

Commercial Horticulture

July 10, 2026

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Orius sp. (minute pirate bugs)

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Dallisgrass

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Juniperus horizontalis
(creeping juniper)

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**Integrated Pest Management
for Commercial Horticulture**
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 sklick@umd.edu

Coordinator Weekly IPM Report:

Laura Nixon, IPM Specialist in Entomology, University of Maryland Extension, Lnixon1@umd.edu, and Paula Shrewsbury, Professor and Extension Specialist in Ornamental and Turf IPM, Department of Entomology, pshrewsbury@umd.edu

Regular Contributors:

Pest and Beneficial Insect Information: Laura Nixon and Paula Shrewsbury (Extension Specialists) and Nancy Harding, Faculty Research Assistant
Disease Information: David Clement (Extension Specialist) and Ana Cristina Fulladolsa (Plant Pathologist and Director, UMD Diagnostic Lab)
Weed of the Week: Kelly Nichols and Nathan Glenn, (UME Extension Educators) and Dan Buonaiuto, (Assistant Professor), Dept. of Plant Sciences and Architecture
Cultural Information: Ginny Rosenkranz (Extension Educator, Wicomico/Worcester/Somerset Counties)
Fertility Management: Andrew Ristvey (Extension Specialist, Wye Research & Education Center)
Design, Layout and Editing: Suzanne Klick (Technician, CMREC)

Stanton A. Gill Symposium: Focus on Biological Control

August 4 and 5, 2026

Location: CMREC, Ellicott City

Seeing Moths in Summer

By: Suzanne Klick

At this time of year, we tend to see more moths than earlier in the season. While scouting for box tree moth yesterday, there was a pandorus sphinx moth (*Eumorpha pandorus*) hanging out on the foliage. Caterpillars feed on *Ampelopsis*, grape, and Virginia creeper.

With its green and light brown coloring, this pandorus sphinx moth blends in well with boxwood foliage.
Photo: Suzanne Klick



July 22, 2026 IPM Diagnostic Session
Time: 12:30 - 3:00
Location: CMREC, Ellicott City

The link to register for this program is on our [Conferences' web page](#)



This session is a great opportunity to bring plant samples with problems you need identified. Entomology, plant pathology, and horticulture extension specialists will be available to look at samples under the microscope and answer questions. There will be short presentations on tarnished plant bugs and another timely insect pest.

Casebearer Larvae, Just Hanging Out

By: Laura Nixon

Greg Dorczak, NaturaLawn, sent us a photo this week of multiple casebearers on a crape myrtle street tree. Casebearers are moth larvae that remove some bark and create a bag-like casing. They hold the bark-encased bag straight up as they move around on the bark of the tree. If you remove the case from the tree, you will see a caterpillar head peeking out. There are multiple species that exhibit this behavior, but they are not damaging to the plants, just an interesting insect to observe!



Casebearer larvae on a crape myrtle trunk.
Photo: Greg Dorczak, IPM Specialist

Box Tree Moth are Pupating Again!

By: Laura Nixon

Box tree moth (*Cydalima perspectalis*) caterpillars have been feeding and growing rapidly. We found mixed instar caterpillars yesterday at our sites in Washington County, MD. As a reminder, box tree moth have 7 caterpillar instars, meaning they molt 6 times and grow slightly larger each time. In one site, we observed 4th-7th instar caterpillars, plus new pupae. What this tells us is we will likely see a mix of life stages for the rest of the summer, as they are not all at the same developmental stage and it takes 21-28 days for caterpillars to develop into pupae.

If you are seeing box tree moth caterpillars on your boxwoods, let us know ([Lnioxn1@umd.edu](mailto:Lnixn1@umd.edu)) and report to MDA (<https://mda.maryland.gov/Pages/Box%20Tree%20Moth.aspx>), clear photos are needed for identification. For control options see the [June 26, 2026 IPM Report](#).



