

Commercial Horticulture

Special Alert

January 17, 2024

**In This Issue...**

- Spongy moth update
- Spotted lanternfly eggs
- Winter protections of figs
- Disease tolerant apples

[Conferences](#)

[Pest Predictive Calendar](#)

**IPMnet**  
**Integrated Pest**  
**Management for**  
**Commercial Horticulture**  
[extension.umd.edu/ipm](http://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](mailto:sgill@umd.edu)

**Coordinator Weekly IPM Report:**

Stanton Gill, Extension Specialist, IPM and Entomology for Nursery, Greenhouse and Managed Landscapes, [sgill@umd.edu](mailto:sgill@umd.edu). 410-868-9400 (cell)

**Regular Contributors:**

Pest and Beneficial Insect Information: Stanton Gill and Paula Shrewsbury (Extension Specialists) and Nancy Harding, Faculty Research Assistant

Disease Information: Karen Rane (Plant Pathologist), David Clement (Extension Specialist) and Fereshteh Shahoveisi (Turf Pathologist)

Weed of the Week: Chuck Schuster (Retired Extension Educator), Kelly Nichols, Nathan Glenn, and Mark Townsend (UME Extension Educators)

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)

**Update on Spongy Moth, *Lymantria dispar dispar*, Populations in Maryland**

From: MDA, Forest Pest Management

Over 23,000 acres of spongy moth defoliation was mapped this year in Allegany, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties. The fungus, *Entomophaga maimaiga*, was seen causing mortality in late instar caterpillars on the lower Eastern Shore. This coupled with the nuclear polyhedrosis virus (NPV) reduced populations of caterpillars. These two epizootics in conjunction with our suppression effort have significantly reduced the spongy moth populations on the lower Eastern Shore.

This is not the case in Western Maryland. The drought conditions combined with an increase in caterpillar populations and a decrease in the native epizootics caused a large increase in spongy moth in Allegany, Garrett, Washington, and Frederick Counties. As such approximately 30,000 acres of spongy moth suppression is being proposed. The majority of the acreage proposed is in Allegany, Garrett, and Washington Counties, with 10% of the proposed suppression occurring in Somerset, Wicomico, & Worcester Counties. Notices to those who are affected will be sent out in February.

MDA FPM Staff are continuing their evaluation across Maryland for spongy moth. Spongy moth egg mass surveys will likely be completed in January. If you have questions, contact your local FPM office.

## Spotted Lanternfly Eggs

Rich Beere, Scientific Plant Service found spotted lanternfly egg masses on January 4 in the Cherry Hill area of Baltimore. If you find egg masses, you can scrape them off of the trunk.



Look for spotted lanternfly egg masses during the winter.  
Photo: Rich Beere, Scientific Plant Service

## Winter Protection for Figs

By: Stanton Gill

If your customers have fig plants then the weather this week may kill back the stems unless you have protected them. Fig trees are native to the Mediterranean and Middle Eastern regions and the stems are damaged in cold winters. The roots are hardy to well below the negative Fahrenheit range but the stems are not as hardy. This week, on Wednesday night, on January 16th the temperatures dropped to 9 °F and this will damage the fig stems. Tonight, it is supposed to go down to 17 °F. Even the tough Chicago hardy fig will suffer when temperatures drop down into single digits, which it may do later this winter.

We grow figs in Westminster in our orchard and we protect them by pruning back to only 1 and 2-year old stems, keeping the plant small and manageable, These young stems are very flexible and can be bundled together in winter and lashed with a rope (see picture). We then surround the stems with a thick mat but we have used comforters from thrift stores with good success. They are very inexpensive at thrift stores such as Goodwill. We then wrap this cover with a plastic sheet that is held in place bound by roping. The end product looks a little like a modern art piece. We remove the covering in late April to early May.

In this way the stems are spared from winter injury and we are able to obtain the breba crops, the first crop of figs that shows up in August. A breba crop develops on the old wood of common fig trees during spring after the fig leaves emerge. The branches which bear the breba crop are from the previous year's one and two-year-old wood on which flower buds develop in fall or later summer.



**Step 1. Tie the flexible young fig branches together.**  
Photo: Stanton Gill, UME



**Step 2. Wrap branches with a thick mat.**  
Photo: Stanton Gill, UME



**Step 3. Wrap the fig bundle with plastic.**  
Photo: Stanton Gill, UME

## Something New for the Maryland Nurseries

By: Stanton Gill

During COVID outbreak several nurseries found the demand for fruit trees increased dramatically. Apple cultivars sold very well. If you are looking for a new apple cultivar that is adapted for nursery growing that fits in an IPM Approach then I have a good candidate for you.

