Hello Fellow Gardeners! You are receiving this email because you have provided us with your email address either when subscribing to our quarterly newsletter, having your soil analyzed, or testing the horticultural prowess and investigative abilities of our incredibly well-versed staff at the UConn Home & Garden Education Center! Or, we just might have thought you would enjoy this e-newsletter. If you do not wish to receive our monthly email updates on gardening tips, pest problems, events and other information, please email us at ladybug@uconn.edu and ask to be removed from this list.

Pest Patrol/Current Concerns/Topics of Interest:

**Orange-striped Oakworm Caterpillars Found in Some Parts of Eastern CT**

Starting in mid-September, the Rhode Island Department of Management (DEM) reported several small outbreaks of this caterpillar in parts of western Rhode Island. It was also found in eastern Connecticut. Usually this native insect does not cause much of a problem. However, in areas suffering drought and where the oak trees were defoliated earlier by gypsy moths, additional feeding by the oakworm caterpillars may cause the trees to further decline. https://www.ecori.org/natural-resources/2017/9/18/new-wave-of-caterpillars-defoliating-oak-trees

**Fall Foliage Muted in Spots**

Several callers have asked about the less colorful than usual fall foliage in various parts of the state. Leaves turn color as the days grow shorter and temperatures grow cooler. As the chlorophyll in the leaf breaks down, more durable pigments remain giving leaves their characteristic colors. Warmer falls means
plants are breaking down their chlorophyll at a slower pace so in some areas they still have not colored up. Several other factors can also be making this a less colorful year according to UConn Extension Forester, Thomas Worthley. He thinks we are seeing this in some areas due to foliar fungi, particularly on sugar maples. Wet conditions most of the summer were ideal for such things as anthracnose fungi. Those trees most severely affected have gone into early dormancy.

He also says that in some cases trees suffered from the one-two punch of gypsy moth defoliation followed by anthracnose on remnant leaves or new leaves. Red maples did not seem as badly affected, and we get a lot of our color from those so all is not lost for the season. Some drier locations in eastern CT, mainly dominated by oaks, suffered multi-year gypsy moth defoliations along with drought conditions last year and are simply experiencing tree mortality.

**Why Did the Woolly Bear Caterpillar Cross the Road?**
The woolly bear caterpillar is the larva of the Isabella tiger moth, which is native from Canada down to Florida and into Texas. The caterpillars are easily recognized by their reddish-brown and black bristly bodies. They feed on a variety of herbaceous and woody plants including grasses and low-growing shrubs. The caterpillars overwinter in leaf litter, under logs or in other sheltered sites, which is most likely why they are seen wandering around this time of year. Once warm spring weather occurs, they resume feeding and then pupate during the summer. The adult moths emerge, mate and lay eggs and another generation of caterpillars will be seen next summer into fall.

According to folklore, the width of the reddish-brown segment is related to the severity of the winter ahead. The larger the brown area, the milder the winter will be. In reality, the size of the reddish brown area is due to the age of the caterpillar. As the caterpillar grows and molts, the reddish-brown area becomes larger. Also, there are several species of tiger moths and natural variation occurs within the species and in individuals. A notable feature of these caterpillars is when threatened, they curl up in a tight circle. They also have the ability to survive freezing temperatures. We welcome them as harbingers of fall here in Connecticut but some states hold woolly bear festivals.

**Tick Testing**
Headed outdoors? Make sure you take precautions against ticks in October and November. Adult ticks are more active during this time of the year, creating a problem for both humans and animals.

These disease-carrying arachnids reside in moist areas, long grass and the leaf litter and will latch onto humans and animals alike. Although there are many different species of ticks, people generally think of one tick species in particular when worrying about illness: the deer tick. While the Deer tick is predominantly known for transmitting Lyme disease (caused by the corkscrew-shaped bacterium, *Borrelia burgdorferi*) it can also carry other disease causing agents such as *Anaplasma phagocytophilum*, *Babesia microti* and *Borrelia miyamotoi*. These are the causative agents of Granulocytic Anaplasmosis, Babesiosis and *Borrelia miyamotoi* respectively. A single tick has the potential to transmit one, two, or even all four of these illnesses simultaneously! Other species of ticks found in the Northeast such as the Dog tick (*Dermacentor variabilis*), Brown Dog tick (*Rhiphephalus sanguineus*) and Lonestar tick (*Amblyomma americanum*) can also be tested for different pathogens known to cause illness in humans and/or animals.