Various larval stages of box tree moth were active on July 9, 2026 when we scouted boxwood in Washington County, MD.
Photo: Suzanne Klick, UME



We found several larvae that were pupating on July 9, 2026.
Photo: Suzanne Klick, UME

Scarlet Oak Slug Sawfly

By: Holly Greenberg, UME

The scarlet oak slug sawfly (*Caliroa quercuscoccineae*) feeds on the underside of oak leaves, resulting in a loss of canopy. They are not exclusive to scarlet oaks and will target other oaks, including pin, red, and white. They gregariously eat the leaf's lower epidermis, leaving behind the veins and top epidermis layer, which later dehydrates and creates a "window pane" or skeletonized appearance. The damage becomes more noticeable as the summer progresses.

These native insects experience 2-3 generations per season. Once the adult emerges around 1544 DD, after overwintering as larvae, they lay eggs on the veins of oak leaves. The larvae are about 1/8" in length during the

first instar with translucent yellow/green bodies. The slug aspect of their name originates from their tendency to cover themselves with excrement, allowing for better attachment to the leaves. As they develop through the instars, they grow to about ½” long and form a distinct facial marking that appears as sunglasses.

It is unlikely that damage from this insect would greatly impact the tree's health. These sawflies are not typically seen in time to prevent the larvae from defoliating. Healthy trees are resilient enough to bounce back from damage, and natural predators commonly help reduce populations. If control is necessary due to high populations and increasing damage, Spinosad (ex. Conserve) is effective against these sawfly larvae.



Scarlet oak slug sawfly larvae skeletonize leaves as they feed.
Photo: Joe Boggs at Ohio State University, <https://bygl.osu.edu/node/51>

Scarlet Oak Sawfly Larval Feeding Behavior and Damage



Many early instar scarlet oak slug sawfly larvae are feeding on a leaf.
Photo: Joe Boggs at Ohio State University, <https://bygl.osu.edu/node/51>

Look! A Shiny Insect

By: Laura Nixon

This week, I saw a leafhopper alighting on one of our crape myrtle study trees. This shiny specimen is a broad-headed sharpshooter (*Oncometopia orbona*). They have a similar body shape to cicada, to whom they are closely related, but much smaller and more slender. They have the blunt head, protruding eyes, and opalescent coloring that make leafhoppers one of my favorite insect families to observe. Some species of leafhopper can be pests, but the broad-headed sharpshooter is not. This insect is a generalist feeder, with a really broad host range, but does not aggregate and feed heavily enough to damage those plants.



A broad-headed sharpshooter is a generalist plant feeder.
Photo: Suzanne Klick, UME

Green June Beetle Adults Are Out And About

By: Laura Nixon

In the [June 26th IPM report](#), Paula Shrewsbury wrote about a variety of scarab beetles, including the green June beetle (*Cotinis nitida*). Since then, we have started to see a lot of adults in the field. As a reminder, green June beetle is only a really a pest directly on fruit (e.g. peaches, grapes, etc.) or in turfgrass (larvae only). If these are not your plants of concern, the beetles should not cause you any problems!



Green June beetles are active at our research this week; many are flying around the plants, with a few landing on some.
Photo: Suzanne Klick, UME

Dobsonfly

By: Suzanne Klick

Dave Keane, Howard County Recreation and Parks, found an Eastern dobsonfly in Keedysville, MD this week. Dave noted that the "the larval stage of these insects, the hellgrammite, are an excellent bait for fishing!" Be careful with the larvae because they can bite if handled. Larvae are found in freshwater streams and feed on various aquatic insects and small fish. Adults go to lights at night and usually do not feed.



