

# WHAT'S HAPPENING

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ENTOMOLOGY AND PLANT PATHOLOGY—EPP#60

## Ron Blair wins first \$500 Exotic Pest Reward

By Beth Long

A homeowner plant sample from Henderson county (Lexington) was identified by USDA as Cogongrass, *Imperata cylindrical* (L.) Raeusch. (Poaceae), a Federal Noxious Weed. This is the first find of this weed in Tennessee. It appears to be confined to a flower bed where it had been growing for at least two years.

The weed will be eradicated and USDA inspectors will monitor the area, including nearby pastures and nurser-

ies to be sure that there has been no spread. It will be considered as a regulatory incident with eradication in progress, not as an established noxious weed.

Congratulations Ron! Thanks for turning the sample in and getting it to TDA for identification so rapidly.

Do you need some county gr\$\$n too? See What's Happening:

Volume 4, Issue 1 for a list of exotic pest finds that qualify for a \$500 Exotic Pest Reward.



Cogongrass identification guide and pictures are available at: <http://www.cogongrass.org/>

## Could you identify Cogongrass?

By Beth Long

A Cogongrass Identification Workshop will be held on Tuesday, July 22, 2008, from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., at the Ed Jones Auditorium on the Ellington Agricultural Center campus in Nashville. The Tennessee Exotic Pest Plant Council (TNEPPC) is organizing the workshop. Dr. Dave Moorhead of the University of Georgia Warnell School of Forest Resources will be conducting the training.

More details will be forthcoming soon. TNEPPC is working to get sponsors to cover the cost of lunch and I can cover mileage costs for Extension agents who wish to attend the training. At this time there is no registration fee planned for the training.

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## Corn: Look Out for Cutworms this Month

By Russ Patrick



I rechecked the cutworm traps this morning and found 35 black cutworm adult moths. All but a couple were alive and kicking. This adds 35 to the twenty caught earlier this week bringing a total of 55 moths. If any weeds are killed cutworms can and will move into any emerging corn plants. Be alert. Do not let these insects ruin your crop. I would recommend an insecticide at planting to control any potential larvae from moving into the corn. Left, is a photo of some of the black cutworms.

## Wheat: True Armyworm Moths Found in Traps

By Russ Patrick

There have been very few true armyworms caught (actually 2) in the black cutworm traps. None were found in the Armyworm traps. That's unusual to me. I expect to see more moths as the month rides out, however in May, we may see more emerging moths caught in our traps. At right notice the photo with the black cutworm left and True armyworm moth to the right. Scouting for either of these insects is the best method to assure that they will not cause excessive damage to the crops.



Cutworm is on the left and True armyworm is on the right

## Tobacco Blue Mold Outlook

By Darrell Hensley

So far, we have had a terrific season, just one incidence of a possible spore shower for our state. Don't let the situation fool you. Keep a keen eye open for the possibility of blue mold developing in your plant beds. If you have already planted, please destroy any unused plants. Unused plants can serve as a reservoir for blue mold development. In the event of any possible spore showers or new outbreaks, I will email all Tennessee county extension personnel so they may notify local producers. So, remember to keep your eyes and ears open. For county extension personnel who have any suspect plants and have access to compound microscopes, dissecting microscopes and/or digital cameras, please send suspected materials through our distance diagnostics system. This will help us get the word out to the surrounding counties, if we have any positive encounters. Also, you may want to have growers review the blue mold web page at <http://web.utk.edu/~extepp/bluesit.htm> if they have any questions.

## EPA Orders Scotts to Stop Selling Certain Pesticides

By Gene Burgess

This is an EPA Pesticide Program Update on 4/23/08.

