BUCKEYE YARD AND GARDEN LINE 2013-19
08/08/13

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Buckeye Yard and Garden Line (BYGL) enhanced with photos and links is available online at: [http://bygl.osu.edu]. Become a fan of the BYGL on Facebook at [http://www.facebook.com/OSUBYGL] or follow the BYGL on Twitter at [http://www.twitter.com/OSUBYGL].

This is the 19th 2013 edition of the Buckeye Yard and Garden Line (BYGL). BYGL is developed from a Tuesday morning conference call of Extension Educators, Specialists, and other contributors in Ohio.

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1. PLANTS OF THE WEEK.

*ANNUAL - PETUNIA (*Petunia* X spp.). Today's petunias are so much more vigorous and easy to maintain than those sold many years ago. They make outstanding massed displays in the landscape that can be seen from a good distance. BYGLers usually call these "55 MPH" plants because you can see them from the highway! The downside to our petunias today is that there are so many cultivars to choose from it sometimes makes it difficult for the gardener to know which is best for what use. Some spread about 2 - 3' and are good for average flower beds; some have a rounded, mounded growth habit and are good for containers and smaller beds; while others really spread profusely and need lots of space. Therefore, make sure you know the growth habit before selecting a variety of petunia for your gardening needs.

Many of the hybrid petunias available today are vigorous growers and do not require deadheading (removal of the dead flowers). Flowering begins early in the season and lasts until a hard frost. If they become slightly leggy or overgrown, rejuvenate them in the middle of the summer by cutting back about
one-half way. Petunias are extremely easy to grow as long as the soil is well-drained. They prefer full sun but will tolerate shade (they won't bloom as heavily in the shade). Rabbits like petunias when they are young so you may have to provide a little fencing early in the season. On the other hand, deer don't like them!

*PERENNIAL - 'KARL FOERSTER' FEATHER REED GRASS (Calamagrostis X acutiflora 'Karl Foerster'). It's no wonder that this plant is one of the best-selling ornamental grasses with its tall, upright stature that remains majestic all growing season and long into the winter. Its structure makes an excellent architectural statement in the landscape when massed. 'Karl Foerster' grows around 3 - 5' tall and approximately 1.5 - 2' wide with a very upright, cylindrical growth habit. This plant tolerates heavy clay soils; however, it doesn't like the soil to dry out completely.

'Karl Foerster' begins to bloom in early June in central Ohio and lasts all season with blooms turning from a purplish-green, to an amber gold, to eventually straw-colored in the fall. The blooms rise about 1 - 2' above the foliage and are best in full sun but will tolerate light shade. The foliage is a nice green color all season and turns tan in the winter. Other cultivars of feather reed grass include 'Overdam' (2.5 - 3' tall with pinkish-green blooms and green and white variegated foliage) and 'Stricta' (4 - 6' tall).

*WOODY - BUTTERNUT (Juglans cinerea). Butternut also known as white walnut, is a relative of black walnut (Juglans nigra). It is less frequently encountered than its cousin. Butternut is a native of the midwestern and northeastern US and is found throughout Ohio, but in lower numbers in the western half of the state. Some mature specimens grow to 60' in height and may have a 50' wide canopy. Butternut has a similar appearance to black walnut, but it is distinguished from black walnut by its elongated nuts, hairy sticky stems, leaves and nut hulls, and pinnately compound leaves (9 - 19 leaflets) that terminate in a single leaflet. Butternut, like black walnut, produces the root exuded chemical known as juglone. Unlike black walnut with light creamy colored sapwood and dark coffee-brown colored heartwood, butternut's wood has a uniform pinkish colored wood throughout. The meat in the nuts of butternut has a sweet taste and is very rich in oil.

Butternut is very susceptible to a bark canker that causes twigs, branchlets, large limbs, and ultimately the entire tree to die. It is also susceptible to late summer drought and will drop its leaves prematurely due to a lack of water.

Butternut prefers deep, moist, rich, well-drained soils, which are common in the bottomlands of rivers and creeks. It also performs reasonably well in relatively dry, rocky soils, especially those with limestone outcrops in higher pH soils. Butternut grows in full sun to partial sun, and is found in zones 3 - 7.

*VEGETABLE - GARLIC (Allium sativum). Garlic is a member of the onion family that is usually planted in the fall. After getting a head start over the winter and putting on most of its growth in the spring, the plant begins to send up flower heads in early summer. Some gardeners remove these heads to encourage larger cloves. Shortly after flowering the entire plant will begin to dry, signaling that bulb development is nearing completion.

