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Weird Weather Continues in 2023

By: Stanton Gill

We continue with the up and down cold weather, followed by warm weather spurts this winter. Mark Schlossberg, ProLawn Plus, Inc., sent in pictures last week of daffodils popping their tip growth through the soil. I have seen similar activity in the Brookeville area of Maryland. We had a picture sent in last week from Chris Sargent of a forsythia in bloom in College Park. We will see what damage this erratic weather will have on plant material in the spring.



Daffodils coming up through the soil last week
Photo: Mark Schlossberg, ProLawn Plus, Inc.

IPMnet
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 sgill@umd.edu



Dandelion in bloom in January in Pikesville
Photo: Mark Schlossberg, ProLawn Plus, Inc.



Pachysandra is one of the plants on which deer are feeding in the landscape
Photo: Mark Schlossberg, ProLawn Plus, Inc.

Pesticide Law Regulation for West Virginia

By: Stanton Gill

While attending the MANTS trade show in Baltimore, I visited the West Virginia Nursery Association booth. The representative mentioned that new legislation was passed in West Virginia that may impact you if you have had a license to apply pesticides in WV. If you have a West Virginia pesticide license for applying pesticide as a commercial applicator, there is a major law change in 2023 of which you need to be aware.

West Virginia law now **allows people to commercially apply pesticides without a license** — and without meeting the minimum federal requirements needed for the West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) to regulate pesticides.

2022 REGULAR SESSION

Introduced House Bill 4644

By Delegates Foster, Kimes, and Steele

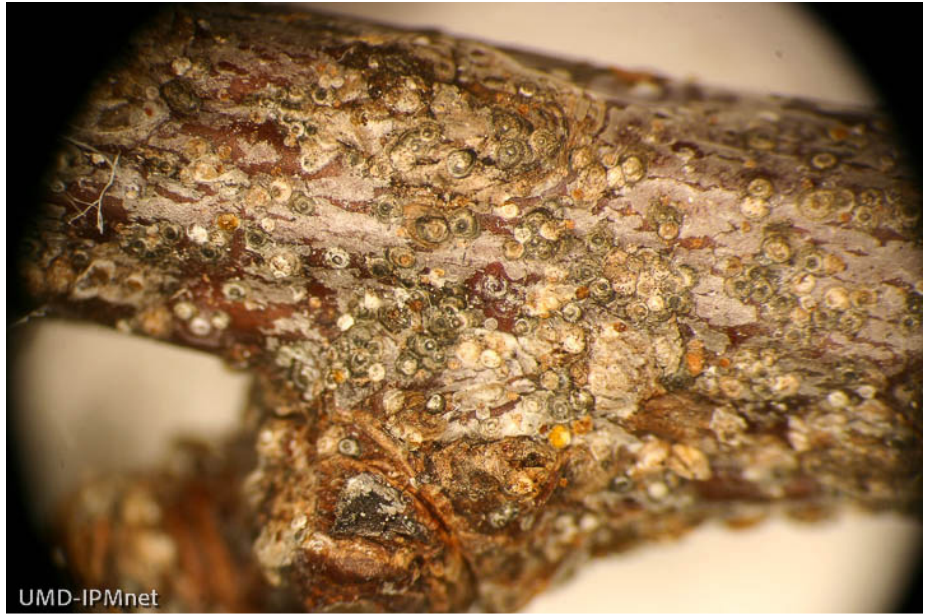
[Introduced February 11, 2022; Referred to the Committee on Government Organization] Passes and Enacted in January of 2023

A BILL amend and reenact [**§19-16A-14**](#) of the Code of West Virginia, 1931, as amended, relating to agriculture and the West Virginia Pesticide Control Act; and exempting from the requirement of an annual pesticide business license for persons applying products that are generally available through retail sale at groceries, drug stores and other stores offering a broad variety of consumer products.

Check for Scale While Pruning Fruit Trees This Winter

By: Stanton Gill

We are seeing an uptick in samples of an armored scale commonly called the San Jose scale, *Quadraspidiotus perniciosus* (Comstock). Don't be fooled by the common name – it is not originally from California or even from America. It originated in China but was introduced into Southern Californian back in the early 1870s on peach trees that were imported. By the 1890s, it had spread to all parts of the United States. It was transported on fruit trees being moved around by nurseries and uniformed horticulturists.



