



“What’s Growing On...”

Volume 17 Number 1 Spring 2014 Edition Published Quarterly

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Attachments

For agriculture news and horticultural tips, listen to me, Pam Burton, on the RCE Agricultural Program on Monday, Wednesday & Thursday on WSNJ AM 1440 & 1240 at **11:30 pm** announcing local workshops, seminars, and horticultural tips.

From The Desk of Pam Burton

It's hard to believe I've been here since October and yet it feels like home. I have had a wonderful journey so far and I'm certain many new doors will open for me in 2014. Spring is such a happy time of year and is full of hope and anticipation.

I love to see the first harbingers of spring in the witch hazel blossoms and helleborus blooms. It seems like after winter's rest, spring is bursting forth full of energy and all that time we spent planning our gardens is finally coming to fruition. We're so glad we thought to have all of our materials ready so we don't waste one minute of the longer days in trekking to the market for tools and equipment.

May will mark a milestone for me in the graduation of the Class of 2014 Rutgers Master Gardeners interns. This is the first program of classes that I have had the pleasure to be a part of and I have been overwhelmed by the quality of the instructors and information provided to the students. My many thanks to all of the Certified Master Gardeners who came to the classes and helped mentor the Class of 2014. From a Home Horticulture perspective, I've had a glimpse of the questions that may be asked of the Help Desk from participating in the Master Gardeners classes of 2014.

I figure I can use the phrase "I'm new here" for at least one year, as it will take that long to fully comprehend all that the Master Gardeners do in programs and activities. It's my pleasure to sit at the front desk at the Extension office and greet people as they come in the door for whatever brings them our way.

Time to Renew.....

As in the past, we are required to update our mailing lists every year. It is now that time again! Attached to this newsletter you will find your subscription information. If you wish to continue receiving "What's Growing On...", please review your information; update necessary items and renew your subscription one of the following ways:

- Return your information by mail: Rutgers Cooperative Extension
291 Morton Avenue
Millville, NJ 08332
Attention: Tammy
- Fax your form back to: 856-451-4206, or
- Call Tammy and request renewal at: 856-451-2800 x1

We are now sending out the newsletter two ways: Regular mail and email! If you are not already doing so and wish to receive your newsletter by email, just indicate same on your information sheet prior to return. You will receive all the same information but with the beautiful colors!

Don't miss out on any of the exciting gardening information provided in "What's Growing On...." All renewals are due back to our office no later than Thursday, May 15, 2014.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our office at 856-451-2800 x1.

Cole crops



Please note, that is spelled **c o l e** and not **c o l d**. While cole and cold sound the same they have different meanings. "Cold" refers to temperature while cole refers to the plants belonging to the Criciferae or mustard family and are grown for their edible leaves, stalks and flowers. The cole crops include cabbage, cauliflower, broccoli, brussel sprouts, collards, kale and kohlrabi. The word cole actually means stem but it is confusing since these cole crops are cool season vegetables.

Rutgers Fact Sheet #561 entitled "Growing Cole Crops in the Home Garden" suggests that for spring cole crops it's best to get a jump on the season by growing transplants. This can be done 4-6 weeks prior to outdoor planting and can be done in a greenhouse, by a sunny window or under fluorescent lights. Cole crop seedlings do not want to be subjected to temperatures below 50°F for more than 10 days. At the same time it is recommended that you test the soil in the area that you will be growing your crops. You can get a soil test kit at the Extension Center for \$20.00 and it will indicate the pH of the soil, the level of fertility and recommend appropriate amendments.

The first line of defense against all insect pests and diseases of cole crops is crop rotation, so be sure not to plant cole crops in the same spot year after year. When it comes time to plant cole crops be sure to have mulch on hand. Mulching the crops helps with weeding, soil moisture and to minimize plant stress. Slowly soak the soil twice a week for your watering regimen and supplement the rainfall to make sure the crops receive at least one inch of water per week. For specific insect and disease recommendations, call us for publication E079, New Jersey Vegetable Pest Control Recommendations for Home Gardens.

Not only is growing cole crops fun but it is also an investment in your health with proteins and vitamins C and A.

Resources: Texas A & M: <http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/archives/parsons/vegetables/colecrop.html> and University of New Hampshire: http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000605_Rep627.pdf

Black Vultures

Recently a Master Gardener was at the Help Desk and when I returned she said that a homeowner needed help getting rid of the black vulture family from outdoor the kitchen building.

Apparently, the homeowner was witness to the vultures snatching a calf from the neighboring farmers' yard and carrying it off. So, rightfully so, she was nervous about letting out her pets as well as having any children over to her home. She called to find out more information about what she could do and in my research I found that we are not the only state with this concern and it seems to be growing in numbers.