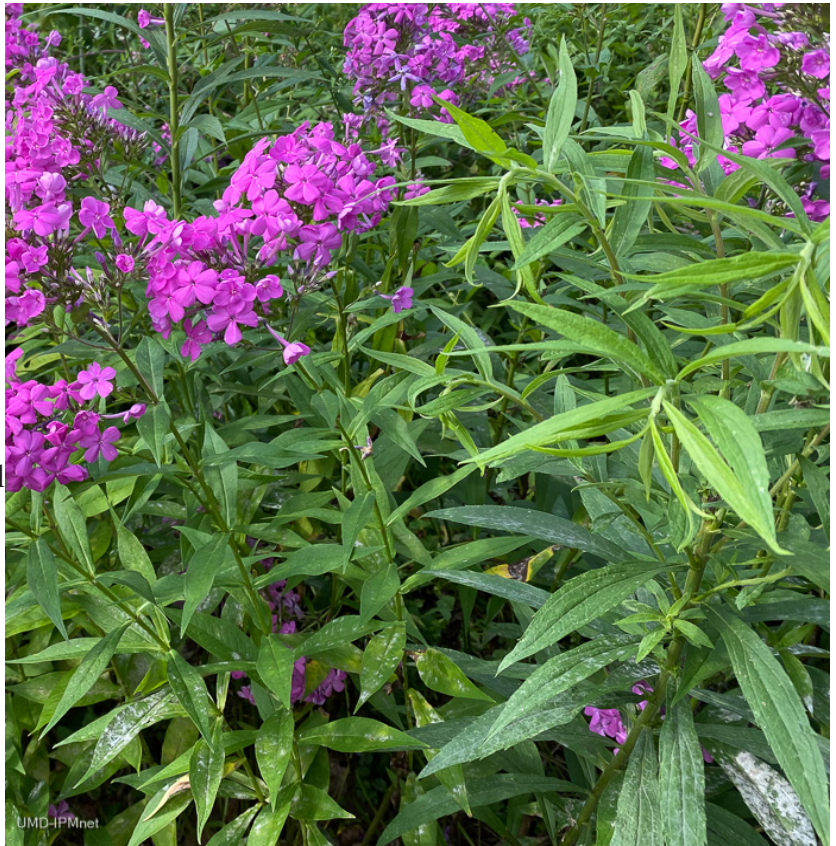
Look for dobsonfly adults at lights at night.
Photo: Dave Keane, Howard Clounty Recreation and Parks

Powdery Mildew Management

By: David Clement

Mid-summer is the time when we begin to see the powdery mildew diseases in our landscape herbaceous and woody ornamentals. Disease is likely when we have high relative humidity with normal summer temperatures. The disease is common in crowded plantings where air circulation is poor and in damp, shaded areas. Young succulent growth is more severely affected than older tissues. However, unlike other fungi, the powdery mildew fungi can infect when very little moisture is present on the leaf surface. Powdery mildews are host-specific, so the fungus attacking your phlox will not spread to your monarda, or sunflowers.

Even though the plant symptoms are identical there are several powdery mildew genera. The first obvious symptoms are the whitish growth that occurs mainly on the upper leaf surfaces and stems. The mycelial growth is mostly on the surface of the plant. Powdery mildew fungi obtain nutrients from infected plants through haustoria that penetrate the epidermal layer of cells. Powdery mildew infection may cause distortion and a reduction in leaf size. Infected leaves may become distorted, turn yellow, and fall prematurely.



Powdery mildew is infecting this phlox. There are powdery mildew resistant phlox cultivars.

Photo: Suzanne Klick, UME

Winter survival occurs in structures called chasmothecia, that have specialized appendages, on the plant or fallen leaves. In the spring, these structures produce spores that initiate primary infections on susceptible hosts. Secondary conidia are produced from these initial infections and cause repeated infections. Spores produced on over wintered mycelium can also start spring infections.

Management

Powdery mildew infection can be managed very effectively by planting resistant cultivars when available. Since powdery mildews prefer humid conditions, it is often recommended to prune, or thin crowded plants to help increase air flow to reduce humidity around leaves. Late summer application of nitrogen fertilizer should be avoided to limit production of succulent tissue, which may be susceptible to powdery mildew infection in the fall. Water early in the day so that the foliage will be dry by evening.

There are many registered fungicide options for powdery mildews including horticultural oils, bicarbonates, biological products and synthetic choices. If plants are rapidly growing and producing new foliage it may become necessary to use the shortest the time between fungicide applications according to label directions. However, once mildew growth is moderate to severe, it generally is too late for effective control with fungicides.

Lady Beetles and Lacewings

By: Suzanne Klick

Many predaceous insects are active in the landscape as we move through the summer months. Dave Freeman, Oaktree Property Care, found a fourteen spotted lady beetle adult (*Propylea quatuordecimpunctata*) last week in Virginia. We are also regularly seeing this species in our field cut flower research plants. They vary in color from cream to yellow to light orange. Sometimes the spots fuse together and make it difficult to distinguish all 14 spots. Like other lady beetles, it is a generalist predator of other insects.

