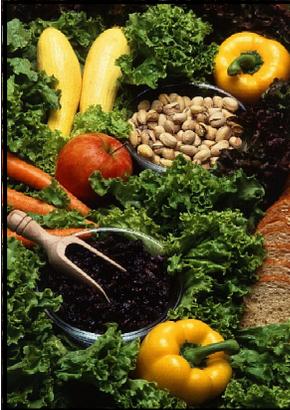




NC STATE UNIVERSITY

Home Gardening Newsletter



September-October
2016



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Horticulture News

White Pine Trees and the Matsucoccus Scale

The North Carolina Forest Service has been observing sporadic reports of eastern white pine in poor condition since mid-May of this year. Trees in Swain, Haywood, Madison, Mitchell, Ashe and Transylvania counties have shown symptoms of branch dieback, crown thinning, cankers of diseased or dead tissue, above normal resin flow, and some death. The culprit is believed to be a tiny scale insect, *Matsucoccus macrocaticrices* known previously to exist in Massachusetts, New Hampshire and parts of Canada. Affected trees may be observed typically on the edge of the forest and less frequently as an understory tree.

In 2006, the *Matsucoccus* scale was first identified on trees in Virginia with lower branch dieback, cankers and some mortality. In 2012, declining eastern white pine trees was observed in close proximity of a hemlock study site in northern Georgia. The pest identified was the *Matsucoccus* scale. Follow-up surveys in 2013 revealed the insect's presence in additional states including North Carolina and more specifically in the counties of Jackson, Macon, Madison and Transylvania. Researchers are uncertain whether this insect has been overlooked for years due to its small size and cryptic nature or if we are now observing its newly-expanded range.

The *Matsucoccus* scale can be found under lichen, in branch crotches, and embedded in cankers of eastern white pine trees. While it has been associated with several fungal species, the one most commonly found with the scale is *Caliciopsis pinea* which causes cankers from which large amounts of resin outflow. *Caliciopsis pinea* and the disease it causes have been known to occur in North Carolina since the 1930s. It most often affects dense stands, suppressed trees and trees on sites with poor soils.



The above information is taken from "Forestry Files" a N.C. Forest Service Blog <http://info.ncagr.gov/blog/2016/06/29/theres-a-new-bug-in-town-novel-insect-threatens-white-pine>

A Growing Threat - Japanese Knotweed

Japanese Knotweed also known as *Polygonum cuspidatum* is a non-native, fast-growing, aggressive weed that forms dense colonies excluding all other vegetation. This difficult to control weed was introduced into the United States during the late 1800's as an ornamental plant. It was valued for its rapid growth, bamboo-like stems, broad leaves and attractive flowers. By the early 20th century it had naturalized in isolated areas. Today, this species has established itself as one of the most invasive weeds of non-crop areas in the United States, displacing native vegetation on stream banks, interfering with water movement in drainage canals, and spreading on transportation rights of way. While driving throughout western N.C. you can observe this non-native species throughout Jackson and Swain counties.



Japanese knotweed is an herbaceous perennial shrub that emerges in the spring from underground stems (rhizomes), producing bamboo-like shoots. These shoots grow from 4-8 feet in height, forming dense colonies. The leaves are large and heart-shaped while the flowers on drooping panicles are white and sometimes tinted pink. Japanese Knotweed can tolerate a variety of adverse conditions including full shade and high temperatures and can be found near water sources e.g., streams, in low-lying areas, utility rights-of-way, and around old home sites. Japanese Knotweed spreads by rhizomes and produces fruit that are small, brown and triangular in shape. If near water, the seed can float and spread along waterways.

Plant Control

Japanese knotweed is difficult to control. Mechanical controls such as mowing or tillage are ineffective because plants regenerate from underground rhizomes or impractical in riparian areas where this weed is most common. Herbicides can be effective, and especially in combination with some type of mechanical control.