EPA is ordering Scotts Miracle-Gro Co. to stop selling and distributing two pesticide products that have not been properly registered with EPA. They may have been sold under names such as "Garden Weed Preventer + Plant Food" and "Scotts Lawn Service Fertilizer with .28 Halts" or other names. These products have apparently been sold illegally, as they have not been registered with EPA and are labeled with invalid EPA registration numbers. Together with the Ohio Department of Agriculture, EPA is analyzing samples of the products to determine their ingredients and will use this information to better determine what additional steps should be taken. If you see the invalid numbers, 62355-4 or 538-304, for lawn and garden products, you have an unregistered product.

For details, see EPA Region V's press release and fact sheet below.

EPA orders Scotts to stop selling certain pesticides (News Release 04/23/08)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE -No. 08-OPA073

(Chicago, Ill. - April 23, 2008) U. S. Environmental Protection Agency Region 5 today issued a "stop sale, use or removal" order against Scotts Miracle Gro Co. and three affiliates, all of Marysville, Ohio, for illegal, unregistered and misbranded pesticides. EPA will also issue a stop sale order to Scotts Lawn Care Service.

Scotts has agreed to recall these products from all retail locations across the United States and to set up a process for consumers to safely return any unregistered products they may have purchased.

An EPA consumer hotline to answer questions about the action has been established at 888-838-1304 (9 a.m. - 4:30 p.m, Central Daylight Time). Questions may also be answered by the National Pesticide Information Center at 800-858-7378 (6:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Pacific Daylight Time, including weekends). A fact sheet and regularly updated information are posted online at <http://www.epa.gov/reg5rcra/ptb/news/>

At this time the risks, if any, posed by these unregistered products are unknown. EPA and its state partner Ohio Department of Agriculture are conducting a laboratory analysis of these products. Updated information will be posted online when it becomes available. Until EPA has more information about the contents of these products, consumers are advised not to use these products and to store them in a safe, cool and dry place such as a garage or utility shed. Do not dispose of them down the drain, in the garbage or at a community disposal site.

EPA ordered the companies, collectively an international producer and distributor of lawn care products, to immediately stop selling and distributing two products which can be identified by the invalid "EPA registration number" listed on the package. Invalid registration number 62355-4 is marketed under names including "Garden Weed Preventer + Plant Food" and "Miracle Gro Shake 'n' Feed All Purpose Plant Food Plus Weed Preventer." Invalid registration number 538-304 is used primarily by Scotts Lawn Service, a lawn care company. It is marketed under names including "Scotts Lawn Service Fertilizer with .28% Halts," "Scotts Lawn Service Fertilizer 0-0-7 Plus .28% Halts Pro," "Scotts Lawn Service Fertilizer 14-2-5 Plus .28% Halts Pro" and "Scotts Lawn Service Fertilizer 22-0-8 Plus .28% Halts Pro."

In an effort to make sure these products are immediately removed from the marketplace, EPA will also issue stop sale orders to major retailers that carry these products.

Under the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act, all pesticides must be submitted to EPA for review, evaluation and registration to ensure that they do not pose an unreasonable risk to human health or the environment. EPA's review and registration process is internationally recognized. Pesticide products that have not undergone EPA review may pose risks to human health and the environment.

"A manufacturer such as Scotts cannot ignore the important legal requirement of registering its pesticides," said Region 5 Administrator Mary A. Gade. "This is a serious violation of EPA's system for protecting people and the environment from the potential harmful effects of pesticides. EPA will fully investigate this violation and take appropriate actions. We are committed to keeping the public informed about any health consequences and providing information to assure the safe recall of these products as soon as possible."

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For more information on pesticides, go to <http://www.epa.gov/reg5rcra/ptb/pest>

## UT to Host Pest Ant Workshop

By Karen Vail

UT is sponsoring an Urban Pest Ant Workshop on June 25. We'll be covering biology and management of odorous house, Asian needle, carpenter and fire ants in the morning. After lunch, which we will provide, we'll give step-by-step instructions for identifying many pest ants, as well as provide vials with identified ants. Cost is \$75 and registration is limited to the first 24 registrants. More details on the course registration and the agenda will eventually be listed under "Teaching" at my faculty web site,

<http://eppserver.ag.utk.edu/personnel/Vail/Teaching.htm> .