As the tops dry up and turn brown, the heads can be carefully dug. The entire plant with bulb attached should be cured by leaving them to dry in a sheltered area for a day or two, either in the garden or in flats or drying racks. If rain threatens, move the garlic under cover. Do not pull the stems from the center of the garlic head as that will shorten the storage life. Soft neck varieties can be braided and hung in a cool dry area for long-term storage. Stiff neck varieties will not braid but can be bundled and tied with twine. The leaves and stems of either variety can be cut just above the head and the heads stored in trays or net bags. Best storage is achieved at low humidity and temperatures around 40F; this discourages sprouting and mold growth.
Save a few heads for replanting this fall. Plants are started from individual cloves separated from the head. There are many varieties of garlic available, from red to white and mild to spicy. For planting, select heads that are firm and show no sign of deterioration. Plant about 4" deep in October. The goal is to allow the garlic to produce a root system prior to winter. Leaves may also emerge before the ground freezes - this will not harm the garlic, but light mulch can be used to prevent heaving or drying.

*WEED - PROSTRATE SPURGE (*Euphorbia humistrata*). Prostrate spurge is a mat-forming summer annual found in landscape beds, container nurseries, and along sidewalks and driveways. As its name indicates it is prostrate, hugging the ground while forming large, almost perfectly round, mats. Individual leaves are oval, less than 1/4" in length, about half as wide and may have an oval purple spot along the midrib. Being in the Euphorbia family, this plant has milky sap.

Flowers are held close to the stem in the upper leaf axils. As with all Euphorbia the flower consists of several male and one female flower forming a small cluster. Flowers are present throughout the summer. Most spurge in the landscape are currently covered with seed that will produce next year's crop of this summer annual weed.

SPOTTED SPURGE (*Euphorbia maculata*) is almost indistinguishable from PROSTRATE SPURGE; several resources list them as synonyms of the same plant. Some of the differences include spotted spurge having more color to the leaves, and not rooting at the lower nodes. Another closely related spurge is the NODDING SPURGE (*Euphorbia nutans*). This spurge has somewhat larger leaves and an upright, almost erect, habit.

2. HORT SHORTS.

A. HOW CAN I TELL IF MY APPLES ARE RIPE? Gary Gao reported that a few apple cultivars were getting very close to be ripe. This is a good time for gardeners to learn how to tell if an apple is full ripe. Apples are known to reach maturity at different times, depending on variety and climate.

Many fruits including apple are ripening earlier this year than the last a few years. Gardeners can observe apples as they grow and inspect the fruit for certain changes that indicate maturity. The "ground" or base skin color of the apple changes from green to yellow as the fruit matures. Flesh color also loses its greenish tint and turns yellow or white.

Some apple cultivars, such as Golden Delicious, Gala, Honey Crisp, are very tasty when they are allowed to ripen on the tree. Other cultivars, such as Red Delicious, may benefit from a couple weeks of cold storage. Starch in those apples is converted to sugar, thus making them taste sweet. With most apple cultivars, a taste test is as good as any instrument. When you are convinced that the apples look mature, take a bite! A mature fruit will be crisp, juicy, and sweet with a little tartness. A pleasing taste is the final indicator of fruit maturity. For more information on home fruit growing, gardeners are encouraged to purchase a copy of the OSU Extension Bulletin 940, "Midwest Home Fruit Production Guide." This bulletin is available for sale from OSU Extension offices and OSU Extension's eStore at [http://estore.osu-extension.org/index.cfm](http://estore.osu-extension.org/index.cfm)

B. LOVE YOUR LICHEN. Danae Wolfe has received calls about suspicious growths on neighborhood trees. Upon investigation, the suspicious growths were identified as lichens.
Lichens are a product of symbiosis between fungus and green or blue-green algae. Observing lichens on your trees is no cause for panic. Because lichens need sunlight for growth, they will take advantage of canopy openings created by dying tree limbs, however, they will not cause plant death.

Although each species of lichen has its own growth requirements, all lichens generally need three things to grow - undisturbed surfaces, time, and clean air. In addition to tree bark, lichen will also grow on wood, moss, rock, and soil.

Since it will not cause harm to your trees, it's best to take a likin' to your lichen. After all, they indicate that the air in your community is nice and clean!