When referencing website information we use those websites that are edu based and I immediately found at least three other states with valuable information that I was able to copy and send to the homeowner. In addition, there are two Rutgers Fact Sheets which may provide references for this situation. The first is FS 1017 entitled "Regulations Governing the Management of New Jersey Wildlife". The second is FS 887 and is titled "Who to Call Regarding Wildlife Damage".

FS 1017 indicates that black vultures are non-game migratory species and are managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife. If black vultures are causing property damage, the property owners must obtain necessary permits if lethal control is necessary. The Fact Sheet provides information for obtaining the appropriate applications.

As in other situations, it's helpful to know the biology, habits and roost-sites of the birds causing the problem and then use that information to try and get rid of them. One website suggested that since vultures prefer large dead trees for roosting, if these snags are removed then that change of habitat MAY result in vultures flying longer distances to reach the problem areas. Some people have tried using netting in the roosting areas, or hanging a goose decoy from the tree that may resemble a dead vulture.

Resources:

University of Michigan; http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/accounts/Coragyps_atratus/

The Ohio State University; <http://sheep.osu.edu/2008/06/20/black-vulture-damage/comment-page-1/>

Colorado State University; <http://lib.colostate.edu/research/agnic/vultures-livestock.html>



African Violets

Leaf propagation of African Violets is a horticultural therapy class taught by Rutgers Master Gardeners of Cumberland County. To propagate an African violet by leaf cutting, first you will need to gather your materials. You will need a pot with drainage holes as well as soil which is half vermiculite and half potting mix. You will also need an African violet, a sharp knife and a clear plastic bag.

Step one: Fill the container with soil.

Step two: Choose a healthy, young, full sized leaf from the African Violet plant. Cut that stem at an angle with at least 1 to 2 inches of stem below the leaf itself and set the leaf into the pot at an angle. Do this with several leaves in the same pot.

Step three: Once you are done placing the leaf cuttings into the pot, water thoroughly and allow the excess moisture to fully drain.

Step four: Place the container with the leaf cuttings into the clear plastic bag and blow into it as you are sealing it tightly so it is puffed up with air. Set the pot in a bright location out of direct sunlight. Roots will form in about one month and at about two months plantlets will form and you can cut off the original leaf. When that occurs, you can plant the plantlets into new containers. The continued care of the African Violets is dependent on consistent care with attention to light, temperature, watering, and fertilization.

Generally, African Violets prefer a bright area in your home that does not receive direct sunlight in the afternoon. If that is not possible, they do perform well under fluorescent lights. African Violets require temperatures between 65 and 80°F.

Violets may be watered from the top or bottom. When watering from the top, apply enough room temperature water to thoroughly saturate the soil and then drain the excess water from the bottom of the container. To water from below, place the pot in a tray that has about 1 inch of water in it, allow the soil surface of the plant to become moist, then remove the pot and drain the excess water.

There are fertilizers on the market which are specifically prepared for African Violets; be certain to follow the instructions on the labels.

I have referenced my Gram time in the past and will do so again in the future. Gram had many African violets in her home, so this is a horticulture therapy project that is near and dear to my heart with memories of my Gram.

Resources:

Iowa State University; Reiman Gardens; <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/publications/rg322.pdf>

Clemson Cooperative Extension; <http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/plants/indoor/flowering/hgic1550.html>



Soil Testing

There are several reasons that you should consider having your soil tested now. One is to avoid the spring rush and any possible delay time in receiving your results. Another reason is that you don't want to wait until the week before gardening to implement some of the recommendations! Rutgers Fact Sheet 797 gives comprehensive instructions on Soil Testing for Home Gardens and Lawns. You can either bring your soil to the Extension Office or stop by for a test kit. The kits are \$20 and instructions are included.

Soil tests aid in diagnosing only those troubles that result from a deficiency or an excess of lime and certain plant nutrients. The lime and fertilizer recommendations are provided based on the results of the soil test.

For optimum results a separate sample should be taken for each area that is used for different plants. For instance, samples from the lawn should be taken separately from the samples for your vegetable garden. Put another way, the samples should represent only one type of planting. Keep in mind, the soil test can only be as good as the soil sample that is collected. Each sample must be submitted with a corresponding soil test questionnaire. Keep your own records of the sample id and areas sampled so you will be able to distinguish the samples from each other. Sample areas separately that have received different lime and/or fertilizer treatments in the past and do not sample areas that have been limed or fertilized within the past six weeks unless there is an evident problem.

To take a sample, use a trowel or spade to obtain thin vertical slices of soil, from the surface to a depth of 6-7" and put the soil in a clean plastic bucket. Repeat this procedure at 10-15 locations within the sampling area, mixing all the soil in the container and breaking up subsamples and any large clods. The goal is to provide an average soil sample, representative of the area. If the soil is wet, allow it to air-dry by spreading it out on clean paper or plastic. You will need about 2 cups of soil for the soil test.