Odorous house ant workers and brood.

## Fire Ant Product Selection: Be Careful Not to Mistake Granular Insecticides for Granular Baits Insecticides

By Karen Vail

Many non-bait insecticides, including many that are used against fire ants, come in the form of granules. Some baits are actually labeled as “bait granules.” It is very important to know the differences between a bait and a contact insecticide granule and how to use each of them.

A bait is an insecticide that insects sense to be food. In the case of ants, workers find the bait and carry it back to the colony, where it is fed to the larvae, workers and queens. Foraging workers may consume some of the liquid portion of the bait before returning the particle to the colony. Fire ant baits should have the word “BAIT” clearly listed on the label. Baits can be applied near a mound or broadcasted across a large area.

Contact insecticides typically need to be contacted or make contact with the ant to work. Contact insecticides can be applied on or into a mound or broadcasted across a large area. Contact granular insecticides broadcasted over a large area may take longer to eliminate a colony, but will reduce the number of ants foraging. More information on fire ant baits and contact insecticides can be found at the eXtension web site, [www.extension.org](http://www.extension.org).

**Appearance and odor:** Baits are yellowish, oily and have a toasted corn smell. Granular contact insecticides are usually gray or brown, not oily and have either a neutral or unpleasant chemical smell. Be careful, some of the newer granular contact insecticides may also look like an ant bait, at least the carrier may look like a corn cob product.

**Application rate:** Most baits are applied at broadcast rates from one to, at most, about 22 pounds per acre. Granular contact insecticides are applied at rates much higher than this, often on the order of 1 to 2 pounds per thousand square feet.

**Effect of moisture:** Baits should *never* be watered in. Water ruins bait particles. Granular insecticides usually work faster and better when watered into the soil surface.

**Baits and granular insecticides, even with the same active ingredient, may have different uses:** What if you received an inquiry from someone wanting a fipronil product that controlled fire ants and possibly fleas as well? A best response to this question would be TopChoice. See the table below which lists some fipronil products registered for fire ant management. The amount of active ingredient in fipronil baits is very low and the application rate is low also, compared with the granular fipronil. TopChoice is the only fipronil product in the table below that lists a flea control option. However, if not consumed by the ants I doubt the amount of fipronil remaining in the unconsumed bait would be enough to control fleas.

**Use sites:** Carefully read the insecticide label to determine site uses of each product. Only certain baits, such as Esteem, Extinguish, Extinguish Plus and AmdroPro, may be applied to cattle pastures for fire ant control. At the time of this writing, no granular contact fire ant products are labeled for fire ant control in pastures.

Some fipronil products registered for fire ant management.

Formulation	Trade name	% AI, fipronil	Broadcast rates	Information directly from the product label
Granular Insecticide	TopChoice	0.0143%	87 lb/acre or 2 lb / 1000 sq. ft	The primary purpose of TopChoice is to control imported fire ants in turfgrass and landscape beds. In addition, mole crickets, fleas, ticks, and nuisance ants are controlled for a limited time by the fire ant treatment
Granular Insecticide	Over N'Out™	0.0103%	2 lb/1000 sq. ft	Over N'Out™ Fire Ant Granules Insecticide controls imported fire ants in residential lawns. To control other insect pests that may be present such as mole crickets, fleas and chinch bugs, you may use Sevin® Brand Granular Carbaryl insecticide
Granular Bait	Ceasefire™ Fire Ant Bait	0.00015%	1.5 – 15 lbs/acre	CHIPCO Ceasefire fire ant Bait Insecticide is intended for use to control imported fire ants in turfgrass.
Granular Bait	Maxforce® FC Fire Ant Bait	0.00045%	1.5 – 5 lbs/acre	Maxforce FC Fire Ant Bait is intended for use to control fire ants in turfgrass.