All stages of lacewings can be found at this time of year. Adults occasionally show up on our building at the research center. Like lady beetles, adults and larvae of lacewings are predaceous and feed on various small insects and insect eggs. To reduce sibling predation, lacewing eggs are laid on top of a silk strand.



The background color of fourteen spotted lady beetles can vary from yellow to orange.

Photo: Dave Freeman, Oaktree Property Care



This adult lacewing was on our research building on July 10, 2026.

Photo: Suzanne Klick

Beneficial of the Week

By: Paula Shrewsbury

These little pirates are voracious generalist predators

It is the time of year when lots of annual and herbaceous plants are in flower which means there should be a diversity of predatory and parasitic insects feeding on floral resources (nectar and pollen for food / energy) and prey items (omnivores) that might be active on these plants. On a beautiful sunny day a few summers ago, I was observing the many insects on the flowers and plants in my landscape beds. As I was admiring the coneflowers (*Echinacea pupurea*, Asteraceae) I noticed tiny dark colored insects crawling in and out of the nooks and crannies of the flower heads. Not just one, but several insects per flower head. Upon closer examination with a hand lens, I realized these little creatures were **minute pirate bugs** (see image) which are predaceous true bugs (*Orius spp.*; order Hemiptera; family Anthocoridae). Upon further examination, I saw that there were also

pretty high densities of thrips crawling around on the petals of the coneflower (see image). It all came together, *Orius* spp. are well known predators of thrips (and other insects) and they also feed on the pollen of flowers (omnivores).

There are two species of *Orius* that are abundant and important, the minute pirate bug (*Orius tristicolor*) (minute pirate bug is also the common name of the group) and the insidious flower bug (*Orius insidiosus*). The minute pirate bug (*O. tristicolor*) occurs throughout North America, and down into Central and South Americas. The insidious flower bug (*O. insidiosus*) is more common in the eastern U.S. but occurs south from Utah and Southern California into Central and South America.

Orius spp. have needle-like sucking mouthparts that they impale into their prey and then use to suck out the prey's insides, ultimately killing them. Adults are small ($< 1/8''$), oval, and black with white markings at the base and ends of the wings. *Orius* undergo incomplete metamorphosis so nymphs and adults may occur in the same location, and are both predacious and may feed on similar prey items. Nymphs and adults are similar in shape but nymphs are usually yellowish-orange with red eyes (see image) but get darker in later nymphal stages. Both stages are highly mobile. *Orius* overwinter as adults and begin activity early in the season. Tiny eggs are inserted into plant material and it takes about 3 weeks to develop from egg to adult. There are multiple generations of *Orius* per year and they remain active until day length becomes shorter (< 14 hours) later in the season.



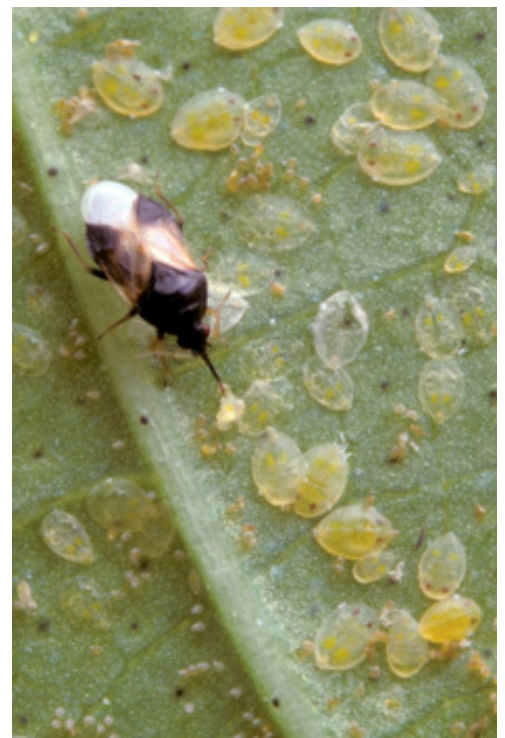
Two adult predatory minute pirate bugs, *Orius* spp., on the flower head of a coneflower.

Photo: Paula Shrewsbury, UMD



A high density of thrips, a common prey of *Orius* spp., on the petals of coneflower.