In completing the form provided with the test be sure to fill out both sides and provide the appropriate information requested including the growing conditions of the area. Unless it is an unusually busy time of the year, you should receive your results within two weeks. A copy of the Soil Test Report is also sent to the Rutgers Cooperative Extension office. Ideally a soil test should be done on the same area every three years.

Resources:

Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station; [http://njaes.rutgers.edu/soiltestinglab/
howto.asp](http://njaes.rutgers.edu/soiltestinglab/howto.asp)



Congratulations to two of "our own"!

Dr. Wesley Kline, Cumberland County Agricultural Agent, was the recipient of the 2014 Distinguished Service to New Jersey Agriculture Award at the recent Joint Agricultural Convention Dinner Banquet held in Atlantic City for the New Jersey State Board of Agriculture and the Vegetable Growers Association of New Jersey.

Some of the highlights as noted in the evening's program are as follows:

Dr. Kline is the Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Cumberland County agricultural agent as well as an associate professor at Rutgers University. His name, more than any other, is synonymous with food safety in New Jersey.

Dr. Kline has worked with the New Jersey Department of Agriculture, setting up a Food Safety Task Force and has trained more than 5,000 farmers on the Food Safety Modernization Act and third-party audits. Dr. Kline was instrumental in the implementation of an educational program in Cumberland County concerning commercial fresh-market and processing vegetable production and herbs. He also coordinates the food safety extension training program in New Jersey.

As an agricultural agent, Dr. Kline collaborates with 300 growers and agribusiness personnel to carry out applied research and demonstrations that directly affect the growers' livelihoods.

I was fortunate to be able to attend this banquet along with members of the Cumberland County Board of Agriculture, several co-workers and a group of the Master Gardeners who worked alongside Wes as his crew of pepper pickers. The evening's write-up on Dr. Kline mentions his tireless effort to educate and assist farmers in his county and around the state, which is absolutely on target. I would also add that those of us who call him Wes and have the pleasure of working with him appreciate and enjoy his professional, direct, straightforward and if I might add humble approach to his dedication of farmers and food safety. It was our honor to congratulate him on this well-deserved recognition and a joy to see the pride on his wife's and his dad's faces as he shared the evening with them.

During the evening's presentations, Dr. Andy Wyenandt received the Charles E. and Lena Maier Research Award for his proposal of "Managing cucurbit downy mildew with disease monitoring, cultivar resistance and effective fungicide programs". Dr. Wyenandt is an Extension Specialist in Vegetable Pathology for the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station.

Dr. Wyendant joined Rutgers University in Spring of 2004 after completing a Ph.D. in plant pathology from Ohio State University. His research has focused on fungicide resistance management in cucurbit crops and the effects of production systems and phytopthora-tolerance on the development of skin separation or 'silvering' in bell pepper fruit.

The Charles E and Lena Maier Research Award was established by Charlie in appreciation of the services they received from Rutgers Cooperative Extension and the NJAES during the many years that their family were commercial vegetable growers. The purpose of the grant is to provide an award to a faculty member who engages in research projects enhancing the commercial vegetable industry of New Jersey. Priority is given to those proposals that are for practical research projects that are directly applicable to vegetable production and marketing in New Jersey and are likely to have near-term impact on the activities of NJ vegetable growers.

Congratulation to Dr. Wyenandt for this high honor of being awarded this grant for his proposal of "Managing cucurbit downy mildew with disease monitoring, cultivar resistance and effective fungicide programs".

Also at the dinner were several Master Gardeners that have worked closely with research projects at the Rutgers Agricultural Research and Extension Center so not only was it a pleasure to see Dr. Wyenandt receive this award, we will also enjoy helping him with the harvest of cucurbits and the tabulation of his results for this project.

Dr. Wyendant will be teaching a Master Gardener class entitled "Plant Diseases" on March 25th, from 9am until Noon at the Extension Center.

PLAN YOUR VEGETABLE GARDEN

One of my favorite winter pastimes is planning my seasonal vegetable garden. I never tire of pouring through the seed catalogs planning what crops I will put in for this year's harvest. There are three Rutgers Fact Sheets that will help you with this process: FS 680, "Vegetable Seed and Plant Sources for the Home Garden"; FS681, "Varieties for New Jersey Vegetable Gardens", and FS 129, "Planning a Vegetable Garden".

