



Coming Events

Workshops and Demonstrations

- Thurs., Aug 6, 10:00a
Hydroponics
- Thurs., Aug 20, 10:00a
Fall Lawn Care
- Thurs., Sept 3, 10:00a
Screen Gardens
- Wed., Sept. 16th, 9:00a - 6:00p
MASTER GARDENER PLANT SALE
- Thurs., Sept 24, 10:00a
Planting Trees and Shrubs

All classes will begin in the auditorium at the Agriculture Building and are free unless otherwise indicated. Registration is required. Call 336-570-6740, or register online here: <http://alamance.ces.ncsu.edu/>

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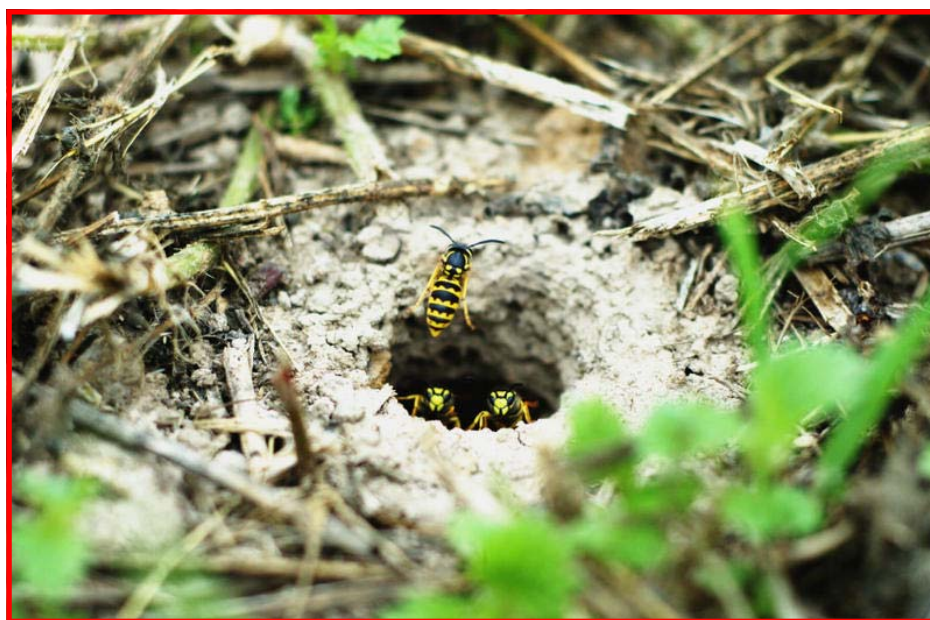


Interested in becoming an Extension Master Gardener ?
See page 2



The Buzz of Summer

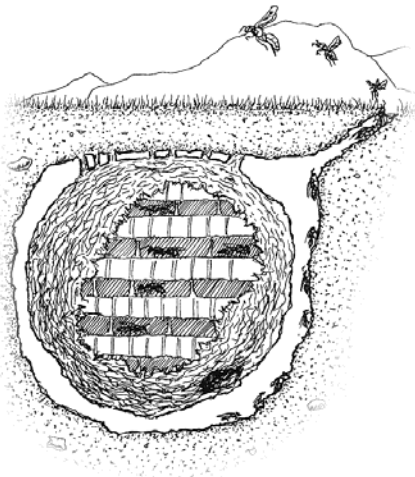
August is a challenging time of year to do any kind of outside work. The hot and humid weather takes most of the fun out of gardening. There is also the issue of insects. Mosquitos are present in large numbers in my garden, but they aren't my least favorite insect. That distinction belongs to a small wasp known as a yellow jacket. I ran over a yellow jacket nest with a tractor several years ago and was stung about 25 times. Needless to say after that incident I became less fond of yellow jackets. Based on the number of calls we have had lately there are a number of folks that share my feelings about those small wasps.



I'll go over control strategies in more detail a little further on in the article, but I do want to tell you what you should **never** do and that is pour gasoline in the yellow jacket nest. That is a very common practice and one of the worst things you can ever do in your yard. I guess this practice started years ago because everybody had gas in the garage for the lawnmower and gas will kill yellow jackets. Of course no one thought much about the environmental impact of pouring gasoline on the soil. Some of the literature I have read states that a single gallon of gasoline can contaminate one million gallons of water. That is most likely when gas is spilled directly into a lake or well, but you get the idea. Gasoline applied to the soil can certainly have a negative impact on groundwater quality and is not real good for plants either.

A Real Buzz Kill

Yellow jackets overwinter as mated future queens in protected places under tree bark, in old stumps and sometimes attics. In the spring she starts building the nest alone, but as soon as enough workers have hatched to take over nest building and foraging for food, she concentrates on egg laying. These workers continue to expand the nest until there may be 600-800 workers in one colony by fall. Rarely are yellow jacket nests a problem until the worker population gets large in late summer. Late summer is also the time when the queen produces female reproductives which will be next year's queens. The nest is abandoned in late fall and is not reused the following year.



