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Clark County Horticulture Newsletter

July 2024



A Word from the Agent . . .

Hello everyone and happy July! At the current moment that I am writing this, it is hot. And humid. And just bleh. Unfortunately, I've noticed the hot and humid has made a lot of our vegetable plants feel bleh as well. It seems tomato disease is especially on the uptick this year. Which is not surprising considering the large amounts of rain we did have, followed by the current conditions. If your plants are suffering, give me a call and we'll see if there's anything that can be done for your situation.

There's a lot of other things I could remind you to do in your gardens, yards, and landscapes...but they are all in the quick tips section, so I'll just remind you to read that section! Instead, I'll use this spot to point out the Plant Propagation class on July 25th that you know you are going to want to come to! See the flyer for more details and sign up today! Lastly, don't forget I am here to help with your horticulture needs! I know I say that one a lot, but I also mean it the most. Stay cool and I'll see you around the county!

Carrie Spry
Clark County Extension Agent for Horticulture
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Clark / Powell
Beekeepers Association Meeting

Monday, July 8
6:30 pm

Clark County Extension Service
1400 Fortune Drive
Winchester, Kentucky

~ POT-LUCK MEAL ~

Zoom option available for those who cannot attend in person. Call 859-744-4682 to be added to the email list to receive the link.



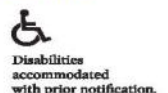
We Will Be Closed
ON 4TH OF JULY
HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY



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Mud Dauber Wasp

By: Carrie Spry

Clark County Extension Agent for Horticulture



I have always had the personal opinion that mud daubers are obnoxious. Growing up on the farm, they inevitably would build a mud nest somewhere that they shouldn't; in an inconvenient place, for us to discover at an inconvenient time. Often in the exhaust or breather of a piece of equipment or vehicle. I also knew that they weren't going to sting me like a wasp or a hornet would. But because they have a similar silhouette to that of a paper wasp, you were sure to pay attention when you saw that silhouette flying around out of the corner of your eye. Once you or someone around you was able to spot it long enough to determine what it was, we would quickly announce what the insect is. "Mud dauber", or "Wasp!", or "HORNET!!", each one taking a different tone. This way we knew whether to ignore it (mud daubers), keep an eye on it (wasp), or run (hornet). All of that to tell you, I have spent the majority of my life ignoring mud daubers.

I am fully aware that not all insects are bad. I am often the first one to say, leave that bug alone! I will even share unsolicited information about insects with my dear husband to show off what I have learned over the years. But because I had spent my life ignoring mud daubers, I had zero clue that they were great for spider control. My dear arachnophobic husband pointed that out to me the other night, and to be honest I didn't believe him at first. I went looking for info and to my surprise, he was right! So, maybe you are like me and have spent your life ignoring them. If so, I encourage you to read the rest of this as you might learn something like I did.

But now I would also like to point out, as I do to him frequently, spiders aren't the devil. They can be quite beneficial. But it does amaze me how there is such a balance in nature.

- **Description of mud dauber wasps:** Mud daubers are solitary wasps that construct small nests of mud in or around homes, sheds, and barns and under open structures, bridges, and similar sites. These wasps are long and slender with a narrow, thread-like waist. Some are a solid steel blue or black but others have additional yellow markings.
- **Life cycle mud dauber wasps:** This wasp group is named for the nests that are made from mud collected by the females. Mud is rolled into a ball, carried to the nest and molded into place with the wasp's mandibles. There are three different wasps that practice this behavior, each one looking different and constructing different types of nests.


After completing the mud nest the female captures several spiders or other insects to provision the cells. Prey are stung and paralyzed before being placed in the nest. A single egg is deposited on the prey within each cell, and the cell sealed with mud. After the wasp has finished a series of cells, she departs and does not return. The larvae that hatch from the eggs feed on the prey items left by the adult wasp. New adult wasps emerge to start the process over again.

