



Coming Events

Workshops and Demonstrations

We're doing things a little differently these days. Learn something new from the comfort of your home during these live Zoom workshops. Registration is required, but all classes are free.

Register here:

<http://alamance.ces.ncsu.edu/>

Thurs., July 16, 10:00a

Water Bath Canning

Sat., July 18, 10:00a

Water Bath Canning

Thurs., July 30, 10:00a

Fall Vegetable Gardening

Visit our new YouTube page for informative videos from Alamance County Extension. Subscribe and be the first to see new content:

[Alamance County CES](#)

Contact us :

Alamance County Cooperative
Extension Service

209-C N. Graham-Hopedale Rd.

Burlington, NC 27217

Phone: 336-570-6740

E-mail:

Mark Danieley

mark_danieley@ncsu.edu

Chris Stecker

christine.stecker@alamance-nc.com

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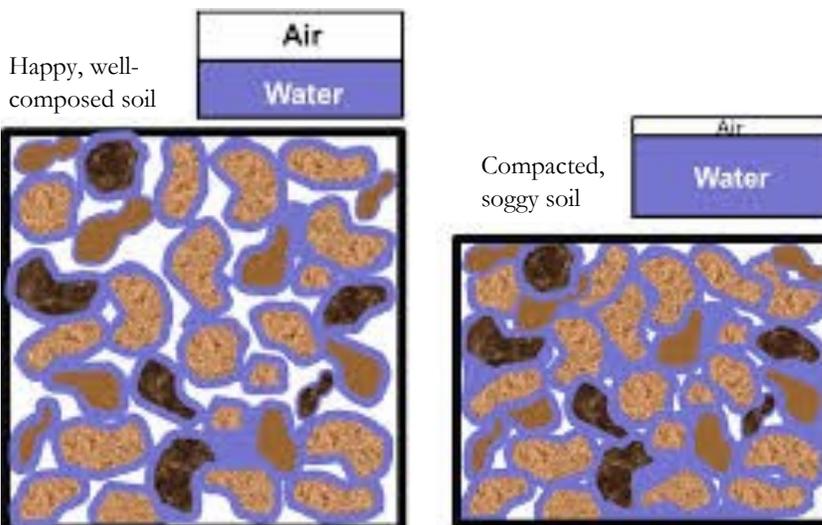
When enough is too much...

May 2020 was a wet month when we had over 9 inches of rainfall. That much rain can cause all kinds of problems for our plants. Plant roots need to absorb air as well as water and when there is too much water in the soil, there is too little air. I have seen many trees young and old, small and large that have died this spring. One of the main causes, I believe, is too much water in the soil. The trees had put out new leaves and were actively growing and because there was not enough air in the soil, the leaves just turned brown and died. Leaf spot diseases and root rots can also be caused by too much rain.



Roots need room to breathe.

Soil compaction, combined with too much water can lead to a lack of airspace in soil. The ideal soil structure consists of 50 percent solids (mineral soil and humus), 25 percent water and 25 percent air space



Spots, Browns and Wilts—Summertime Blues



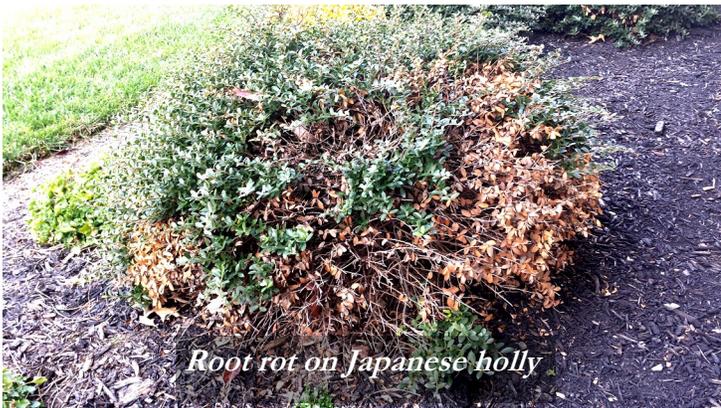
Entomosporium leaf spot on Indian hawthorn

I have had a number of calls about plants with spots on their leaves. These spots are usually caused by one of several species of fungi and can be on many different ornamental plants. Hydrangea, camellia, Indian hawthorn, holly and dogwood are just some of the plants affected. There are fungicides that will control these diseases, but they are mostly preventative and must be applied at the first sign of disease. If you are not looking closely at your plants or have been kept inside by the rain, the disease may get ahead of you. The good news is most of these diseases don't cause much permanent damage, but they do look pretty bad. Once the new growth hardens off and we have some dryer weather, the leaf spot problem will get better. If you have a special plant that has a leaf spot disease this year, plan on treating with a preventative fungicide next spring when the new growth begins.