Photo: Paula Shrewsbury, UMD



An adult *Orius* bug feeding on a nymph of a whitefly with its piercing-sucking mouthpart. Photo from: <http://www.ars.usda.gov>; by Jack Dykinga

Orius are considered generalist predators that feed as adults and nymphs on a wide range of prey items. They commonly found in association with thrips, which they consume in addition to spider mites, aphids, small caterpillars, psyllids, leafhopper nymphs, whiteflies, chinch bugs (in turf), plant lice, and insect eggs of many species ([click here to see a great YouTube of *Orius* eating a thrips](#)). *Orius* are also omnivorous in that they feed on pollen from many flowering plants and plant juices when prey is not available. I have seen *Orius* in the flower heads of a diversity of flowers feeding on pollen and prey. This suggests planting a diversity of flowers should help to encourage predatory *Orius spp.* and suppress plant feeding thrips and other pests. For example, it is commonly recommended to plant marigolds which *Orius* commonly



Orius nymph sucking the insides from an aphid. Note the orange coloration, sucking mouthpart, and wing buds (not fully developed wings) on the top of the thorax -characteristics of *Orius* nymphs. Photo from: <http://extension.entm.purdue.edu/>

use, next to thrips prone plants such as roses. Applications of most broad-spectrum insecticides, such as pyrethroids, neonicotinoids, organophosphates, and carbamates, can be detrimental to *Orius* populations, so if *Orius* is present choose reduced-risk insecticides when warranted. Some *Orius* species are commercially available and are used successfully in biological control programs against thrips in greenhouses and field grown peppers. Occasionally, *Orius* may even take a “taste” of humans, but in most cases the bite is only irritating for a few minutes.

Weed of the Week

By: Nathan Glenn

Dallisgrass (*Paspalum dilatatum*)

Dallisgrass (*Paspalum dilatatum*) is a **warm-season perennial grass** that forms coarse, persistent clumps in turfgrass and occasionally landscape beds. Native to South America, it was introduced to the United States as forage grass but has since become a troublesome weed throughout much of the country. Dallisgrass thrives in **moist, fertile soils** and is commonly found in lawns, parks, athletic fields, roadsides, and other turf areas where irrigation is inconsistent or drainage is poor.



Figure 1: Dallisgrass growing habit in a turfgrass setting. Photo: Weed ID Guide, Division of Plant Sciences, University of Missouri

Identification

- ☐ **Growth habit:** Coarse, upright perennial grass that grows in expanding clumps
- ☐ **Leaves:**
 - ☐ Four to twelve inches long
 - ☐ Rolled in the bud
 - ☐ Membranous ligule

- ☐ No auricles
- ☐ Long hairs near the collar region
- ☐ **Root system:** Fibrous roots with short rhizomes, helping distinguish it from other clump-forming grasses
- ☐ **Seedheads:** Consist of **2–10 finger-like branches (racemes)** arranged along a central stalk. Each raceme bears two rows of oval seeds that range from pale green to purplish.
- ☐ **Height:** Can tolerate close mowing but may reach **up to five feet tall** if left unmanaged.

Fun Fact: One of the easiest ways to identify dallisgrass is by its distinctive seedheads. They often develop dark fungal growth called **ergot**, giving the seeds a black, swollen appearance. While unsightly in lawns, ergot can be toxic to grazing livestock if consumed in large quantities.

Habitat & Timing

- ☐ Common in **lawns, athletic fields, golf courses, parks, roadsides, and occasionally landscape beds**
- ☐ Prefers **moist or poorly drained soils**
- ☐ Seeds begin to germinate when **soil temperatures reach approximately 60–65°F**.
- ☐ Spreads by both **seed and short rhizomes**. Seeds are readily dispersed by mowers, animals, wind, and contaminated sod.

Control

Because dallisgrass is a perennial with both rhizomes and a persistent seedbank, successful management typically requires **multiple years of control efforts** rather than a single treatment.

Cultural Control

- ☐ Maintain a dense, healthy turf through proper mowing, irrigation, and fertilization.
- ☐ Avoid overwatering with long intervals between irrigation, as these conditions favor dallisgrass establishment.
- ☐ Dig out young plants before they develop rhizomes or produce seed, removing as much of the root system as possible.
- ☐ Clean mowing equipment after working in infested areas to prevent spreading seed. Inspect sod before installation to avoid introducing the weed.