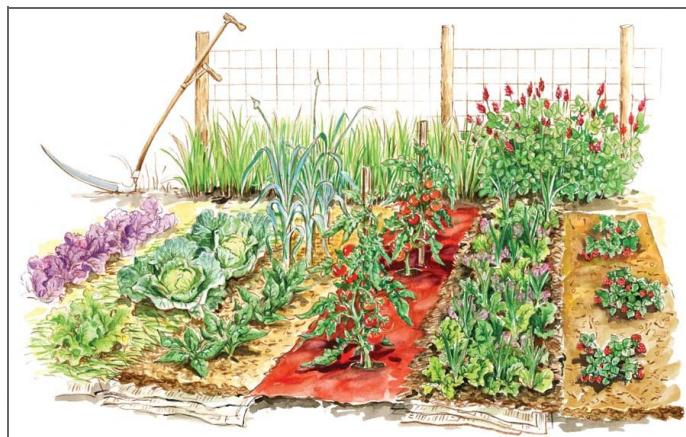
There are many details to take into consideration as you are armchair gardening. But by taking the time to plan ahead, you will be able to get the highest yield possible from your home garden, no matter what the size. It's helpful to make a listing of the vegetables you'd like to grow and then put the plan on paper. This will allow you to make the best use of your available garden space and will save you time when it comes to planting your seeds and transplants. Remember to include the space between and within rows, the varieties of crops, and which are seeded or transplants.

By putting your ideas to paper, you will be able to tell if you have enough garden space for the crops you wish to grow – if you are like me, I always want to grow many more vegetables and crops than the size of my actual garden allows. It also helps to rotate the crops of similar vegetables so they are not planted in the same location in consecutive years. Be sure to plan for the tallest crops on the north side of the garden to avoid shading the lower growing plants. Don't sacrifice appropriate spacing to try to fit in more plants. There needs to be good air movement through the garden to help dry the moisture on the plant leaves.

By planning your garden ahead you will allow yourself plenty of time to place your seed order early and hopefully that will help ensure that you get the varieties of vegetables that you want in your garden for the upcoming season.

I'm sure you have a few tried and true varieties of plants that you would never consider changing, but it's also a good idea to include some of the newer disease resistant varieties of vegetables, as well as adding a few heirloom varieties to your garden space for diversification. While I'm planning my garden in the cold winter weather, I make a listing of any supplies I will need and make sure I buy them ahead so I am ready to plant when the weather turns. I enjoy trellises in my garden, so I make sure I am well-stocked with cedar poles and twine.

Many gardeners enjoy the act of planning their garden well in advance and have a variety of ways to do the research. Whether you enjoy poring over seed catalogs, watching the gardening channel or developing your pinterest garden board, you will be able to reap the harvest of your enjoyable time well spent in the planning phase of your gardens.



Eastern Bluebirds

There are very specific suggestions for attracting eastern bluebirds to your yard, but if you are lucky enough to have them, the extra consideration is well worth the effort. I have seen them as early as February in years past and they are always a harbinger of spring.

Eastern Bluebirds are known as "forest edge" species because they prefer a habitat of open grasslands and scattered trees for perching, nesting and feeding. There has been a reduction in these natural food and shelter resources, and that has been one theory of why there has been a decline in the bluebird population. One of the ways that you can help with this effort is to spend some of the winter months constructing bluebird nest boxes. As part of the New Jersey Forest Stewardship Series there is a Rutgers Fact Sheet #034 entitled "Build Bird Nest Boxes" with specific instructions for constructing bluebird nest boxes.

It's recommended that the new nest boxes be installed by February to attract migrating bluebirds. Place the boxes at least 100 feet from treelines and 4 to 6' above ground so as to avoid predators. It's also best to place the box away from the prevailing winds for protection. Keep a vigilant watch and remove any starling or sparrow nests. Leave the boxes up year round and at the end of each nesting season remove the nesting materials.

Provide water for the bluebirds that is less than 2 inches deep and has perches, shrubs and trees nearby. Fruits comprise more than 30 percent of the bluebird's diet, and they are very dependent on persistent fruits in the winter. Plan your home landscaping accordingly by choosing trees and shrub species that will retain fruit through the winter.

In researching this topic I read that Eastern bluebirds are very social but are territorial as well and will defend the nesting and territory during the breeding season, and I found this to be true when I personally got a bit too close to the nest for the momma bluebird's comfort and she let me know it in an up close and personal way. I have spent many happy moments watching the bluebirds and hope you have the opportunity to do so as well.