Destruction of a yellow jacket colony may not be necessary if it is in a secluded spot because they do feed on insects that we consider pests. As much as I have a hard time believing they are beneficial I guess that is possible. Usually they nest in an area that people frequent and can be a problem in late summer when the population gets large. That is when the gasoline is misused. So what is the proper way to get rid of yellow jackets? The first step is to try to locate the nest. Sometimes you can find the entrance and sometimes you can't.



If you can locate the entrance to the nest, applying a pesticide directly into the nest opening will give the best control. A "Wasp & Hornet" spray that has a 10-12 foot range is your best bet. That range will give you a little head start in case you need to leave the area quickly after spraying. You may prefer to enlist the aid of a teenage boy who still believes he is yellow jacket proof. In either case you want to treat the nest at dusk when most of the yellow jackets are in the nest. Avoid using a flashlight since that could give the angry insects a clue to your location.

The trickier situation is when the nest is beneath a shrub or tree and you can't easily find the entrance. This is where you may need to hire a professional with a long range sprayer. The goal here is to apply the pesticide to the general area in hopes of hitting the nest or at least getting close enough to make the yellow jackets abandon the nest. More than one treatment will probably be necessary and again it is advisable to have a rather mobile applicator. Recommended pesticides include carbaryl (Sevin) and bifenthrin (Fertilome Broad Spectrum Insecticide).

If you have any questions about controlling yellow jackets or any other garden pest, please give me or Chris a call.

Yellow Jacket Wasp



Honey Bee



Release Your Inner Gardener!

It's been the norm that the Alamance Master Gardeners have a new class only every other year, but, by popular demand, we're considering an Extension Master Gardener Class of 2016!

Here's a link to an informative brochure on what the Alamance EMGVs are about: <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/?p=367806>

Here's the application: <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Application-2016.pdf>

Interested, but need more information? Call (336) 570-6740, or e-mail christine.stecker@alamance-nc.com





August Garden Tips

Continue pinching back annual flowers to encourage new bloom right up until frost. Stop fertilizing roses by the end of the month.

August brings heat and humidity and as a consequence, things may not be looking too great in your yard and garden. Insects and diseases have taken their toll over the course of the summer. Much of this burned-out look may be attributed to the end-of-summer wind down and can be addressed with a little judicious pinching back. However, if you feel the use of pesticides is warranted, please contact the Cooperative Extension Service for proper identification of the pest and help in selecting the best product to use. Phone 570-6740.

Take stock of your lawn this month. If the "green" is more than half weeds and weedy grasses, a complete lawn renovation may be in order. Renovation of fescue lawns begins now with an application of Round Up or the equivalent to kill out Bermuda grass and other pesky weeds. A second application may be needed

in two weeks to ensure a thorough job.

Feed basil with a liquid fertilizer to keep it productive into fall. If you cut off the seed heads, the plant will put more energy into producing flavorful foliage.

Your fall vegetable garden starts this month. Before the 15th, plant cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, spinach, cucumbers, leaf lettuce and kohlrabi. Between the 15th and the 30th plant kale, turnips, mustard, head lettuce and radishes.

Collect soil samples from lawn and garden and take them to the Cooperative Extension for analysis. This service is still free until November 25th and we'll be happy to take your sample to the NCDA lab next time one of the staff goes to Raleigh. If you're in a hurry, you can mail your sample yourself. Just pick up a mailing carton when you come in for your soil boxes and submission form.

Treat for turf pests now, if needed. Cut a 12-inch square of turf

and peel it back. If there are fewer than six white grubs visible in the exposed dirt, put the turf back and forget about it. Six or more and you may need to treat the lawn.

Try not to disturb the soil in flower beds during hot, dry August days. Loosening the soil through cultivation can damage surface roots and increase water loss. Instead, inspect mulch and replenish where needed; 2 to 3 inches between the plants, but only about 1/2" around the base of each plant.

Avoid overhead watering of plants to slow the spread of disease. Water in the early morning to allow foliage, fruit and flowers to dry out before evening. Early-morning watering discourages slugs, too. Dry surface soil slows down their nocturnal activities.

Fall webworms and azalea caterpillars are now making their presence known. Hand pick what you can reach. Break open webs to expose the worms to the birds and the elements.





Liriope muscari

Monkey Grass, Lily Turf

A real landscape problem-solver, *Liriope* works year-round as an evergreen border, slope holder and ground cover in sun or shade. But, in August, this unsung hero of the landscape puts on a lovely flower show in shades of purple and white. Dark green or variegated, *Liriope muscari* forms dense clumps about 12 inches high and 18 inches wide. Plant divisions about 12 inches on center to create a solid mass or border. Cousin *Liriope spicata* is a spreading type—keep this one in a confined area or it could overtake the garden.

For best appearance, cut back either species in late winter, just before the new leaves sprout. A lawn mower set at its highest setting works just fine for this task.

It may not be the star of your perennial border, but Monkey Grass doesn't monkey around when it comes to doing its job in the landscape.

Click the link below for a bit more information on Lily Turf



<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/all/liriope-muscari/>