If you find a tick on yourself, your child, or your pet, remove it immediately but do not make any attempt to destroy it. The Connecticut Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory (CVMDL) at UConn can test the tick for all those pathogens. Ticks received at the CVMDL are first examined and identified by trained technicians using a dissection microscope. This identification process determines the species of tick, life stage, and degree of blood engorgement, all of which are factors that may impact transmission of pathogens to the person or animal (the host). Ticks may then be tested for the DNA of pathogens that are
known to be transmitted by that tick species. Results are reported within 3-5 business days of receiving the sample. Next business day RUSH testing is available for an additional fee. The information obtained from testing your tick at UConn is very useful when consulting with your physician or veterinarian about further actions you may need to take.

Compared to 2016, this year, the CVMDL has seen a significant increase in the numbers of tick submissions to the laboratory. In the month of April, the number of submissions increased 92% relative to the same month in 2016. The increases for other warm weather months were 104% in May, 70% in June and 60% in July. CVMDL speculates that changes in weather patterns this year may have affected changes in tick populations and with that, increased number of tick submissions to the lab.

CVMDL is the only laboratory in New England accredited by the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnosticians. The laboratory is located on the UConn-Storrs campus and provides diagnostic services, professional expertise, research and detection of newly emerging diseases, and collaborates with federal, state, and local agencies to detect and monitor diseases important to animal and human health.

How to send in ticks: Please send ticks in sealed, double zip lock bags accompanied by a small square of moist paper towel. The submission form and the “Do’s and Don’ts of tick testing” can be found on our website at http://s.uconn.edu/tickform

Photo Credit: Heather Haycock

Fighting Fruit Flies
Fruit flies invading your home are a huge nuisance. Trap them in a small dish of vinegar or leftover wine. They prefer red! Cover the top with plastic wrap and poke a few holes in the top with a fork. The fruit flies will find their way in but not be able to get out. Put all fruit and vegetables in the refrigerator, then wash the counters completely with soap and water to eliminate any eggs or larvae. http://blog.extension.uconn.edu/2016/01/27/fruit-flies-are-annoying/

New Food Safety Website

Other items that the Center is getting calls or emails on include storing winter squash, fertilizing lawns, when to bring in summer flowering bulbs, dying oak trees, rashes from hickory tussock moths and chipmunk control. If you have specific questions, gardening queries or pest problems, check out our website, www.ladybug.uconn.edu, call the UConn Home & Garden Education Center (877) 486-6271 (toll-free in CT) or email us at ladybug@uconn.edu. Your County Cooperative Extension Centers are also listed on the website.
Ten Tips for the October Gardener:
1. Remove, bag and trash any gypsy moth, bagworm, or eastern tent caterpillar egg masses or spray them with a commercial horticultural oil to smother them. Do not get oil on tree bar.

2. Replace spent annuals with frost tolerant hardy mums, asters, pansies or kale.

3. Bring houseplants back inside before the first frost. Scout for insects and rinse the foliage and containers to remove any hitchhikers.

4. Mulch perennial beds using a loose organic material such as bark chips or leaves to keep down weeds, preserve moisture and give roots a longer time to grow before the soil freezes.

5. Renovate the lawn by thatching or aerating if needed. Keep any areas that were seeded in September well-watered.

6. Plant garlic from October 1st to November 15th. Place each clove pointed-side up at a depth of 2 to 4 inches deep and about 6 inches apart.

7. Outwit hungry squirrels and chipmunks by planting bulbs in established groundcovers. Lift and store tender bulbs, i.e. cannas, dahlias and gladiolus after first frost.

8. Cut asparagus ferns to the ground once they have been hit with a frost and turned brown.

9. As tomatoes end their production, cut down plants and pick up any debris and put in the trash or take to a landfill. Many diseases will over-winter on old, infected leaves and stems so these are best removed from the property.

