



Consumer Horticulture Newsletter

Yancey County Center

July 2021

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Have a gardening question?

N.C. Cooperative Extension is here to help. The NCCE website has a lot of great gardening articles and resources:

<https://gardening.ces.ncsu.edu>

Want to identify a plant or find a plant for your particular landscape needs? Check out the Extension Gardener Plant Toolbox:

<https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu>

You can also call or stop by the Extension office in Burnsville with your garden and landscape questions.

Welcome to the Yancey County N.C. Cooperative Extension Consumer Horticulture Newsletter,

This new, local resource for home and community gardeners in Yancey County includes important updates, resources, and research-based educational materials to help you meet your gardening goals. Whether you have a small container garden or a large landscape with multiple gardens there is always something new to learn. This newsletter will be published quarterly and I hope you find it a valuable resource.

Happy gardening,

Sara Runkel
Agriculture Agent
N.C. Cooperative Extension
Yancey County

Did you know this is just one of our newsletters? To view all of our program newsletters, check out our website

<http://yancey.ces.ncsu.edu>. You can subscribe to receive any of our newsletters by email. Don't use email or do you want to receive a hard copy in the mail? That is ok as well! Contact us by calling **828.682.6186**, and we can let you know how you can receive a hard copy in the mail.



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New Pest Alert: Box Tree Moth

Box tree moth is a potentially devastating pest of boxwoods and was recently found in multiple states on the East Coast of the US in May of 2021. It arrived on plants imported from Ontario Canada. Nurseries or retail outlets that received boxwoods, Euonymus, or hollies from Canada and consumers who recently purchased these plants should scout for this pest. Learn more here:

<https://yancey.ces.ncsu.edu/2021/06/urgent-new-pest-alert-box-tree-moth-found-in-the-us/>

Box tree moth larva and webbing.
Ferenc Lakatos, University of Sopron, Bugwood

Pesticide Drop Off Days

Monday, July 19 & Monday, August 2

Do you have old or unused pesticides in storage that you don't know what to do with? Pesticides are a type of hazardous waste, don't throw them away and don't dump them down the drain! You can bring your unwanted pesticides to the N.C. Cooperative Extension Office in Burnsville to be properly disposed of for free. An appointment is required to drop off unused, unwanted pesticides to make sure they are properly prepared for drop-off. To schedule an appointment, or for more information, contact the Yancey County Center.

828-682-6186

Homeowner Guide to Managing Diseases

New publication available from NC State: Homeowner's Guide to Managing Diseases Using Fungicides, Bactericides, and Alternative Products, by Inga Meadows and Ella Reeves.

Includes fungicides, bactericides and alternative products organized by active ingredient for the following types of plants: annuals and perennials, fruit trees, lawns, small fruits, vegetables, and woody ornamentals. Available online here: <https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/homeowners-guide-to-managing-diseases-using-fungicides-bactericides-and-alternative-products>

Managing Weeds in the Garden



With the recent rain and warm weather, your garden may be overwhelmed with weeds. There are many different plants that can be considered a weed and sometimes a plant that is a weed to one person is not a weed to another. Simply put, a weed is a plant out of place. Weeds can compete with desirable plants for water, nutrients, sunlight in your garden and lawn. Some invasive and noxious weeds can also cause problems in the natural landscape by outcompeting native plants or are harmful to humans and domestic animals. Here are some tips to help you manage weeds in your home landscape.

First, identify the weeds you are trying to get rid of. Learn if they are broadleaf weeds or monocots like grasses, sedges, and alliums. Understand how they reproduce and what season they typically grow in. Chickweed is an example of a winter annual broadleaf weed that typically starts growing in the fall, lives through the winter and sets seed in the spring. Lambsquarters and galinsoga are two common summer annual broadleaf weeds that start growing in the spring, set seed in the summer and fall and are killed at frost. Annual weeds multiply by going to seed. If you have a lot of them in your garden, they may seem overwhelming, but they can be relatively easy to control if you know how to identify them when they first come up or implement strategies like mulching to suppress their germination.