- **Damage caused by mud dauber wasps:** Wasps usually evoke a great deal of anxiety or fear. However, solitary wasps such as the mud daubers do not defend their nest the way social wasps such as hornets and yellowjackets do. Mud daubers are very unlikely to sting, even when thoroughly aroused. They may sting if mishandled.
- **Management of mud dauber wasps:** Control of these insects is not warranted since they normally pose little threat. Rather, mud daubers should be regarded as beneficial, since they remove and use as prey many species of spiders which most people find disagreeable. The mud nests can be scraped off and discarded at night if they are objectionable, or wasp and hornet aerosol sprays can be used to treat nests if desired. There is no proven method that is effective in discouraging wasps from building nests in sheltered or protected areas. Prompt and frequent removal of nests is suggested in areas favored by the wasps.

Plant

Propagation

Class

 Cooperative
Extension Service



Registered participants will leave with the tools needed to create a simple windowsill propagation chamber for rooting vegetative cuttings.

Thursday, July 25

6:30 pm

Clark County Extension Service

Plant propagation is the process of growing new plants from existing ones, using seeds, cuttings, or other plant parts. It can be a natural process, like when seeds are dispersed, or it can be man-made. Join us as we cover the various methods of making new plants! We will discuss seeds, division, layering, and vegetative cuttings. *(We will give an honorable mention to grafting, but this class will not cover it in depth).*

To register:



859-744-4682



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**Cooperative
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Agriculture and Natural Resources
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MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

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Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.



After some up and down temperatures earlier this year, it seems summer has settled in for good. While a lot of the work we do in the garden happens in the spring, that doesn't mean we can coast through the summer. Here are some things we can be doing in our landscapes to help keep them going through the summer, and give us time to relax and enjoy our garden.

Water

As the temperatures heat up and the spigot in the sky turns off, providing supplemental water to our plants is often necessary. There are a variety of ways you can go about watering your plants. From just the hose with a nozzle, over-head sprinklers, or drip irrigation, each has its advantages and disadvantages. However you decide to water your plants, in general, most will need 1-2 inches of water a week, either through rainfall or irrigation. Just remember infrequent deep watering is better than frequent shallow watering.

Make sure to keep a close eye on your raised beds and container gardens. Raised beds and containers dry out much quicker than plants in the ground. Therefore, these will likely need to be watered more frequently. It's not uncommon to have to water potted plants daily during particularly hot, dry stretches of weather.

Don't forget to water recently planted trees and shrubs. These plants will need to be watered until they are established in the landscape, which can take several years. While shrubs will typically establish themselves in one to two years and small trees in 2-3 years, larger trees can take much longer (over five years).

Weeds

As the plants in our landscapes take off with the arrival of warm weather, so do weeds. Make sure you stay on top of weeds and don't allow them to go to seed. Mechanical (hand pulling, hoeing, etc.) is a good way to control small weeds or weeds in small areas.

Chemical control of weeds is dependent upon many factors like what the weed is, to where it is located. Even the weather is a factor, as high temps can cause some chemicals to volatilize. Since each weed control situation is different, reach out to your extension agent for help with this.

Mulching your plants can also help keep weeds down not only in flower beds and around trees, but also in vegetable gardens. Try using organic mulches like wood chips, straw, or shredded leaves. Not only will they help keep weeds down, as they break down they will also add organic matter to the soil.

Pests

Just like with many of our weeds, pest populations can also explode as the temperatures continue to heat up. It is important to go out and scout your landscape at least once a week. This will help you keep track of what's going on in your garden and help you stay on top of any pests that may be present.

Like with weeds, make sure you are properly identifying insects and diseases in your landscape. Some of them will warrant control, some you can live with, and others may not be pests at all!

When managing pests in your landscape, try to utilize IPM practices. Depending on the pest you're dealing with, there may be management options other than spraying pesticides. Often using cultural (disease resistant cultivars, altering planting dates), physical (netting plants, handpicking pests), and biological (conserving natural enemies) management techniques can provide adequate control of pests without the use of pesticides.

Make sure to remove any standing/stagnant water every 5-7 days to prevent them from turning into mosquito breeding grounds. For example, if you have a birdbath in your yard, make sure to change water frequently to help prevent standing water. Also, make sure you empty drip trays under potted plants and empty wading/kiddie pools.