10. Keep herbaceous or woody foundation plants a few feet away from the house to eliminate hiding places for insects and mice, which could wind up indoors as temperatures plummet.

Events/ Programs/Save the Dates:
September 21, October 19, November 16. Green Forum at Auer Farm. 6:30 to 9:00. Auer Farm
For registration and info go to: www.s.uconn.edu/3uk. $25 for 3 lectures on food waste, landfill alternatives and hunger.

UConn Master Composter Program presents:
WORM DAY, October 21, 2017, 10 am – 1 pm.
What: Learn about invasive and beneficial earthworms, discover how to set up and care for a worm bin with vermicomposting worms, make your own bin to bring home (complete with worms).

Where: Fairfield County Extension Center, Bethel, CT
To register and find out more go to www.ladybug.uconn.edu. Program is free. $5 donation for worms appreciated.

Department of Animal Science Activities

The Connecticut Sheep Breeders Association Inc. in conjunction with the University of Connecticut Cooperative Extension Service are again offering a one-day shearing school.
Saturday, October 14, 2017, UConn Beef Barn (Livestock Unit 1), Horsebarn Hill Road
8am-4:30pm
This program is offered for those individuals who have a strong interest in learning how to shear sheep and have a basic understanding of sheep husbandry and handling. As sheep shearing is a physically demanding skill, it is highly recommended that you be able to perform a squat and touch your toes without discomfort and hold for an extended amount of time.
Class is limited to 12 students  Preregistration is required: Deadline for registration is October 7
CSBA members and UConn student: $20.00
All others: $40.00 Audit course: $10.00
Send: Name, address, email and phone # along with registration fee payable to CSBA to:
   Kathy Robinson
   743 Murdock Ave.
   Meriden, CT 06450

17th Annual Fun Horse Show
Presented by Animal Science Department’s UConn Morgan Drill Team.

2017 UConn Beef Auction
Sunday October 22, 2017 10 am Animal Preview  12 noon Auction. Cattle Resource Unit (Heifer Barn), Horsebarn Hill, UConn Storrs campus.

For information on these or other Dept of Animal Science events, go to www.animalscience.uconn.edu.
YOU’RE INVITED!
2017 LITTLE “I” LIVESTOCK SHOW

Please join us for the 88th Annual Little International Livestock Show on Saturday, October 21st beginning at 8:30 AM. The show will feature showmanship classes for poultry, beef and dairy cattle, horses, sheep and pigs. Students will show off their animal handling skills with a species that they have been working with for the past two months.

The program booklet and schedule of events will be available at www.animalscience.uconn.edu in mid-October!
SALT CONFERENCE
Smaller American Lawns Today
A Down to Earth Look at Soils

Have you ever wondered what is happening below ground and how that affects the plants that grow above ground in your garden?

Healthy soil is an essential component of a fertile landscape. Composed of mineral solids, organic matter, water, and air, soil anchors and supports plants. Alive with bacteria, fungi, nematodes, and larger organisms, soil plays an important role in supporting a vital living ecosystem. Take the necessary steps to improve and maintain this living natural resource while providing a good foundation for vigorous plant growth.

Soil testing is an easy way to assess the fertility of your soil. Fall is the best time to collect samples. Get your soil tested now (www.soiltest.uconn.edu) and bring your results to the conference to better understand the recommendations (optional).

Presentations

Soil Sustainability (45 minutes)
Making Sense of Soil Tests (45 minutes)
Dawn Pettinelli, Extension Instructor in the Department of Plant Science at UConn

Soil Ecology and Health – Making Links (1 hour)
Ray Covino, District Conservationist, USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service

Building Soil Carbon for Healthier Gardens (2 hours)
Jack Kittredge, Soil Carbon Program Coordinator & Editor of The Natural Farmer MA chapter of NOFA and Julie Rawson, Executive Director of the MA chapter of NOFA

Saturday, November 11, 2017
8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
Connecticut College
Cummings Arts Center, Oliva Hall
270 Mohegan Avenue, New London CT 06320

$65 by November 1/$90 after
Members: $55 by November 1/$70 after
(Arboretum, CT Master Gardener, Wild Ones)
Presentations begin at 9 a.m.