Resources:

University of Michigan; http://animaldiversity.ummz.umich.edu/accounts/Sialia_sialis/

PennState Extension; <http://extension.psu.edu/natural-resources/wildlife/landscaping-for-wildlife/pa-wildlife-3-managing-habitat-for-eastern-bluebirds>

University of Kentucky; <http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/for/for52/for52.htm>

Fairfax County Public Schools; http://www.fcps.edu/islandcreekes/ecology/eastern_bluebird.htm



Ladybugs

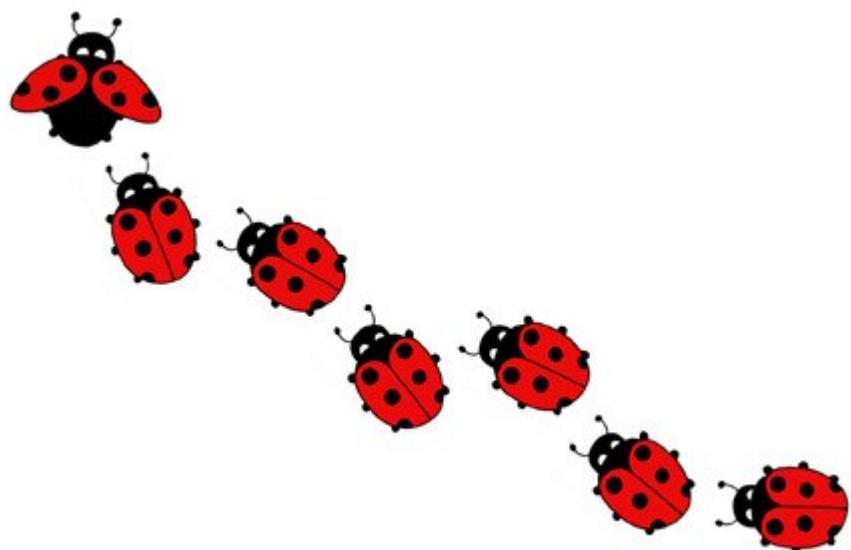
I have been getting reports from people that there seems to be an abundance of ladybugs, or lady beetles in their homes and I have experienced this as well. Ladybugs are known for their appetite of aphids, but will also munch on a buffet of other insects, as well. Folklore also has it that they are good luck and we can all use a strong dose of that.

But, while we love to see ladybugs about 7 months of the year, it's generally not our preference to cohabitiate with them. In the autumn they start to look for a spot to overwinter and you'll find them congregated on the sunny wall outside of your home. From there, it's not too difficult to gain access into your home through air leaks, attic vents, gaps in siding and cracks at the windows and doors.

So the question is...what do we do about them? One suggestion is to place slices of fresh apple in the heavily infested areas and this will usually bring them down from the ceiling and walls. Another suggestion is to leave a light on and they will congregate to that area.

Once you've got them rounded up, one option is to sweep them up with a dust brush and broom to relocate them. Please note if a ladybug is crushed or disturbed a noxious, but harmless odor results, which in nature is the ladybug's way of warding off predators because it tastes as bad as it smells. I can believe this because, just the other night, Libby, my golden retriever, tried to eat a ladybug and spit it out after making a horrible face.

Another option is to collect them and keep them in a breathable container in the refrigerator to hibernate until spring. If the idea of your family refrigerator just doesn't work for you, a mesh-covered bucket in your garage should be just fine. Ladybugs are excellent insects to be released in your garden in spring. One ladybug will consume up to 1000 aphids in its' lifetime in both its larval and adult stages, so it's worth the effort to gathering and overwinter them!



Edgeworthia

Edgeworthia chrysantha or more commonly referred to as Paperbush is an early spring bloomer. Edgeworthia provides year round interest with some noteworthy wintery attributes. Edgeworthia has showy reddish brown smooth bark and it flowers during the winter months. The flowers are reported to smell sweet like Gardenia but a bit spicier. I have had the pleasure of smelling the flowers of Edgeworthia and can assure you that it is exquisite. Paperbush flowers when the stems are bare, which accentuates the beauty of the bark and flowers even more. The florets themselves are tiny, but when gathered enmass they make a stunning bouquet.

This is a great shrub for a woodland or shady border planting and is best planted in Spring. Edgeworthia prefers light shade with moist well drained soil that contains plenty of organic matter. It is hardy in zones 7 through 9 and is native to China where it grows along stream banks and on the edge of woodlands. This multistemmed shrub has a rounded growth habit and at maturity reaches about 7 feet high and wide. It makes an excellent specimen plant or as an accent at the back of the border. It requires very little pruning and has few pest issues.

The common name of Paperbush refers to the high grade paper products made from the woody bark and stem of the plant. Not only does Edgeworthia provide distinct winter interest, it is also a four season plant by sporting beautiful bluish elongated 5 inch leaves with silvery undertones in the spring and summer. The foliage seems to hold droplets of water during spring showers. In the fall, the leaves drop to show the silhouette of a beautifully structured plant.

If your site analysis provides a well drained soil and requires a shrub that can tolerate shade, strongly consider Edgeworthia for your landscaping options. I usually wax poetic about native plants, but in this case because of it's four season appeal, I will make an exception and say that I would very much enjoy having one of these ion my yard.