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San Jose Scale on plum as seen under the microscope

In many nurseries, growers have started growing larger fruit trees to sell to customers who want full size producing

fruit trees. With this influx of trees that are grafted, several are slipping through that have low populations of this armored scale on the trunk or branches. Cherry laurel is another plant host for this scale. Several nurseries have submitted branch samples loaded with female scale to our CMREC lab.

The scale is a tiny insect that sucks the plant juices from twigs, branches, fruit, and foliage. Although an individual scale cannot inflict much damage, a single female and her offspring can produce several thousand scales in one season. In the nursery, it may not be noticeable for the 3 or 4 years it is growing in the nursery row, but will become apparent when moved into the landscape. If uncontrolled, they can kill the tree.

Hosts

San Jose scale is most destructive on apple and pear, but it can be a serious pest of sweet cherry, peach, prune and other tree fruits. It also attacks nut trees, berry bushes, and many kinds of shade trees and ornamental shrubs. We are receiving samples with this scale on flowering plums and crabapples.

Control Options

Dormant rates (2- 3%) of horticultural oil sprays can be applied to the overwintering scales to suffocate them. At this point, wait until March or April when temperatures reach 50 - 55 °F for several days in a row and temperatures do not drop below freezing at night.

A better (usually more expensive control) is to use insect growth regulators. There are two on the market. The first is Buprofezin: (Talus for ornamentals, Applaud for use on fruit). Buprofezin is effective via contact, ingestion and vapor activity. In addition to its primary mode of action, Talus also suppresses egg-laying and causes egg sterilization in infected adults. Applaud and Talus are contact insecticides in as much as it is neither absorbed by the plant nor translocated to growing points.

The second IGR is Pyriproxyfen sold under the names Distance (labeled for ornamental plants) and Esteem (labeled for use on fruit plantings).

Asian Longhorned Beetle Update

USDA is reporting that north Charlestown and Hollywood, SC have been placed in quarantine for Asian longhorned borer.

Galls on Plums

By: Stanton Gill

David Clement had a photo sent to him this week of a large gall on plum that he asked me to look at with him. It was not an insect gall, but rather a gall commonly called black knot. It doesn't matter if they are edible or decorative plums, landscaping variety, the trees could be fatally affected. Black knot is also found on cherry trees. Since twigs and branches are easily seen during winter, it is a good idea to check any plums or cherries for galls or swollen growths. If you see this swollen growth on your customers' trees, go ahead and prune it out now. Wait to completely prune a plum until it warms up above 50 °F in March or early April to avoid making wounds that cytosports canker can enter.

Black knot causes black, corky, swollen growths to form on branches, twigs and occasionally trunks. The nutrient and moisture flow are cut off to the branch that extends beyond the black knot. The spread of the disease has to do with suitable hosts and humid weather during the growing season.

If you see this now, you need to make sure protectant fungicides go on the tree branches and trunks during the growing season. You can contact me for suitable fungicides later this spring.



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Black knot on *Prunus*

Multi-colored Asian Lady Beetles

Multi-colored Asian lady beetles overwinter as adults. Marie Rojas, IPM Scout, found them at her place in Montgomery County. You may see them clustering in buildings over the winter. They are good predators of aphids in trees.



Adult multi-colored Asian lady beetles find places in buildings where they congregate to overwinter. Photo: Marie Rojas, IPM Scout

Conferences

Go to the [IPMnet Conference Page](#) for links and details on these programs.

February 6, 2023

Western Maryland Pest Management Conference
Location: Allegany Fairgrounds, Cumberland, MD

February 15, 2023

2023 Eastern Shore Pest Management Conference
Location: Salisbury, MD

February 16 and 17, 2023

Chesapeake Green Horticultural Symposium
Location: Maritime Institute, Linthicum Heights, MD

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Photos are by Suzanne Klick or Stanton Gill unless stated otherwise.

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