Parts of this article were excerpted from:

Barr, C., T. Davis, K. Flanders, W. Smith, L. Hooper-Bui, P. Koehler, K. Vail, W. Gardner, B. Drees, and T. Fuchs, 2005. **Broadcast Baits for Fire Ant Control**. Texas Cooperative Extension and the Southern Region IPM Center B-6099. [http://agrilifebookstore.org/publications\\_details.cfm?whichpublication=1190](http://agrilifebookstore.org/publications_details.cfm?whichpublication=1190)

## Ground-nesting "Native" Bees Not Harmful

By John A. Skinner



Nest site near home. These people are not being harmed.

Each year in the spring I receive a dozen calls and several samples identified as native bees that were nesting in the ground near homes and gardens. Most people were concerned that these bees were a stinging threat, especially for those callers that have young children. These bees are not a stinging threat, they are beneficial as pollinators of flowering plants in the garden or landscape.

Nest site near home. These people are not being harmed

Make sure the "bees" are bees and not something else. I would be concerned if the suspect "bees" are indeed yellowjacket wasps (see UT SP341-M for details including identification characteristics.). The yellowjackets are a sting-

ing threat. Yellowjackets often nest in the ground but there are seldom more than two entrances to the nest. Yellowjacket coloration usually combines alternating bright yellow and black bands while many ground nesting bees are grey or black (see below). A few sweat bees are bright metallic green-blue.

There are hundreds of species of ground nesting bees in Tennessee. They range in total body length from 5mm (ca. 3/16") [small sweat bees] to honey bee size of 11mm (ca. 7/16") to larger digger bees at 19mm (ca. 3/4"). They are usually black with grey hairs but some can be metallic green or blue. These bees range in sociality from being solitary (each single female works alone) like many leaf cutter bees [Megachilidae], mining bees [Andrenidae], and digger bees [Anthophoridae] to primitively eusocial as with some sweat bees [Halictidae](workers help care for brood, progressive feeding, and or overlapping generations).

I will include some details about the families of bees involved below, however, none of these bees are a threat to safety regarding stinging. You would have to capture a female in your hand and squeeze it to make it sting or very rarely a female bee could get trapped inside clothing and sting when the cloth restricted its movement. These bees often make numerous nests close together in the ground, especially when they find soft, loose soil that is easy to dig in. Hundreds of bees may be observed flying in and out of the nest area close to the ground. Often the bee that flies up to "check you out" is a male and it will soon determine that you are not a female bee and fly away.

Homeowners see numerous flying bees and panic, thinking that they could be stung or that a child playing in the yard is at risk. There is no need to control them with chemicals or other methods. My advise is to leave them alone, because they are not harmful and do a great job pollinating any flowering plant in the vicinity. I would not have children playing on top of the nesting site because a bee may accidentally fly up into their clothing. The area could be fenced off with wood stakes and engineers flagging to mark the nesting site and make it easy to avoid.

**Halictidae (sweat bees)** These bees are tiny (5mm) to small in size (9mm) and usually nest in the ground. Some are metallic blue or green and all females are excellent pollinators.

**Megachilidae (leaf-cutter bees)**. Some leaf-cutters actually nest in the ground in large groups and they are called mason bees because they plug cells and entrances to the nest with mud and not with pieces of leaf. The females have a dense patch of longer hair on their abdomens that they put pollen into. This patch may appear to be bright yellow due to the color of pollen they have collected. Their size ranges from small (7mm) to medium (12mm) and sometimes large (19mm).

**Andrenidae (mining bees)**. These bees have been particularly abundant this spring. Mining bees nest in loose soil and most are solid black, especially the abdomens and are covered with fine gray hair. They (females) store pollen in the longer hairs on their hind legs. Males have conspicuously longer antennae than females.

**Anthophoridae (digger bees)**. Digger bees nest in the ground and some make an elaborate outer turret (tunnel) of mud that encases the entrance to the burrow. These bees are medium (11mm) to large (18mm) in size. They carry pollen on long hairs on the hind legs and are dark in body color and may have gray or brown hairs that give them a reddish hue. Most of the sites of ground nesting bees we have examined where made by mining bees or digger bees and posed no hazard to the landowner.