In contrast, many perennial weeds are more difficult to control. These plants live for many years and often have large root structures that can make them difficult to remove. In addition, many perennial weeds multiply vegetatively in addition to setting seed. For example, quackgrass is a common perennial monocot that reproduces by seed and through rhizomes. Even small pieces of this plant left in the ground can root and grow a new plant, making this weed more difficult to control. Once you have identified your weeds and learned about their biology you can now develop a plan to manage them using a combination of control methods.

Cultural control methods include choosing the right plant for the right place and creating the ideal environment for the plant you do want in your landscape to grow. Water the plants you want not the weeds by using drip irrigation or soaker hoses. Provide your gardens and lawns with adequate fertilizer and the proper pH. Many weeds can thrive in less-than-ideal conditions, and feeding your garden plants properly will give them a chance at outcompeting many weeds.

Use mechanical control methods like hand pulling or hoes to remove weeds from the garden. Weed on a sunny day so weeds that are uprooted and brought to the surface dry out and die. For larger weeds, especially perennials with large root systems, you may need a shovel or a special tool like a Weed Wrench[®] to help remove as much of the root system as possible. Mulch is a great way to suppress many weeds from germinating. Make sure the mulch layer is thick enough to keep light from reaching the soil surface and avoid mulch materials like old hay, that might contain new weed seeds. If your weeds get too large to remove from the garden without uprooting your vegetables and flowers another mechanical...

(cont'd on next page)

(cont'd from page 3) ...control method you can use is mowing or clipping to prevent the weeds from going to seed. Repeated mowing can also help kill some perennial weeds by depleting the energy stored in their roots. If you remove the plant's leaves it won't be able to photosynthesis and eventually it will die.

Herbicides are another control option. Herbicides are a type of pesticide designed to kill plants. Some herbicides will kill broadleaf plants and monocots, while others are more selective and only kill broadleaf plants when applied according to their label. Herbicides work in a variety of ways. There are some that kill the plant through contact, meaning you need to get very good coverage for the product to work. There are others that are taken up by the plant and move down to the root system, these are known as systemic herbicides. Contact herbicides work best on small annual weeds that are in the early stages of growth. They do not work well on perennial weeds. There are also some herbicides that can be applied to the soil before weeds even start growing. These are known as pre-emergent herbicides and they kill weed seedlings right after germination. When choosing an herbicide, it is important to know what weeds you are trying to control, the correct timing for application, and the environment you will be using it in. Always follow the instructions on the label and make sure you wear adequate personal protective equipment including closed toed shoes, long pants, long sleeves, and anything else recommended on the label.

Last but not least, start thinking about how you can prevent introducing new weeds into your garden and landscape. If you use compost make sure that it has been heated to at least 140°F to kill weeds seeds. Closely inspect new garden plants to make sure they do not have any weeds in them. Sharing plants with friends and neighbors can be an economical way to add new plants to your garden but it can also lead to new weeds if you aren't careful. Also make sure tools and equipment are cleaned so you don't move weed seeds or plant parts around your property.

If you have weeds don't delay in implementing some of the weed control strategies discussed above. The weeds aren't getting any smaller! And remember an integrated approach will be much more effective in the long run than relying on just one control method.

Article by: Sara Runkel, June 2021

Sustainable Gardening Workshop Series

Home and community gardeners in Yancey and surrounding counties are invited to attend a series of free educational programs on the second Saturday of the month from 1–2 p.m. Workshops are offered in partnership with the Yancey County Library in Burnsville. For more information and to register visit: <https://yancey.ces.ncsu.edu/2021/04/sustainable-gardening-workshop-series/>

Schedule for Summer and Fall, 2021 (workshops will be held in-person at the library in Burnsville):

July 10: Pollinator Gardens

August 14: Planning your Fall Vegetable Garden

September 11: Soil Testing for Productive Gardens and Landscapes

October 9: Fall Garden Maintenance (perennial garden focus)

November 13: Happy House Plants