C. TOMATOES SLOW TO RIPEN. There were several reports this week that commercial and backyard tomato crops were ripening slowly, if at all. This is not an uncommon event when the weather turns cool for more than a few days. The hot days and sultry nights that make for poor sleeping are great for many garden plants. The tomatoes, peppers and sweet corn ripen quickly in the constant heat. Cool days and even cooler nights slow ripening to a rate more common to September than August. Rest assured, once daytime temperatures get into the upper eighties and nighttime temperatures stay in the seventies, the tomato crop will ripen much faster than one can make salsa, sauce and ketchup.

3. BUG BYTES.

A. EAB NOW ON EVERYONE'S RADAR IT SEEMS. EMERALD ASH BORER (EAB) now has the public's attention. The damage caused by this exotic invader is becoming more and more obvious. This was evident at the Ohio State Fair when EAB questions outnumbered all other inquiries at the Ask a Master Gardener Volunteer booth in the Agriculture & Horticulture Building. Master Gardener Volunteers reported that EAB questions varied from how to treat healthy Ash trees to protect them from EAB to what can be done with wood from dead and dying trees. Visitor concerns over EAB provided an opportunity to alert them to watch for other invasive species such as Asian longhorned beetle (ALB), hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) and other non-native threats. Identification cards and bookmarks from OSU, ODA and USDA were handed out to visitors.

B. OUR FRIEND, THE MILKWEED BUG. The LARGE MILKWEED BUG (Oncopeltus fasciatus) is a true bug that feeds on the milkweed plant. It has a long straw-like mouthpart called a proboscis that is used to inject saliva and suck out fluids from seeds and plant tissue. Milkweed contains chemicals that are toxic and, like the monarch butterfly, the milkweed bug accumulates these toxins that help to defend the insect against predation. The bright red aposematic coloration of this bug is a warning to any would be predators that it tastes bad.

Milkweed bug nymphs are showing up in Ohio now and are often found in clusters. Nymphs look like adults but are without wings and in their place are black wing “buds”. These bugs are not considered pests in the landscape and do not bite humans or spread disease. However, be aware of curious pets (or kids) as consumption of these bugs can cause vomiting.

4. DISEASE DIGEST.

A. SOOTY BLOTCH AND FLY SPECK OF APPLE. Gary Gao reminded BYGLers that the samples of apple fruits with sooty mold and fly speck could arrive in the OSU Extension offices soon. Sooty blotch and fly speck are two different diseases. Both diseases are widespread throughout the Midwest, and commonly occur together on the same fruit. They are more considered late season diseases.
The discoloration is superficial, and while neither disease actually damages the fruit, the presence of disease reduces the grade and market value of the fruit. Although all apple varieties are susceptible to infection by both fungi, symptoms are most severe on yellow or light colored varieties such as Golden Delicious or Grimes. Both diseases are most common during years with a cool, wet spring, rains in late summer, and low temperatures in early fall.

The symptoms of sooty blotch are as follows: brown to dull black, sooty blotches with an indefinite outline form on the fruit surface, blotches may be 1/4" in diameter or larger, and the blotches may coalesce to cover practically the entire fruit. The sooty blotch fungus is restricted to the outer surface of the fruit, and in many cases the blotches can be easily rubbed off. However, if infection occurs early in the season, you may need to rub or bleach the fruit vigorously to remove it.

The symptoms of fly speck are as follows: groups of 6 - 50 or more black and shiny round dots that resemble fly excreta appear on the surface of the fruit, the individual "fly specks" are clearly separated, and can be easily distinguished from sooty blotch. Like sooty blotch, fly speck infections are superficial; however, they are usually harder to rub off than sooty blotch. Refer to OSU Extension FactSheet HYG-3302-08, "Sooty Blotch and Fly Speck of Apple" online at: [http://ohioline.osu.edu/hyg-fact/3000/pdf/HYG_3022_08.pdf].

5. TURF TIPS.

A. BUCKEYETURF UPDATE. Last week, an article appeared on the BuckeyeTurf Website ([http://buckeyeturf.osu.edu]) addressing physical soil problems. If you missed it, no worries, here is the information. In addition to this article, the website is full of informative and educational materials - a must have favorite for anyone working with turfgrass.

"The last few days have been a welcome break from the stress period of heat, humidity and rain that past few weeks. Signs of the stress period however are evident on a number of golf course fairways throughout Ohio. As a brief recap the week of July 15th saw high humidity, rainfall, and high soil temperatures (as was the case from the previous week). Late in the week into Monday of this week (July 22nd) several areas received significant rain within a short period of time.