Resources:

University System of Georgia; <http://www.caes.uga.edu/extension/cobb/anr/Documents/EDGEWORTHIAPAPYRUFERA.pdf>

North Carolina State University; <http://extensiongardener.ces.ncsu.edu/extgardener-edgeworthia-leads-blooms-and-fragrance-to-winter/>

University of Tennessee; <http://utgardens.tennessee.edu/pom/edgeworthia.htm>

University of Georgia or the University System of Georgia.
<http://www.caes.uga.edu/extension/cobb/anr/Documents/paperbush.pdf>





Silverfish and Firebrats



Most all of us have had the unpleasant experience of encountering a silverfish or firebrat in our homes. Rutgers offers Fact Sheet #008 on Silverfish and Firebrats and their control.

Silverfish and Firebrats have many things in common, including their appearance. They are both slender with flat carrot shaped bodies that have scales. They are both wingless and have two long feelers at the head and three long projections at the tail and are often called bristletails. They are anywhere from $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch long and move very rapidly when disturbed. One difference is their coloration. Silverfish are shiny and silver whereas firebrats are a more mottled grey and darker in color.

Both silverfish and firebrats prefer areas where there is high humidity and little airflow. While they are both nocturnal and avoid direct sunlight, the silverfish prefers damp cool places such as basements or found trapped in sinks and bathtubs. The firebrat likes hot dark places such as attics or around fireplaces and furnaces and the insulation around hot water heat pipes.

Both are primarily a nuisance pest, however, they can cause damage in the home by eating foods and other materials that are high in protein, sugar, or starch. Plus they are just plain creepy when they scurry along and you don't expect them.

Non-chemical control of these pests includes sealing up cracks around plumbing, windowsills and wall molding. They love dust, so periodic cleaning of closets, cabinets and storage areas will help control the population. Additionally, remove cardboard boxes and old newspapers to eliminate food sources and a place to hide. It will help if you can eliminate moisture problems, as well by keeping laundry areas and bathrooms clean and dry; use dehumidifiers and ventilate with fans.

One last bit of advice is to use small, glass jars covered on the outside with masking tape. The insects climb up the tape, fall into the jars, and can't climb back up the slick sides. Place these traps or jars in corners and along edges where foraging is likely. While this method is not likely to eliminate an infestation, it might give you some personal satisfaction in trapping this pesky critter.

Resources:

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service; <https://insects.tamu.edu/fieldguide/aimq2.html>

NC State University; <http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/course/ent425/library/compendium/thysanura.html>

University of Missouri; <http://extension.missouri.edu/p/g7376>

PennState University; <http://ento.psu.edu/extension/factsheets/bristletails-silverfish-and-firebrats>

University of Minnesota; <http://www1.extension.umn.edu/garden/insects/find/silverfish-and-firebrats/>

University of Nebraska; <http://lancaster.unl.edu/enviro/pest/factsheets/005-94.htm>

University of California; <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7475.html>

Iowa State University; <http://www.ipm.iastate.edu/ipm/iiin/silverfi.html>

University of Florida; <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/ig094>

Garden Tips for March



- Till or turn the vegetable garden soil when it's at the proper moisture level. FS129
- Add lime to lawns and gardens only when a soil test recommends it. FS797
- Sow seeds of dahlia, snapdragon, verbena, leaf lettuce, cabbage and broccoli indoors.
- Use dormant oils to combat scale insects and mites when the temperature is above 40° and when freezing temperatures are not predicted for a few days and before the buds begin to open. FS866
- For a full-sun border, try mixing colors of perennial coneflower and Shasta daisy with annual globe amaranth. Place the taller coneflower toward the rear of the bed and Shasta daisy toward the front, with the globe amaranth mixed in between.
- Rake and remove debris from the lawn when its dry.
- Have the lawn mower serviced and the blade sharpened.
- Fertilize your lawn. Call Extension at 856-451-2800 for a fact sheet. FS633
- Remove dead asparagus shoots from last year's growth. NE221
- If you want to raise fruit in your garden, try grapes, raspberries or strawberries. It is much less difficult to succeed with them than with tree fruits and you'll get much faster results. FS354, 214, 97 & 98
- Submit a soil sample for testing to determine how much lime and fertilizer your lawn and garden areas need. Soil sampling packets with instructions are available at Extension at \$20.00 per test.
- Prune grapes, raspberries, blueberries, fruit trees and summer-flowering shrubs early in the month when the temperature is above freezing.
- Remove black knot fungus 18" below the growth on cherry, peach and plum trees.
- Grapevine prunings can be made into attractive wreaths.
- If the soil dries out against a house under the eaves where rain rarely reaches, water well during a thaw to prevent loss of plants.
- Sow grass seed as soon as possible. FS584
- Pinch off early buds from developing pansies to encourage plants to branch and form more buds.
- Watch for sale prices on fertilizers and pre-emergent crabgrass killer.
- Cut back the dried foliage of ornamental grasses.
- Particularly good choices for your cutting garden are phlox, daisy, dahlia, cosmos, aster, gladiolus and lily.
- Start broccoli, cabbage and other cabbage family crops indoors by the middle of the month. They should be planted outdoors between the middle and end of April.
- Check stored bulbs, tubers and borms. Discard any that are soft or diseased.
- Check any vegetables you have in storage. Use or dispose of any that show signs of shriveling or rotting.
- Plant pea and spinach seeds and onion, shallot and garlic sets on St. Patrick's day, weather permitting.
- Branches of forsythia, pussy willow, spirea and dogwood can be forced for indoor bloom. Make long slanted cuts when collecting the branches and place the stems in a vase of water. Change the water every four days. They should bloom in about three weeks.
- Mulch heaved perennials; replant them when the weather is more settled.
- Late winter is the time to prune many deciduous trees. Look over your plants now and removed dead, dying, unsightly parts of the tree, sprouts growing at or near the base of the tree trunk, crossed branches and v-shaped crotches.
- Repot and begin fertilizing house plants.
- Avoid walking on grass or ground covers while they are frozen.
- Fertilize woody plants and fruit trees.
- Purchase new 40 watt, cool-white fluorescent bulbs for starting your seedlings.
- Keep the bird feeder filled.
- Enjoy the early spring season!