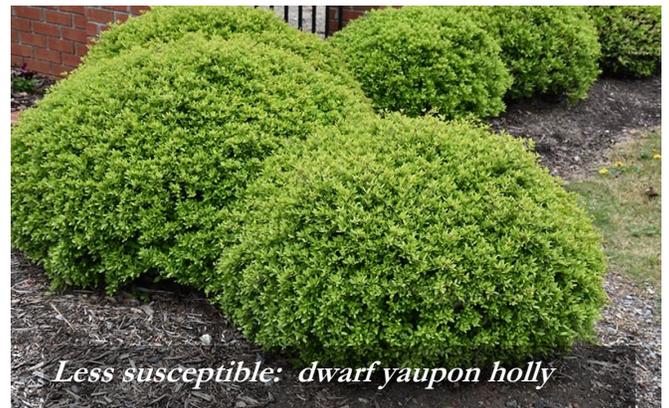


Cercospora leaf spot on hydrangea

Root rot is a fungal disease that attacks our shrubs and flowers and its growth is promoted by poorly drained soils and wet weather. It is no surprise that we have had a large number of root rot samples so far this year. Unlike the fungal leaf spot, root rot diseases almost always cause plant death. Japanese hollies like Helli and Compacta are prime candidates for root rot in our poorly drained soils. If you have had a Compacta holly die in your landscape, it is almost certainly root rot. Since fungicide treatments are expensive and not always effective, the best option is to replace the Japanese hollies with plants that are tolerant to the disease. Dwarf yaupon and Chinese hollies are resistant to root rot and are good replacement plants. It is always a good idea to add more organic matter to the soil before planting new shrubs to help improve the drainage.



Root rot on Japanese holly



Less susceptible: dwarf yaupon holly

Petunia, vinca and other annual flowers have also been suffering from root rot. This is especially true in flower beds that were planted in pansies over the winter. The pansy/vinca rotation allows the disease to persist throughout the year. The symptoms include yellowing foliage, stunted growth and wilting. Often homeowners will water the wilting annuals which will make the root rot worse. Unlike the shrubs there isn't much root rot resistance in flowering annuals, but there are fungicide treatments for root rot in annual color beds that will help suppress the disease. The combination of Cleary's 3336 (thiophanate-methyl) plus Subdue (mefenoxam) is effective on several species of root rot fungi. These products will need to be applied every 6-8 weeks during the growing season.



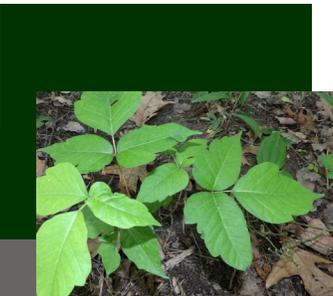
Annual vinca

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http://oggehorticulture.tamu.edu/guestion

If you have questions about root rot on your plants or any other gardening questions, please give Chris or me a call.

NC STATE

Extension Master Gardener



July Garden Tips

An annual bedding plants will benefit from a summer haircut. Stagger your pruning by cutting back one-third of a bed or container each week. By the third week, the first group of pruned plants will be blooming again, assuring some color during the entire pruning period. Annual plants grown for their foliage, such as coleus and basil, will produce more leaves if the flowers are pinched out regularly.

If you're seeing fluffy white stuff on the stems and undersides of leaves in the garden, fear not! It's just the nymph of the flatid planthopper. See how it jumped when you inspected the fuzz? Although they feed on plant juices, they are usually not numerous enough to cause a problem.

Fertilize established warm-season (*Zoysia* or *Bermudagrass*) lawns at the rate of one pound of nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. Unlike fescue, which should be kept tall – at least 3 to 3-and-a-half inches, warm-season lawns need to be maintained at a height of about 1". This

promotes dense growth and discourages many weeds.

Even moisture at the root zone of tomatoes may help prevent blossom-end rot. Use soaker hoses or drip irrigation rather than overhead watering to reduce disease pressure and keep plants mulched. Even moisture is also key to preventing bitterness in cucumbers.

Plant Brussels sprouts, carrots and rutabagas from July 1st to the 15th. Around the middle of the month begin planting beets, broccoli and collards. Keep summer vegetables picked to encourage production.

Mature vines of poison ivy, trumpet creeper, English ivy and wisteria that climb your trees can be killed at this time. Cut a chunk from the vine near the base of the plant, being careful not to cut the resident tree. Apply brush killer to the cut. The cut must be fresh – no more than 15 minutes old. Bag vines and dispose of in the trash. Never burn poison ivy!!!

Brown patch is a disease that attacks cool-season lawns and is encouraged by overwatering and over fertilizing with nitrogen. Allow your cool-season (*Fescue*) lawn to go dormant, watering only if there has been no rainfall for three or four weeks. Remember that no lawn grass is green year round.

Take semi-hardwood cuttings of spring-blooming shrubs such as azaleas and camellias. Remove most foliage from a four- to six-inch cutting, dip the cut end in a rooting hormone, then stick the cutting in moist potting medium. Pre "drill" the holes with your finger or a pencil to keep the powdered rooting hormone from scraping off. Place the cuttings in the shade and keep them moist by misting or placing them under cover in a large translucent box or plastic bag. Make sure to keep the plastic from touching the foliage by using small stakes to prop the bag away—wooden skewers work well for this. After about three months, a healthy root system should be growing strong.

Arbor Gate Plant of the Month



Mountain Mint

Pycnanthemum muticum



Of all the must-haves in your pollinator patch, mountain mint should rank way up at the top.

Tiny, nectar- and pollen-rich flowers cluster atop silver-green foliage and feed just about every nectar drinker and pollen collector until frost knocks it down.

This robust native is in the mint family, so you know it will have a tendency to spread, so give it some room, or consider it a two- to three-foot tall groundcover. Unwanted outliers are easily pulled up.

Full sun to part shade is the light requirement and good soil drainage is important. Mountain mint will withstand drought, but prefers some soil moisture.



Plant a patch of *Pycnanthemum*, pull up a chair and enjoy the pollinator party!
Read more here:

<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/pycnanthemum-muticum/>