Figure 2: Dallisgrass leaf growth.
Photo: Weed ID Guide, Division of Plant Sciences, University of Missouri



Figure 3: Upclose photo of Dallisgrass's hairy collar. They have a tall membranous ligule and no auricles.
Photo: Weed ID Guide, Division of Plant Sciences, University of Missouri

Chemical Control

- **Pre-emergent herbicides** can help reduce new seedlings when applied in late winter or early spring, before germination. Products containing dithiopyr, pendimethalin, prodiamine, benefin + oryzalin, or oryzalin are among the options labeled for turf.
- **Post-emergent control** is considerably more difficult. Selective herbicides are limited and often depend on the turf species. Multiple, properly timed applications may be required over two to three years for acceptable control.
- In landscape beds or where spot treatment is appropriate, glyphosate remains one of the most effective options. Avoid contact with desirable plants, and reseed or re-sod treated areas as needed.



Figure 4: Dallisgrass seedhead with the presence of ergot, the dark fungal growth seen on the seedheads.

Photo: Weed ID Guide, Division of Plant Sciences, University of Missouri

Management Tip: Dallisgrass is much easier to prevent than to eliminate. Once mature clumps become established, complete control often requires a combination of digging, repeated herbicide applications, and, in severe infestations, renovation of the affected turf.

Plant of the Week

By: Ginny Rosenkranz

Juniperus horizontalis ‘Blue Rug’, commonly known as creeping juniper, is valued for its dense, spreading growth habit that forms an attractive evergreen groundcover. Plants typically grow only 3 to 6 inches tall but can spread 6 to 8 feet wide, creating a beautiful carpet of blue foliage that provides year-round color. This procumbent juniper is exceptionally cold hardy, thriving in USDA Hardiness Zones 3 through 9. ‘Blue Rug’ performs best in full sun and adapts to a wide range of soil types and growing conditions, provided the soil is well-drained. The soft, plume-like evergreen foliage is blue to silver-blue during the growing season and often develops attractive purple-lavender tones in winter. Juvenile foliage is awl- or needle-like, while mature foliage becomes scale-like, with needles arranged opposite along the branches. Plants form a dense mat of long trailing branches interspersed with shorter, compact growth.



***Juniperus horizontalis* can create a lovely waterfall effect when planted in an area with large rocks.**

Photo: Ginny Rosenkranz, UME

This versatile juniper is ideal for planting on slopes to help control erosion or in rock gardens. It can also be planted along retaining walls, around foundations, and where its cascading branches spill over ledges, creating the appearance of a flowing evergreen waterfall. Plants are deer, drought, and erosion tolerant. Plants can be susceptible to blight, cedar-apple rust, and root rot in poorly drained soils. Insect pests can include aphids, bagworms, webworms, scale, and spider mites.

Pest Predictive Calendar “Predictions”

By: Nancy Harding and Paula Shrewsbury

In the Maryland area, the accumulated growing degree days (DD) this week range from about **1479 DD** (Clarksville) to **2127 DD** (Nat'l Arboretum/Reagan Nat'l). The [Pest Predictive Calendar](#) tells us when susceptible stages of pest insects are active based on their DD. Therefore, this week you should be monitoring for the following pests. The estimated start degree days of the targeted life stage are in parentheses.

Catalpa sphinx – egg hatch (1st gen) **(1365 DD)**
Green June beetle – adult emergence **(1539 DD)**
Scarlett oak slug sawfly – larva, early instar **(1544 DD)**
Pine needle scale – egg hatch / crawler (2nd gen) **(1561 DD)**
White prunicola scale – egg hatch / crawler (2nd gen) **(1637 DD)**
Obscure scale – egg hatch / crawler **(1774 DD)**
Orangestriped oakworm – egg hatch / early instar **(1917 DD)**
Magnolia scale – crawler **(1938 DD)**
Fall webworm – egg hatch / early instar (2nd gen) **(1962 DD)**
Maskell scale – egg hatch / crawler (2nd gen) **(2035 DD)**
Euonymus scale – egg hatch / crawler (2nd gen) **(2235 DD)**
Mimosa webworm – larva, early instar (2nd gen) **(2260 DD)**

See the [Pest Predictive Calendar](#) for more information on DD and plant phenological indicators (PPI) to help you better monitor and manage these pests.