Connecticut College Arboretum

For more information or to register call 860-439-5020
e-mail arbor@conncoll.edu
visit arboretum.conncoll.edu
October 27-28, An Old New-Gate Halloween. The Old New-Gate Prison & Copper Mine, a National Historic Landmark and State Archaeological Preserve will be open the last Friday and Saturday in October for this Special Event. Presently the Museum and Grounds are closed for renovation. http://www.cultureandtourism.org/cct/cwp/view.asp?a=2127&q=520994

November 11 & December 9
The Greenhouse Research & Extension Program at UConn is organizing two workshops on greenhouse vegetables. The workshop on Nov. 11 will help new farmers learn how to establish and manage a hydroponic system. The second workshop (Dec. 9) is intended for experienced growers who would like to improve their production practices in hydroponic or soilless systems. Both workshops will take place at UConn-Storrs. For more information go to: http://greenhouse.uconn.edu/workshops/

UConn Garden Master Classes are offered through the UConn Extension Master Gardener Program. These classes provide continuing education for Certified Master Gardeners as part of the Advanced Master Gardener certification process. **These classes are also open to the general public.** Anyone with an interest in gardening and horticulture is welcome! For a list of classes go to: http://mastergardener.uconn.edu/garden-master-classes/

From CT DEEP:

**National Fossil Day**
National Fossil Day is October 11th. One way to celebrate is to learn more about Connecticut’s State Fossil – Eubrontes. Eubrontes means “true thunder” and is the name of a dinosaur track that is very abundant in the Connecticut Valley. These tracks date from the early Jurassic period, approximately 200 million years ago. They were left behind by a Theropod dinosaur similar to Dilophosaurus. Theropods are the group of bipedal carnivores that includes some of the smallest dinosaurs like Coelophysis and some of largest, like the late Cretaceous giant Tyrannosaurus Rex. The best place to see our state fossil is Dinosaur State Park in Rocky Hill. The trackway at Dinosaur State Park is a registered National Natural Landmark. The Connecticut Valley has a long history of dinosaur track discoveries and is one of the best places in the world to see dinosaur tracks. Dinosaur State Park is open year round and features 600 tracks on display along with exhibits, a Discovery Room and bookshop. The park sits on 60 acres and has 2.5 miles of hiking trails, an outdoor picnic area, gardens, and track casting and mining areas (seasonal). Discovered by accident in 1966, the park provides activities for families on weekends and guided programs for school groups in grades 1 through the college level during the week.

A new poster featuring the Park and other National Natural Landmarks was created by the National Park Service. Free copies of the poster are available by contacting Meg Enkler at (860) 529-5816 or Margaret.Enkler@ct.gov. Supplies are limited to 1 poster per request. Teachers can also pick up copies of the poster at the park at 400 West Street in Rocky Hill. To learn more about Dinosaur State Park visit www.ct.gov/deep/DinosaurStatePark.

**World Egg Day - October 13** CT Poultry & Egg Producers
"A Box without Hinges, A Key Or A Lid, Yet Golden Treasure Inside Is Hid"

**National Pumpkin Day - October 26** Pumpkin Facts & Pick-Your-Own

**Use Less Stuff Day - October 26** Teacher Workshop: Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Rot

**World Kindness Day - November 13** Random Acts of Kindness in the Classroom
October 10, 2017 (Tuesday), 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. Let’s Go Geocaching and Identifying with iNaturalist!
James L. Goodwin Conservation Center, 23 Potter Rd., Hampton
Check out hidden treasures and use the iNaturalist app to identify flora and fauna.

October 14, 2017 (Sat.), 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Osborne Museum Architecture Tour
Osborne Homestead Museum, 500 Hawthorne Ave., Derby
Visitors will explore the transformation of this modest 1800s farmhouse into an elegant twentieth century Colonial Revival style home.

October 21, 2017 (Sat.), 9 a.m. - 10:30 a.m., Project FeederWatch Volunteer Training
Kellogg Environmental Center, 500 Hawthorne Ave., Derby
Help monitor birds for the Project FeederWatch program. November 2017 to March 2018, on Fridays and Saturdays.