Flowers

Many annual flowers don't require much care other than the occasional watering. However, some will benefit from deadheading (removing old flowers). Doing this encourages the plants to produce more flowers and helps keep them from looking ragged. This can be done by pinching the old flowers off with your fingers or with pruning shears. Some annuals that may benefit from deadheading are geraniums, marigolds, salvia, and snapdragons.

Annuals can also be pinched back. Pinching removes the tips of the plants and encourages them to branch. This causes plants to be shorter and fuller. This increased branching can lead to more blooms on plants too. Pinching can be done at any time, but a good time to do it is when the plants begin to get leggy and flop.

Vegetables

If you haven't done so already, harvest your cool-season crops like lettuce, broccoli, and spinach. As the temperatures get warmer, the quality of these plants will decline, and they will begin to bolt (flower).

Make sure you're harvesting vegetables like cucumbers, sweet corn, and green beans at the proper time. Cucumbers can be picked at any stage, but make sure to pick them before they start to turn yellow. Green beans should be picked when they are fully elongated but before the seeds have gotten too large. Sweet corn should be harvested when it is in the milk stage (kernels will have a milky liquid when pierced). Also, keep up with harvesting your other vegetables, such as tomatoes and peppers.

Come July and August, you can begin planting your fall garden. Many cool-season vegetables that we grow in the spring, like broccoli, cabbage, carrots, lettuce, and spinach, can be planted again in mid-to-late summer to extend our growing season. Many of these crops end up doing better because they are developing as the weather cools as opposed to in the spring, where they are developing as temperatures warm.

Attack of the Flying Spiders

By Jonathan L. Larson, Entomology Extension Specialist

Over the past week, there has been a lot of media coverage focused on an introduced spider species known as the Jorō spider. While this species doesn't belong here in the USA, it is spreading in the Southeast and much of the press this year is focused on the chances it may appear further north in places like New York City. It's easy to see why this orb weaving wonder might tingle the spine. Fully-grown females are around 4 inches wide when you include the legs, but luckily they pose little to no hazard to people.

Jorō Spider Basics

The native range for the Jorō spider is in southeastern Asia and Japan. Since their first detection in Georgia, they have spread to Tennessee, North and South Carolina, Alabama, West Virginia, Maryland, and Oklahoma.

As with many spiders, the male and female Jorō spider look quite different. The female is the larger one; their actual body is about 1.25 inches long. They are quite colorful with an abdomen featuring banded markings of yellow and silver-green on top, and yellow and red markings on the belly-side. Their legs are banded yellow and black. Males, on the other hand, are only about a quarter inch long and dull-colored. They reach maturity and mate in the late summer or early autumn and overwinter as eggs in a sac produced by the mother.

They don't truly "fly" in the sky. Flapping spider legs won't produce lift. However, like many other spiders, when the eggs hatch, the spiderlings often release a silk thread that will catch on the wind and take the spider to the skies. They are at the mercies of the weather at that point, but this skill will aid them as they continue to move through the eastern U.S.

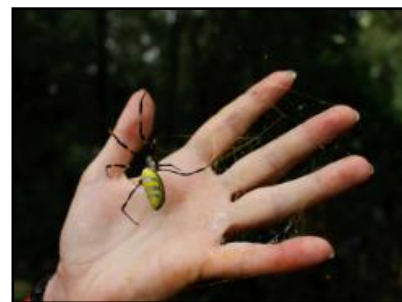


Figure 1: Adult Jorō spider females are large and in charge. Handling them isn't encouraged, but they are not an aggressive species. (Photo: Carly Mirabile, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org)



Figure 2: Joro spider webs can be extensive and annoying. People in Georgia and other states report difficulty in navigating their yards as they try to avoid accidentally walking into the webbing (Photo: Carly Mirabile, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org).

Issues with Jorō Spider

Broadly speaking, Jorō spiders don't pose a hazard to people. Like all spiders they are equipped with venom, though theirs is relatively weak compared to other spiders. They don't look to bite unless directly handled or provoked. They want to use the venom to subdue their prey rather than for defensive purposes. Jorō spiders can serve as beneficial predators in the landscape, potentially eating pest mosquitoes, moths, and even invasive species, such as the spotted lanternfly.