Gardening Tips for April

- Seed bare spots in the lawn early in the month. FS584 & 108
- Prune ornamental grasses.
- Prune your roses, except for climbing varieties. FS944
- Remove the winter mulch from roses after the middle of the month.
- Follow Extension's fruit spray schedules. FS112, 101, 115, 113, 114 and 116
- Divide summer and fall blooming perennials.
- Rake winter debris from your lawn before mowing.
- Apply dormant oil sprays for insect control when the temperature will be above freezing for at least 24 hours. FS866
- Start celosia, cosmos, marigold, annual phlox and zinnia seeds indoors at mid-month.
- Repot your houseplants; begin fertilizing them.
- Are those swarming insects termites or ants? Can you tell the difference? FS338
- Apply pre-emergent crabgrass killer when forsythia is in full bloom.
- Fertilize established trees and shrubs. FS31
- Harden-off or condition transplants prior to moving them to the garden. Plant bedding plants of cabbage, broccoli and collards the third week of the month.
- Direct seed beets, carrots, leaf lettuce, mustard greens, bok choy and radishes around the middle of the month.
- Plant strawberries, rhubarb, asparagus and small fruit plants as early in the month as possible.
- Plant gladiolus corms.
- Plant daylilies, delphiniums, painted daisies and phlox.
- Remove spent flowers from spring flowering bulbs. Fertilize with 5-10-10 at 2 pounds per 100 square feet.
- Sharpen the lawn mower blades. Mow the lawn no shorter than 2 1/2". FS119
- Sow hardy annual flowers like calendula, clarkia, larkspur and sweet pea.
- Turn the compost pile and keep it moist. FS74 & 117
- Protect well-developed strawberry buds from frost injury by applying straw mulch when freezing temperatures are forecasted.
- Start eggplant, pepper and tomato seeds indoors at the middle of the month. FS787
- Do not fertilize newly planted trees and shrubs.
- Have a soil sample analyzed. Contact Extension for sampling packets (\$20 per test). FS797
- Prune early flowering shrubs immediately after flowering and before new growth begins.
- Have a Great April!