Degree Days (as of July 8, 2026)

Annapolis Naval Academy (KNAK)	1829
Baltimore, MD (KBWI)	1855
Belcamp (FS836)	1751
Clarksville (001MD)	1479
College Park (KCGS)	1917
Dulles Airport (KIAD)	1878
Ft. Belvoir, VA (KDA)	1954
Frederick (KFDK)	1678
Gaithersburg (KGAI)	1789
Greater Cumberland Reg (KCBE)	1653
Martinsburg, WV (KM RB)	1724
Millersville (MD026)	1847
Natl Arboretum/Reagan Natl (KDCA)	2127
Perry Hall (C0608)	1709
Salisbury/Ocean City (KSBY)	1849
St. Mary's City (Patuxent NRB KNHK)	1987
Westminster (KDMW)	2034

Important Note: We are using the [Online Phenology and Degree-Day Models](#) site. Use the following information to calculate GDD for your site: Select your location from the map Model Category: All models Select Degree-day calculator Thresholds in: Fahrenheit °F Lower: 50 Upper: 95 Calculation type: simple average/growing dds Start: Jan 1

Conferences

IPM Diagnostic Session (1 - 3 p.m.)

July 22, 2026

Location: CMREC, Ellicott City, MD

The Stanton A. Gill Symposium: A focus on biological control

August 4 and 5, 2026

Location: CMREC, Ellicott City, MD

FALCAN Truck & Trailer Safety Seminar

October 14, 2026

Location: Urbana Fire Hall, Urbana, MD

Registration opens in July.

Last year's FALCAN Truck & Trailer Safety Seminar sold out well before the event, and we expect another strong turnout this year. Whether you manage a fleet, operate trucks and trailers, or are responsible for compliance and safety, this seminar provides valuable information on the laws, regulations, and best practices that can help protect your business and avoid costly violations. We encourage you to share this information with supervisors, coworkers, and others within your organization who would benefit from attending. Seating is limited, and early registration is recommended.

2027 Advanced Landscape IPM PHC Short Course

This is a recertification short course for arborists, landscapers, IPM consultants, horticulturalists, professional gardeners, and others responsible for urban plant management. The course lectures will be held over four days at the University of Maryland, College Park, MD. In addition, there will be a hands-on lab following lecture (available to a limited number of course attendees). Coordinators: Drs. Paula Shrewsbury and Mike Raupp, Dept. of Entomology, University of Maryland

Lecture dates: Monday, January 4 - Thursday, January 7, 2027 from 8:00 am – 3:00 pm

Lab dates: Monday, January 4 - Thursday, January 7, 2027 from 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm (space limited)

Course information: <https://landscapeipmphc.weebly.com/>

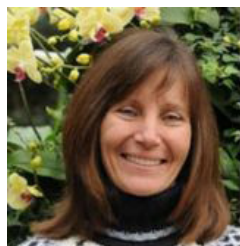
Registration: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2027-advanced-landscape-ipm-phc-short-course-tickets-1992372702386?aff=oddtcreator>

Questions contact: Amy Yaich, 301-405-3911, umdentomology@umd.edu

Commercial Ornamental IPM Information

<http://extension.umd.edu/ipm>

CONTRIBUTORS:



Paula Shrewsbury
Extension Specialist
pshrewsb@umd.edu



Laura Nixon
Extension Specialist
lnixon1@umd.edu



David Clement
Plant Pathologist
clement@umd.edu



Ana Cristina Fulladolsa
Plant Pathologist
acfulla@umd.edu



Nathan Glenn
Extension Educator
Howard County
nglenn@umd.edu



Nancy Harding
Faculty Research
Assistant



Kelly Nichols
Extension Educator
Montgomery County
kellyn@umd.edu



Dan Buonaiuto
Assistant Professor
Dept. of Plant
Sciences and Land-
scape Architecture
dbuona@umd.edu



Andrew Ristvey
Extension Specialist
aristvey@umd.edu



Ginny Rosenkranz
Extension Educator
Wicomico,
Worcester, Somerset
Counties
rosnkrnz@umd.edu

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