Research from Penn State University suggests mowing in early summer, treat with an herbicide in July (Glyphosate) to allow time for regrowth before fall, followed with a second herbicide application in September. A fall herbicide application of Glyphosate at 4 qt./acre is considered the best treatment window. Other herbicide options include imazapyr, dicamba, and triclopyr with glyphosate exhibiting the best control. If Japanese Knotweed is in an aquatic habitat, use products such as Rodeo or AquaNeat. Look to treat Japanese Knotweed for 2 consecutive years for effective control.



For more information, contact your local NCSU Extension Center at 828 586 4009 or 828 488 3848 and or go to Penn State University's publication at

<http://plantscience.psu.edu/research/projects/vegetative-management/publications/roadside-vegetative-mangement-factsheets/5managing-knotweed-on-roadsides>



Lawns

- Seed tall fescue and bluegrass lawns. Mulch newly seeded areas with straw and keep watered.
- Fertilize and lime tall fescue lawns with a slow release fertilizer.
- If needed, apply an insecticide for lawn grubs in early September.
- Core-aerate cool season lawns this month or next if soil is compacted.



Vegetables

- Sow seeds for carrots, lettuce, mustard, radishes, greens and spinach. Plant onion seed or sets.
- Transplant broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, and collards. Use floating row covers to protect cabbage family crops from cabbageworm moths.
- Collect herbs for drying or freezing for winter use.
- Dig Sweet Potatoes before first frost.
- Leafy greens can be harvested by pulling the whole plant, or by removing lower leaves and allowing the plant to continue to grow.
- Most winter vegetables, such as cabbage, broccoli and greens, do not need protection from cold temperatures until nights fall in the low 20s.
- Sow cover crops such as clover, annual rye, barley and buckwheat in fall-winter beds to improve soil structure and suppress weed.



Fruits

- Spray for peach tree borers on nectarine and peach tree trunks early in the month.
- Fertilize strawberry bed with 2 pounds of ammonium nitrate per 100 feet of row.
- Strawberry beds need one inch of water each week now for good blower bud development.
- Do not prune fruit trees until March.
- Pull weeds in the strawberry bed and cover the plants with straw.

Ornamentals

- When planting trees and shrubs, pay attention to correct planting depth. Water well and apply a 3 inch layer of mulch, being careful to pull the mulch a few inches away from the stem.
- Check landscape beds for winter annual weeds. Remove them now as they will only be larger in the spring.
- Inspect house plants, especially any that spent the summer outdoors. They often carry in small insects such as scale, mealybugs, whiteflies and spider mites.
- Prune maple, birch, elm, and willow trees now through January if needed.
- Pull bagworms off shrubs to prevent re-infestation next year.

Other

- This is an excellent time to soil sample while the test is free from April-November. A \$4.00 charge will begin during peak times from Dec-March. Results come back quickly this time of year, allowing plenty of time to start making adjustments for next season's garden.
- Continue feeding hummingbirds. Migrating birds need lots of feeding stations along their route.
- Turn the compost pile incorporating layers of chopped Autumn leaves.



Old Pesticide Pick-up Day

Do you have pesticides at your home, business or farm that you no longer need or use? If your answer is 'yes,' then you'll be interested to know that The NC Department of Agriculture's Pesticide Disposal Assistance Program, in cooperation with the Swain County Extension Center and Swain County Government, will be offering this Pesticide Collection Day for residents in Swain and Jackson Counties and the surrounding area.



The Collection will be from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday October 4th at the Recycling Center in Bryson City off of Old Hwy. 19.

Pesticides that will be accepted include insecticides, herbicides, fungicides, fumigants, rodenticides and growth regulators. For pesticides with unreadable or missing labels, please contact your local Extension Office for instructions. Please save any portion of the label to help identify the material so you can be assisted with disposal. Unknown materials cannot be accepted. Other hazardous materials, such as paint, antifreeze, solvents, etc. will not be accepted at this collection day. For additional information, contact Christy Bredenkamp at phone # 488-3848 or 586-4009 with the Swain and Jackson County Extension Centers.



Sincerely,

Christy Bredenkamp, Extension Agent
Agriculture-Horticulture



Page 4

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