet on attracting purple martins](#).

One thing, purple martins do not feed on mosquitoes. If you are trying to reduce mosquito populations, then bats are your best bet. You are in luck. The University of Maryland has another excellent fact sheet entitled "[Got Bugs? Get Bats](#)". It details how to build and place a bat house in your nursery or at your customers' residences.

## Poorly Pruned Crape Myrtles or Great Job? By: Stanton Gill, UME

Jay Nixon sent pictures from Florida showing how crape myrtles are pruned "Florida style". Dave Clement and I were presenting at an Eastern Shore conference two weeks ago and saw a similar pruning method of crape myrtles in the Salisbury area. Given that crape myrtles do flower on new growth maybe this pruning technique is ok. It looks rather ridiculous to us but this might be a good way to really stimulate this plant. I need horticulturist feedback on this one.



"Florida-style" pruning of crape myrtles  
Photos: Jay Nixon

### From Andrew Ristvey, UME:

I think it's a management contract. Once you start doing it, you need to keep doing it because the growth points around the wound are weak. It's guaranteed income for the tree company. We call this "crepe murder". Ginny and I are opposed to this form of heading cut, called "dead-head" pruning, especially with crepe myrtle and others. It's no different than pollarding, and for other trees, it's an old-timey practice that is discouraged in our enlightened and modern society.

### Fom Ginny Rosenkranz:

I have to agree with Andrew, that pruning 'Florida style' is not good horticulture practice. I have seen it more often now that a lot of the landscape companies are hiring folks from the south where they practice deadheading on a regular basis. That doesn't make it right, and I often find myself talking to both landscape contractors and homeowners to pick the right plant for the right space. Many do not know that crape myrtles come in different sizes, mostly they only care about the color.

Yes, crape myrtles bloom on new growth, but they always put out new growth each year and the Don Egolf series bloom 3 times each summer while the Carl Whitcomb crape myrtles bloom steadily from late spring through early fall.

## Daikon Radish Just Will Not Die This Winter

By: Stanton Gill

Thanks to all of you who responded to the daikon lack of death situation across Maryland. Based on the many emails I received, it appears daikon radish continues to flourish into the end of February in 2024. Something about this winter, even though we had 3 incidences of single digit temperatures, did not trigger the death of daikon radish this winter.

I contacted Ray Weil, the "godfather of daikon radish plantings" for his comments on this lack of death of daikon in 2024. Ray is in Tanzania but followed up with two emails on the situation.

"I'm sweating in tropical Tanzania right now and it's hard to imagine single digit temperatures and radishes winter killing.

Good to hear you got a good stand of radishes on your farm. I wouldn't worry too much about the radishes not winter killing. Generally, over the last two decades I'd say that there was one year in three when radish cover crops planted by mid-September didn't winter kill, depending on what part of Maryland they were in. Although with planted at the right time it's extremely competitive and vigorous in fall, the **radish is pretty wimpy in spring**. It will produce a flower stalk and pretty much die out. It may produce some variable seeds, which would not be such a bad thing. The radish is very easy to control with 2,4-d, glyphosate, another common broadleaf herbicides, or even by mowing. As they are not very competitive, they could even be ignored, depending on how dense the stand is."

### Second follow up email from Ray Weil:

"I should add that a couple of years ago on the southern E Shore the radishes survived the winter in an organic field experiment to be planted to corn. We "planted green" right through the big roots and got a good corn stand. We then roller-crimped that cover crop which also included rye and clover. We had weed problems later, but not from the cover crop."



Tops of daikon radish are still green in Westminster in late February.

Photo: Stanton Gill, UME



Tops of daikon radish are still green in Greenbelt.

Photo: Nikki Privé

## LED Lights and Plants

By: Stanton Gill

Just messing around this winter, we tried planting purple and white potatoes in large 5-gallon buckets and put LED lights over them. We were inspired by Matt Damon in the movie "The Martian" where he was supposedly growing potatoes on Mars. It does work. Our potatoes are close to the flowering stage in late February and the tubers have formed through the 5-gallon container. So, Mars, here we come. Seriously, this may not be cost effective, but it might be a fun project for you to do with your kids in the dead of next winter.

Another interesting winter crop we do is grows kumquats in a 20-gallon container. We had them flower and set fruit back in late September. We just finished ripening the crop under LED lights with the final harvest on February 24. We harvested 4 times, 2 weeks apart, for 4 separate harvests (January through February) that yielded 3 - 4 pints at each harvest. If you kept the kumquat trees in a sunny, south facing window you could do this without using LED lights. There are interesting things to do with edible plants over the winter.

## White Pine Weevil

Bob Trumbule, Robert Trumbule Horticultural and Entomological Consulting, reported that white pine weevils were found in Tedder traps in Baltimore/Carroll County as of February 27 in the Upperco area. The DD reading for Hampstead which is a little north of Upperco is 15 degree days. There were 22 degree days as of February 27 at BWI.

White pine weevils overwinter as adults. To prevent damage, treat terminal growth when the adult activity is noted on conifers or in traps. Avaunt insecticide is labelled for weevil control in nurseries.



**White pine weevils are being caught in Tedder traps in Upperco this week.**

**Photo: Bruce Davidson**

## 2024 Weekly Landscape and Nursery IPM Reports

We will start sending out the regular IPM reports on **March 22**. As usual, if we have any special pest or conference announcements, we will send out an email before then.

### Conferences

#### **March 26 - 29, 2024**

IPM Scouts' Training

Location: Central Maryland Research and Education Center, Ellicott City, MD

#### **April 19-20, 2024**

Youth Arboriculture Career Expo

Location: Gallaudet University

For more info: 202-826-6314

#### **May 22, 2024**

MAA Pest Walk

Location: CMREC, Ellicott City, MD

#### **June 4, 2024**

MNLGA Program: Focus on Garden Centers

Location: Ladew Gardens, Monkton, MD

#### **June 5 and 6, 2024 (previously scheduled for February/March 2024)**

Biological Control Conference for Greenhouses, Nurseries, and Landscapes

Location: Central Maryland Research and Education Center, Ellicott City, MD

#### **June 20, 2024**

UMD Extension and MNLGA Technology Field Day for Nurseries

Location: Ruppert Nurseries, Laytonsville, MD

#### **September 17 and 18, 2024 (rescheduled from March)**

Cut Flower Program

Location: Central Maryland Research and Education Center, Ellicott City, MD and several tour locations in Howard County.

#### **October 9, 2024**

MNLGA Retail Day

Location: Homestead Gardens, Davidsonville, MD

Go to the [IPMnet Conference Page](#) for links and details on these programs.

## Commercial Ornamental IPM Information

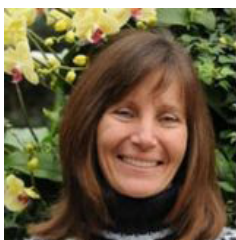
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