October 25, 2017 (Wednesday), 10:00 a.m., Tree Identification Walk,
Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area, 341 Milford St. (Rt. 69), Burlington
Take a guided hike along the Tree Identification Trail at Sessions Woods.

October 26, 2017 (Thurs.), 10 a.m. - 11 a.m., The Secret Garden: The Elements of Surprise and Refuge in Your Garden, James L. Goodwin Conservation Center, Hampton
Discover a unique approach to gardening that highlights secret places and the element of surprise.

October 27, 2017 (Friday), 12 p.m. - 1:30 p.m., Rodents and Small Mammals
James L. Goodwin Conservation Center, 23 Potter Rd., Hampton
Take a look into the life cycle, habitat, diet, and just what makes these pests so unique and adaptable.

October 27, 2017 (Friday) 3 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. The Art of the Sit Spot
James L. Goodwin Conservation Center, 23 Potter Rd., Hampton
Take a unique journey to discover the lost art of the sit spot. Age 12 – Adult

October 29, 2017 (Sunday), 2:30 p.m. A True Crow Story
Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area, 341 Milford St. (Rt. 69), Burlington
An introduction to crows and a newly released nonfiction book, An Inky Summer with authors Fred and Cheryl Lowman.

November 1, 2017 (Wed.) 7 p.m. CT’s Indigenous Communities & their Natural World, Kellogg Environmental Center, 500 Hawthorne Ave., Derby
Dr. Lucianne Lavin, PhD, Director of Research and Collections for the Institute for American Indian Studies will speak on CT’s native communities regional history. All ages welcome.

November 11, 2017 (Saturday), 1:30 p.m. Turkey Tales
Sessions Woods WMA, 341 Milford St., Rt. 69,Burlington
Join us for an informative program on wild turkeys!

For more information and additional programs visit ct.gov/deep/calendar
For a listing of CT Agricultural Fairs that are happening through October, go to: http://www.ctagfares.org/
KNOWLEDGE TO GROW ON!

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Black tea may help with weight loss, too

9 American Foods That Have Been Banned in Other Countries
Health benefits of olives and olive oil

Hurricane Irma may speed the end of orange juice, America’s biggest source of ‘fruit’

A spoonful of oil: Fats and oils help to unlock full nutritional benefits of veggies, study suggests

CLIMATE CORNER

A stinging report: Climate change a major threat to bumble bees

To predict how climate change will affect disease, researchers must fuse climate science and biology

Extreme weather has limited effect on attitudes toward climate policies

What soot-covered, hundred-year-old birds can tell us about saving the environment

WHO KNEW?

https://apnews.com/2d8b8e906ac54949a83bb98d4700c9dd/Not-so-sweet:-75-percent-of-honey-samples-had-key-pesticide

Key plant species may be important for supporting wildflower pollinators

Are you barking up the wrong tree by sleeping with your dog?

Cannot sleep due to stress? Here is the cure

What Do Dogs See in Mirrors?

UCONN PLANT DIAGNOSTIC LAB: www.plant.lab.uconn.edu

UCONN SOIL NUTRIENT ANALYSIS LAB: www.soiltest.uconn.edu

UCONN EXTENSION: www.extension.uconn.edu

UCONN FOOD SAFETY: www.foodsafety.uconn.edu
Cascading Hopflower Oregano

Exceptional sun-loving ornamental herb with fragrant foliage. Pale green and blush colored paper-lantern like bracts dangle from arching wiry stems, each embellished with a tiny rose-pink flower. Beautifully featured at the edge of raised beds and berms or in window boxes. Flowers are prized for dried arrangements. Herbaceous. Text from www.monrovia.com. Attributes also noted on their website include that plants grow 1 to 2 feet high and wide, they are attractive to butterflies and hummingbirds and are drought tolerant once established.

We Need Your Support!

If you do enjoy our efforts to keep you informed about horticultural and College-related items, please consider showing your support by liking us on Facebook https://www.facebook.com/pages/UConn-Home-Garden-Center/136211899745967, checking out our weekly blog www.uconnladybug.wordpress.com.

October 2017 DMP