However, they can be annoying in the late summer and early fall. When they reach maturity, their webs can be quite large. The webbing itself has a golden luster to it but not all that glitters is enjoyable in this case. People often have dozens of webs on their property, making mowing and outdoor leisure difficult. Nobody likes to walk into a spider web.

Look-alikes in Kentucky

The Jorō spider has not been located in Kentucky as of the publication of this article. However, it is not far away from the state since it has been found in Tennessee and West Virginia, so there is potential it could arrive here soon. However, many Kentuckians have mistaken two other species of large orb weavers for this introduced one: (1) the black and yellow garden spider and (2) the banded garden spider. As seen in the images below,

there are distinct differences in the colors, markings, and legs of these species but, at first glance, they can all look alike. Another important distinction is the "zipper" or zig-zag often seen in garden spider webs is not common with Jorō spiders. If you see that marking, you likely have one of our usual arachnid pals.



Black and yellow garden spider

Banded garden spider

Jorō spider

Figure 3: A comparison of the common garden spiders of Kentucky and the Joro spider.

If you believe you have seen a Jorō spider, you can send in photos and your county location to reportapest@uky.edu



Gus'

QUICK TIPS

for


JULY

july

- 1 Now is the time to plan and plant a fall garden. Most plants with shorter growing seasons can be grown in the fall and often produce better results. Allow a little more time to mature than the seed package says as cooler nights will slow growth somewhat.
- 2 When watering, try to avoid wetting foliage or watering late in the evening as both can promote disease.
- 3 Do not spray chemicals in the heat of the day, PLEASE! Many plants can be damaged. Spray in the early morning or late evening when temperatures are cooler.
- 4 Monitor evergreens for spider mite damage. Drought stressed plants are particularly at risk. If you see signs of browning shake the branch over a white surface, if you see tiny moving red specks you likely have mites. Minor infestations can be treated with a daily spray from the hose. Larger problems may need chemical control.
- 5 Remove spent blooms from flowering annuals and perennials to promote more bloom. If your late blooming perennials (Asters, Goldenrod, Butterfly Bush, Mums, etc.) are already tall and threatening to flop, prune them back to 1' in height. This will result in a fuller, sturdier plant that will bloom slightly later than normal.

RECIPE

What's
Cooking?



Mozzarella Basil Chicken with Roasted Grape Tomatoes

4 (4 ounce) boneless chicken breast halves	12 large fresh basil leaves	2 ½ cups grape tomatoes, halved
½ cup lite balsamic vinaigrette dressing	2 ounces low-fat skim mozzarella cheese, cut into four slices	4 tablespoons shredded Parmesan cheese

Place chicken breasts into a 1 gallon zip close plastic bag. **Pour** ¼ cup of dressing over chicken. **Marinate** in refrigerator for 30 minutes. **Preheat** oven to 400 degrees F. **Remove** chicken breasts from marinade. **Discard** bag and marinade. Make a deep **slice** into one long side of each chicken breast half, being careful not to cut through to the opposite side. **Fill** each chicken breast pocket with 2 basil leaves, 1 slice of mozzarella cheese, and two grape tomato halves. **Place** chicken on one side of rimmed baking sheet sprayed with nonstick spray;

add tomatoes to the other side of baking sheet. **Sprinkle** each breast half with 1 tablespoon of Parmesan cheese. **Bake** 30 minutes or until chicken reaches an internal temperature of 165 degrees F. **Cut** remaining basil leaves into thin slices and toss with remaining dressing and roasted tomatoes. **Serve** chicken topped with tomato mixture.

Yield: 4 servings

Nutritional Analysis: 220 calories, 6 g fat, 3 g saturated fat, 85 mg cholesterol, 720 mg sodium, 10 g carbohydrate, 1 g fiber, 5 g sugar, 31 g protein.

Plate it up!
Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.
<http://plateitup.ca.uky.edu>