Standing water and saturated soils was the result of excessive rainfall. If excessive rain or flooding occurs in the spring turfgrasses are relatively tolerant due to the water and soil temperatures are low (see [Impact of Flooding on Turf]). However, in the summer high soil temperatures combined with excessive rainfall can result in turf death. Actually the combination of anaerobic soil conditions (lack of soil oxygen) resulting from soil saturation and high soil temperatures can kill turfgrass roots within hours and the entire plant within days.

To reduce the potential from turf loss from what is basically a soil problem caused by a lack of drainage requires the installation of a subsurface and/or surface drainage. If you have suffered turf loss on your fairways or any turf area the signs are there to show you where drainage should be installed. For now, try to dry the turf out and when possible break any surface sealing (crusting) that may have occurred through coring. And seed if the temperatures remain moderate.

For a more in depth explanation of what happens to turfgrass under anaerobic soil conditions watch the video [Anaerobic Soils: Impact on Root Respiration]."
6. INDUSTRY INSIGHTS.

A. ARE YOU LOOKING FOR ASIAN LONGHORNED BEETLE (ALB)? Several BYGLers reported receiving calls or emails from residents wanting more information about ALB. Awareness about this invasive species seems to be on the rise. To continue to build upon extra eyes looking for this exotic invader, USDA has declared the month of August as Tree Check Month.

While we urge Ohioans to be on the look-out for signs and symptoms of the Asian longhomed beetle (ALB) year round, a concerted outreach effort is being made throughout the month of August. Scott Pfister, Director of USDA's APHIS Pest Management Division, reports that August is a time of peak emergence for the beetle and is most likely when members of the public will see an adult beetle infesting trees.

The most important thing you can do to protect your trees is to check them regularly and encourage others to do so too. Early detection is crucial in the fight against this invasive pest. It can mean the difference between the six infested trees lost in Boston vs. over 30,000 trees lost in Worcester County, Massachusetts. Unfortunately, once ALB infests a tree, there is no cure for that tree, but there are things we can do to save the rest.

USDA works closely with federal partners, states, communities and the public to combat the pest in areas where infested trees have already been found. While eradication has been declared in Illinois (2008), New Jersey (2013) and Islip, New York (2011), the eradication efforts continue in Ohio, Massachusetts, and New York. We all still need to stay vigilant and inspect trees regularly for signs of infestation, especially since trees in all states are at risk.

The beetle was first discovered in the United States in 1996, likely arriving in wood packing material from Asia. It is an invasive insect that feeds on 13 different genera of hardwoods trees eventually killing them. Maple, willow, elm, horsechestnut and birch are the host trees most preferred by the pest. Infestations have been found in New York (1996), Illinois (1998), New Jersey (2002), Massachusetts (2008) and Ohio (2011), resulting in the removal of more than 85,000 host trees. It threatens recreational areas, forests, and suburban and urban shade trees. Important American industries such as timber, nursery stock, maple syrup production, and tourism are also at risk.

Help stop the Asian longhomed beetle's destruction by checking your trees and report any signs or symptoms of an infestation immediately. If you find a suspect beetle, try to take a picture or capture it and place the insect in a jar and freeze it. This will help with identification. To report a sighting or for more information, visit www.aphis.usda.gov or www.asianlonghornedbeetle.com or call the toll free hotline at 1-866-702-9938.

B. GET YOUR GREEN INDUSTRY FIX WEBINAR: AUGUST 14. We had a great Webinar session in July on powdery mildew disease, Ginkgoes, the Great Lakes Early Detection Network Application for Androids and iPhones, bagworms, Japanese beetles, and mushrooms in turfgrass. Next up: Wednesday, August 14, 8:00 - 8:50 a.m. Join OSU Buckeye Yard and Garden Line (BYGL) experts for this Ohio Nursery Landscape Association's Green Industry Webinar then. If you have questions about registering, contact ONLA at 614-899-1195 or 800-825-5062.

7. WEATHERWATCH.

A. WEATHER UPDATE. The following weather information summarizes data collected at various Ohio Agricultural Research Development Center (OARDC) Weather Stations spanning the dates from August
1 - 6, 2013, with the exception of the soil temperatures which are readings from Tuesday, August 6, 2013 at 5:05 p.m.

Each of the five stations below is reporting less than average precipitation totals thus far in August. Temperatures continue to be on the cool side, especially evening temps. It is beginning to feel a bit like fall (already!)

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For a link to the OARDC Weather Stations, visit: [ http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/centernet/weather.htm ].