Gardening Tips for May

- Mow the lawn at a height of 2 1/2 –3" while never removing more than 1/3 of the leaf blade. Leave the clippings on the ground.
- Water the lawn deeply, applying a half to one inch of water at a time. Your lawn needs one inch per week during dry period. FS829
- Apply broad-leaf herbicides to control weeds in the law. FS119
- Check your lawn for turfgrass insect pests and apply the correct control according to label directions. FS814.
- Remove flowers from newly established strawberry plantings. Let them become established this year and form fruit next year.
- Remove seed stalks from rhubarb as soon as you see them. Harvest rhubarb through early June.
- Harvest mature asparagus beds for 6 to 8 weeks only.
- Lift and divide old chrysanthemum plants or set out new plants purchased or grown from cuttings. Pinch back mums when they are about 6" tall for bushier plants.
- Continue to pinch back the mums until mid-July.
- Plant gladiolus corms every two weeks for continuous bloom.
- Remove daffodil and tulip flowers as they fade. Leave the foliage in place until it turns brown and dies. Dig bulbs for storage after the leaves die.
- Plant dahlia and canna tubers mid to late May.
- Control euonymus scale now before their hard shells forms.
- Prune spring-flowering shrubs after the flowers fade.
- It is not too late to sow directly into the soil seeds of sunflower, zinnia, morning glory, portulaca, marigold, cosmos, periwinkles and gourds. Achimenes and other summer-flowering bulbs can also be planted in May.
- Pinch back the terminal growth on newly planted annual and perennial plants. This will result in shorter, more compact, well branches plants with more flowers.
- Time to plant caladium tubers, impatiens, coleus, begonias and pentas in shady areas.
- Replace and replenish mulch materials in flower beds and shrub borders to conserve moisture and reduce weed growth.
- Prune climbing roses as they complete their spring bloom season. Remove dead or weak wood as needed.
- Take a critical look at your landscape while at the height of summer development. Make notes of how you think it can be better arranged, plants that need replacement, overgrown plants that need to be removed and possible activity areas that can be enjoyed by family members.
- Check for insects and diseases. Destroy badly infested plants. Spider mites can be especially troublesome at this time. Select a chemical or organic control, or use insecticidal soap.
- Start with your tools. Use the right tool for the job and make sure each is in top working condition. A sharp edger makes short work of edging walkways and borders, whereas a dull one can double your time and make it look like a boy with a bad haircut.
- Stake your flowers now. They will be much easier to train.
- Weed now to eliminate an abundant crop of weeds later. Use a solution of scalding water and vinegar to kill many down to the roots.
- Transplant on cloudy days and make sure you keep the delicate exposed roots of your seedlings and plants protected from drying out.
- Harvest some of your well-rotted compost to make high grade soil for your transplants. Make compost teas and give a good big to your young plants after transplanting. Use immediately, it doesn't keep.
- Harvest early plantings of radishes, spinach and lettuce.

Rutgers Cooperative Extensions Fact Sheets

FS #	Fact Sheet Name
Fact Sheet 8	Silverfish and Firebrats and their control
Fact Sheet 31	How to Fertilize shade trees
Fact Sheet 34	Build Bird Nest Boxes
Fact Sheet 74	Backyard Leaf Composting
Fact Sheet E79	NJ Vegetable Pest Control Recommendations for home gardens
Fact Sheet 97	Strawberries in the Home Garden
Fact Sheet 98	Strawberries in the Home Garden II
Fact Sheet 101	Bramble Pest Control Schedule for Home Gardens
Fact Sheet 108	Renovating your lawn
Fact Sheet 112	Apple Pest Control Schedule for NJ Home Orchards
Fact Sheet 113	Peach and Nectarine Pest Control Schedule for NJ Home Orchards
Fact Sheet 114	Pear Pest Control Schedule for NJ Home Orchards
Fact Sheet 115	Cherry Pest Control Schedule for NJ Home Orchards
Fact Sheet 116	Plum Pest Control Schedule for NJ Home Orchards
Fact Sheet 117	Using leaf compost
Fact Sheet 119	Weed control in home lawns
Fact Sheet 129	Planning a vegetable garden
Fact Sheet 214	Raspberries in the home garden
Fact Sheet NE221	Asparagus tips for the home gardener
Fact Sheet 338	Subterranean Termites
Fact Sheet 561	Growing cole crops in the home garden
Fact Sheet 584	Seeding your lawn
Fact Sheet 633	Fertilizing the home lawn
Fact Sheet 680	Vegetable Seed and Plant Sources for the home garden
Fact Sheet 681	Varieties for NJ Vegetable gardens
Fact Sheet 787	Starting Vegetable seeds indoors
Fact Sheet 797	Soil testing for home lawns and gardens
Fact Sheet 814	Managing diseases of landscape turf
Fact Sheet 829	How to protect water quality and have a beautiful lawn
Fact Sheet 866	Using horticultural oils
Fact Sheet 887	Who to Call Regarding Wildlife Damage
Fact Sheet 944	Roses and their care
Fact Sheet 988	Picking vegetables in the home garden
Fact Sheet 1017	Regulations Governing the Management of NJ Wildlife
Fact Sheet 1163	Mail order vegetable seed sources for the NJ gardener

Call 856/451-2800 x4 ask for Pam Burton. When calling to request a fact sheet refer to the Fact Sheet by FS# or by name. All fact sheets are free unless otherwise noted.

What's Growing On is prepared by Pam Burton, Horticultural Assistant, Rutgers Cooperative Extension of Cumberland County.

Sincerely,

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For important announcements concerning the Cumberland County Extension Center visit:
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Visit the newly activated website to see what activities are happening in the
Home Horticulture and Agriculture Departments.

If you have any questions concerning the website, please call our office at
856-451-2800 x1 for agriculture and
856-451-2800 x4 for Home Horticulture and Master Gardeners

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