**Female digger bee entering a nest burrow**



**Entrance of burrow formed into a tumulus**

## Plant & Pest Diagnostic Highlights

By Bruce Kauffman

We received 52 samples from April 10 to April 23, 2008 including 32 samples via the UT Diagnostic Web Site.

### FIELD CROPS :

Collar rot (*Sclerotinia* species) of greenhouse tobacco seedlings.

### FRUIT & VEGETABLES :

Nutrient deficiency, possible bacterial leaf spot, exposed carpels of fruit caused by possible pollination injury, and possible pythium root rot of tomato.

### INSECTS, CRUSTACEANS, and MITES :

Alfalfa weevil on alfalfa; fern scale on Boston fern; nymphal soil tubes of Brood XIV of the 17 year periodical cicada; fall cankerworms feeding on silver maple leaves; slugs on goldenrain tree roots; bagworms on juniper; rose sawfly egg-laying on rose.

### Insects in and around the home :

Imported fire ants; digger bees; banded hickory borer; carpet beetles; crane flies (*Tipula* species); humpbacked flies; corn earworm or tobacco budworm.

### ORNAMENTAL :

Mortality of rhododendron due to plant competition, site and soil conditions and drought; root and branch dieback due to over or under watering of blue rug juniper; possible crown gall and/or wound-caused root initials on stem of rosemary; suspected rose rosette disease of Peace roses; leaf drop of camellia due to heavy flowering; adverse light, water, and temperature extremes on lemon tree; branch death caused by drought stress and phomopsis branch canker on Leyland cypress; stinkhorn fungus in bark mulch; sooty bark disease of sugar maple trunk; spot anthracnose of 'Cloud Nine' dogwood flower bracts; phytophthora root rot of goldenrain tree; branch dieback of cherry laurel shoots due to drought; sapsucker damage to elaeagnus stems; white smut leaf spot of gaillardia, cercospora leaf spot on pansy; lack of tulip blooms due to suspected genetic characteristics; phytophthora root rot of Japanese maple.

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**OTHER UT NEWSLETTERS WITH PEST MANAGEMENT INFORMATION**

**Fruit Pest News**

<http://web.utk.edu/~extepp/fpn/fpn.htm>

**Tennessee Crop and Pest Management Newsletter**

[http://www.utextension.utk.edu/fieldCrops/cotton/cotton\\_insects/ipmnewsletters.htm](http://www.utextension.utk.edu/fieldCrops/cotton/cotton_insects/ipmnewsletters.htm)

**Ornamental Pest and Disease Update**

<http://soilplantandpest.utk.edu/publications/ornamentalnwsltr.html>

**Tennessee Soybean Rust Hotline - 877-875-2326**

**USDA Soybean Rust Web Site**

<http://www.sbrusa.net>

**This and other "What's Happening" issues can be found at**

<http://eppserver.ag.utk.edu/Whats/whatshap.htm>

**Entomology and Plant Pathology Web Site**

<http://eppserver.ag.utk.edu>

**Precautionary Statement**

To protect people and the environment, pesticides should be used safely. This is everyone's responsibility, especially the user. Read and follow label directions carefully before you buy, mix, apply, store or dispose of a pesticide. According to laws regulating pesticides, they must be used only as directed by the label.

**Disclaimer**

This publication contains pesticide recommendations that are subject to change at any time. The recommendations in this publication are provided only as a guide. It is always the pesticide applicator's responsibility, by law, to read and follow all current label directions for the specific pesticide being used. The label always takes precedence over the recommendations found in this publication.

Use of trade or brand names in this publication is for clarity and information; it does not imply approval of the product to the exclusion of others that may be of similar, suitable composition, nor does it guarantee or warrant the standard of the product. The author(s), the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture and University of Tennessee Extension assume no liability resulting from the use of these recommendations.

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