

Number 14 – August 13, 2010

Moths Numerous

Celery leaf-tier moths are very numerous in central and northern Illinois. These moths are brownish and about one-quarter inch long. Their wings form a triangular shape when they are at rest. An excellent article written by fellow Extension Entomologist, Mike Gray, on this moth is in the Bulletin, a newsletter produced by University of Illinois Extension covering field crops. This article can be found at <http://bulletin.ipm.illinois.edu/article.php?id=1389>

Sod webworm moths are also very common in turfgrass. They are larger, being about one-half inch long. They are light tan and sit with their wings tight against the body on grass blades. We have not had any reports of sod webworm damage to turf in Illinois, but be vigilant of non-irrigated turf that has received little rainfall. These insects were addressed in this newsletter about two weeks ago. The article can be found at <http://hyg.ipm.illinois.edu/article.php?id=221> --Phil Nixon

Rabbits

The rabbit species that primarily causes damage to trees and shrubs in Illinois is the Eastern cottontail. Cottontails cause serious damage to shrubs and small

trees by stripping off the bark during the winter. Although they can be repelled with thiram, an ingredient in some rabbit and deer repellents, this requires at least a couple of treatments during the winter. The first application is applied after the weather turns cold, usually between Thanksgiving and Christmas, with a second application during a warm spell in mid-February.

Fencing also protects ornamentals but must be at least two feet high and of a small enough mesh to keep the rabbits out. In the winter, this fence should be at least two feet higher than crusted snow depth. It is difficult to find fencing that does not detract from ornamental plants. When attractive fencing is found, it tends to be expensive.

Last Saturday, I was visiting the Missouri Botanic Garden in St. Louis, MO. In their home gardening center, manned by University of Missouri Extension Master Gardeners, I noticed a publication that listed plants that are less susceptible to rabbits. As we are approaching the season for fall planting, the following list may be useful to you. The entire publication containing various management methods, other repellents, and less susceptible herbaceous plants can be found at <http://www.mobot.org/gardeninghelp/plantfinder/IPM.asp?code=101&group=2&level=s> --Phil Nixon

Woody Plants Seldom Damaged by Rabbits:

- Azaleas (*Rhododendron* species)
- Boxwood (*Buxus* species)
- Buckeye, Common (*Aesculus glabra*)
- Buckeye, Bottlebrush (*Aesculus parviflora*)
- Butterfly Bush (*Buddleia davidii*)
- Butternut (*Juglans cinerea*)
- Cinquefoil, Bush (*Potentilla fruticosa*)
- Cotoneaster (*Cotoneaster* species)
- Dogwood, Tatarian (*Cornus alba*)
- Gum, Sweet (*Liquidambar styraciflua*)
- Horsechestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*)
- Hydrangea, Climbing (*Hydrangea anomala petiolaris*)
- Hydrangea, Smooth (*Hydrangea arborescens*)
- Inkberry, Dwarf (*Ilex glabra* 'Compacta')
- Laurel, Mountain (*Kalmia latifolia*)
- Maple, Japanese (*Acer palmatum*)
- Pine, White (*Pinus strobus*)
- Rhododendron (*Rhododendron* species)
- Spruce, Blue (*Picea pungens*)
- Sumac (*Rhus* species)
- Tulip Tree or Yellow Poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*)
- Walnut, Black (*Juglans nigra*)
- Yew (*Taxus* species)

White Grubs

White grub damage to turf typically appears in the second half of August, continuing into October. Damage will appear as wilted, light tan turf in which the sod is easily pulled up. In heavily damaged areas, the turf can be rolled back like a carpet. Initial damage will appear as small patches usually about a

foot across in which the grass blades are turning lighter green to tan. Although the turf in these early damage patches will pull up easier than undamaged areas, it will still be firmly rooted.

White grub numbers are likely to be high enough to cause turf injury in areas of the state that experienced dry, hot periods in the second half of June and first half of July if non-irrigated turf went dormant, being light green to tan. In these areas, egg-laying was likely to be concentrated enough in irrigated turf to result in damaging white grub populations. If the adult Japanese beetle and/or masked chafer populations were high, the likelihood of turf injury is increased.

Scout for damaging white grub numbers by cutting through the turf with a heavy knife. Choose areas where the grass blades appear to be lighter in color. Working your fingers through the cut sod, grasp the roots and peel back the sod. In well-watered turf, the white grubs will be obvious in the root zone. In drier turf, they are likely to be three to four inches deep in the soil. Most of the white grubs will be on the soil that was revealed when the sod was peeled back. Also check the soil on the underside of the sod for grubs. Till the soil with the knife to pop out any grubs that are deeper in the soil.

Ten or more white grubs per foot square, an area twelve inches by twelve inches, is a good rule of thumb to determine whether there are enough to cause turf injury. If the turf is heavily used, damage may occur with as few as eight grubs per foot square. Lightly used turf may not show damage with up to fifteen grubs per foot square.

Control can be achieved quickly with an application of trichlorfon (Dylox). Although Dylox will kill white grubs within three days, it only lasts for five days. If the soil is dry, it is recommended to water the turf a day or two before treatment to bring the grubs up into the root zone where they will be reached by the Dylox. Application of chlorantriliprole (Acelepryn), clothianidin (Arena), imidacloprid (Merit), or thiamethoxam (Meridian) will also be effective. These last longer but usually take longer to kill the grubs. Irrigate with at least one-half inch of water to move the insecticide down into the root zone where the grubs are located.--*Phil Nixon*

Invasive Plant, Pest & Disease Awareness: Do you know the part you play in environmental defense?

The USDA has announced that August is officially 'Invasive Plant, Pest, and Disease Awareness Month' (http://www.aphis.usda.gov/newsroom/content/2010/08/invasive_pest_awareness.shtml) in an attempt to increase public awareness of these invasive organisms and the threats they pose. More and more invasive species are being discovered and the problems they pose are serious. Many of these invasives endanger the balance of ecological systems, cause economic loss, and pose public health hazards. For this reason the state and federal government has established a variety of programs to help identify and control these pests, but for complete success the awareness and participation of every day citizens are needed.

Invasive species are introduced to an area through a variety of ways, the most common being the transportation of goods and people between states or countries. Once introduced, these species often face little resistance to their spread and development. Another way invasives are introduced is through people planting invasive plants in their gardens. These plants can often spread outside your garden and become an infestation. Many of these species are of little threat in their native range but when placed in scenarios without limiting factors they do a lot of damage such as destroying crops, killing native organisms, or creating health hazards.

Even though many official programs have been established, sightings of invasives are often called in by private citizens. These instances of vigilance by citizens have played a vital role in identifying and controlling new infestations. To do your part, try and stay informed about invasive species in your area. In past issues of the Home, Yard, and Garden Pest newsletter, we've highlighted invasive species that are a threat to Illinois. Take a look back to see what these insect pests may look like or where they may be lurking. Also, make responsible gardening decisions and choose native plants for your garden. A new factsheet (http://www.aphis.usda.gov/publications/plant_health/content/printable_version/fs_attack_of_the_invasive_species.pdf), from the United States Department of Agriculture discusses further ways to fight these invaders. Staying informed and acting responsibly will help you play an integral role in protecting your home and state from invasive plants, insects, and diseases.--*Irenka Carney*