8. COMING ATTRACTIONS.

A. DIAGNOSTIC WALKABOUT FOR THE GREEN INDUSTRY. Diagnostic Walkabout for the Green Industry series is once again occurring around Ohio this summer. ONLA, AGI and OSU Extension will be hosting 3 more events in 2013: August 15, Toledo Botanical Garden; September 12, Inniswood Metro Gardens, Westerville; and September 26, Sunset Memorial Park, North Olmsted. Pre-registration is required and class size is limited to 30 per class. ODA, ISA and OCNT credits available. For registration, location and pesticide credit information see: [ http://www.onla.org ].

B. OHIO PLANT DIAGNOSTIC WORKSHOP. This is the first notice for the 81st (or so) running of the Ohio Plant Diagnostic Workshop, to be held on September 4, 2013 at the Secrest Arboretum of Ohio State University's Wooster Campus. This program, sponsored by OSU's Extension Nursery Landscape and Turf Team, the Ohio Nursery Landscape Association and the Davey Tree Expert Company is a full day of hands-on diagnostic samples and walks, and updates by OSU's Joe Boggs, Francesca Peduto, Nancy Taylor, Curtis Young, Erik Draper and Jim Chatfield, and all the assembled experts. Registration information is at http://go.osu.edu/chatfield. If you want to learn, teach, and catharse about landscape, treescape, nursery and greenhouse plant health problems, from beetles to blights to botany make sure you register by August 28.

C. NAME THAT TREE WORKSHOP. Join fellow tree IDers on September 27, 2013 at the Secrest Arboretum of Ohio State University's Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center in Wooster, Ohio. We will be conducting a Name That Tree Workshop sponsored by the OSU Extension Woodland Stewards and Nursery Landscape and Turf Teams, combining tree ID from both sides now, from woodland species to landscape cultivars. You can register online at woodlandstewards.osu.edu. It will be a full day of indoor and outdoor sessions at the Jack and Deb Miller Pavilion and the Arboretum plantings. Cost is $35. Also check out all the other great Woodland Stewards programs listed on the site.

D. WHY TREES MATTER FORUM. The annual Why Trees Matter Forum, after a year's hiatus, returns to Ohio State and Wooster, Ohio this autumn on Wednesday, October 16, 2013. Details will be forthcoming regarding registration, but you will be sure to learn a great deal about the multiple benefits of trees and the practice of learning and teaching about these benefits. We will discuss the latest on i-Tree
benefits, the OSU Arbo-Charrette Program, the Tree Campus USA program of the College of Wooster, updates on the pervasiveness of invasiveness in our urban and woodland forests (including the new Great Lakes Early Detection Network smartphone application). We will also highlight wildlife and trees, in a much-anticipated talk by Marne Titchenell of the OSU School of Environment and Natural Resources. Green ink your calendar.

9. BYGLOSOPHY. "To the great tree-loving fraternity we belong. We love trees with universal and unfeigned love, and all things that do grow under them or around them - the whole leaf and root tribe." - Henry Ward Beecher

APPENDIX - ADDITIONAL WEBSITE RESOURCES:

Ask a Master Gardener Volunteer (Consumer Gardening Questions)
http://mastergardener.osu.edu/ask

Buckeye Turf
http://buckeyeturf.osu.edu

Emerald Ash Borer Information
http://ashalert.osu.edu

Growing Degree Days and Phenology for Ohio
http://www.oardc.ohio-state.edu/gdd/

Hungry Pests Website
http://www.HungryPests.com

Ohio State University Department of Horticulture and Crop Science Plantfacts
http://plantfacts.osu.edu/web/

Ohio State University Extension Master Gardener Volunteer Program
http://mastergardener.osu.edu

The C. Wayne Ellett Plant and Pest Diagnostic Clinic (CWEPPDC)
http://ppdc.osu.edu/

USDA APHIS Beetle Buster Website (Asian Longhorned Beetle)
http://www.beetlebusters.info/

USDA APHIS Beetle Detective Website (Asian Longhorned Beetle and Emerald Ash Borer)
http://beetledetectives.com/

Following are the participants in the August 6th conference call: Pam Bennett (Clark); Gary Gao (OSU South Centers); Denise Johnson (State Master Gardener Volunteer Program); Ashley Kulhanek (Medina); Tim Malinich (Erie); Any Stone (Lucas); Nancy Taylor (PPDC); Marne Titchenell (School of Natural Resource); and Danae Wolfe (Summit).
BYGL is available via email, contact Cheryl Fischnich [fischnich.1@cfaes.osu.edu] to subscribe or to unsubscribe. Additional fact sheet information on any of these articles may be found through the OSU FactSheet database [http://plantfacts.osu.edu/web].

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