This new disease tolerant apple cultivar is called Triumph and was released from the Michigan State apple breeding program and made commercially available in 2021. It had a name of MN80 while still under evaluation but the Michigan State University branded it under the name Triumph and released it into the commercial market in 2021. I had to wait until 2024 before wholesale plant producers had enough for me to add to the 114 cultivars I grow presently. The Triumph shows excellent tolerance to Apple scab- a common apple disease. It also shows only low susceptibility to Cedar Apple Rust and it has not been observed to be susceptible to fire blight. Though it is resistant to fire blight if the weather is warm and humid at flowering fire blight pressure may be high enough to cause some dieback. This apple does take a couple years to produce fruit but is a consistent and heavy cropper once it gets established.

A cross between the Honey Crisp and Liberty apples, the Triumph has traits from both its parents. Liberty has been sold as very disease tolerant cultivar for years but the quality was not really where it should be. The combination is both diseases tolerant and have the rich flavor of HoneyCrisp with a slight tartness which is very nice. It is a medium sized apple, bright red in color, and shiny. It is sweet with the slightest hint of tartness with crisp white flesh. I tried the apple in 2023 at a Pennsylvania/Maryland fruit conference and the flavor was very good. The fruit is also reported to hold up well in cold storage. It is ready to harvest right around mid-September, it is a great pollinator for mid -season apples. Ripens in mid-September with attractive red color fruit.

I am establishing 15 trees, with some grafted-on Geneva 41 understocks and some on M-& understock to see how each perform in central Maryland.

### Horticulture classes starting soon at Montgomery College

Classes start the week of January 22.

The courses are offered in differing formats including online, hybrid (online but with face-to-face field trips) and all face-to-face. **In-county tuition rates** are available for Business/Industry employees. Businesses or other organizations that do business in the state of Maryland may be eligible to enter into an agreement with the College that affords their employees or members tuition and fees at the in-county residence rate, regardless of actual domicile. Detailed instructions are provided on the [Business and Industry form](#).

Web registration: [Montgomery College | Montgomery College, Maryland](#)

For further information about the program/courses contact:

Steve Dubik (240) 567-7803 [steve.dubik@montgomerycollege.edu](mailto:steve.dubik@montgomerycollege.edu)

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

**January 26, 2024**

FALCAN Conference

Location: Frederick Community College, Frederick, MD

**February 8, 2024**

[25th Anniversary - Manor View Farm & The Perennial Farm Education Seminar](#)

**Location:** Valley Mansion, Cockeysville MD

Speakers: John Stanley (Green Industry International Business Consultant), Vinnie Simone (Planting Fields Arboretum, NY), Janet Draper (Smithsonian Gardens) & Stanton Gill (UMD Extension)

Registration information available soon.

**February 14, 2024**

Eastern Shore Pest Management Conference

Location: Wicomico Civic Center, Salisbury, MD

**Information and Registration:** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2024-eastern-shore-pest-management-conference-tickets-726283502507?aff=oddtcreator>

**February 15 and 16, 2024**

Chesapeake Green Horticulture Conference

Location: Maritime Institute, Linthicum Heights, MD

**February 20-21, 2024**

Drone Program

Location: Central Maryland Research and Education Center, Ellicott City, MD

**March 6 and 7, 2024**

Cut Flower Program

Location: Central Maryland Research and Education Center, Ellicott City, MD

**March 26 - 29, 2024**

IPM Scouts' Training

Location: Central Maryland Research and Education Center, Ellicott City, MD

**June 5 and 6, 2024 (previously scheduled for February 2024)**

Biological Control Conference for Greenhouses, Nurseries, and Landscapes

Location: Central Maryland Research and Education Center, Ellicott City, MD

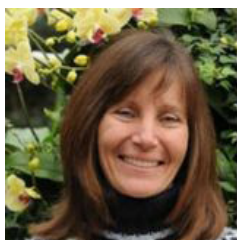
**Commercial Ornamental IPM Information**  
<http://extension.umd.edu/ipm>

---

**CONTRIBUTORS:**



Stanton Gill  
Extension Specialist  
sgill@umd.edu  
410-868-9400 (cell)



Paula Shrewsbury  
Extension Specialist  
pshrewsb@umd.edu



Karen Rane  
Plant Pathologist  
rane@umd.edu



Chuck Schuster  
Retired, Extension Educator  
cfs@umd.edu



David Clement  
Plant Pathologist  
clement@umd.edu



Andrew Ristvey  
Extension Specialist  
aristvey@umd.edu



Ginny Rosenkranz  
Extension Educator  
rosnkranz@umd.edu



Nancy Harding  
Faculty Research Assistant



Fereshteh Shahoveisi  
Assistant Professor  
fsh@umd.edu



Kelly Nichols  
Extension Educator  
kellyn@umd.edu

Thank you to the Maryland Arborist Association, the Maryland Nursery, Landscape, and Greenhouse Association, Professional Grounds Management Society, and FALCAN for their financial support in making these weekly reports possible.

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

The information given herein is supplied with the understanding that no discrimination is intended and no endorsement by University of Maryland Extension is implied.

University programs, activities, and facilities are available to all without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, age, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, religion, protected veteran status, genetic information, personal appearance, or any other legally protected class.