Q&A

Distribute 7-27-15

Q. Why have the New Gold lantanas quit blooming? The leaves have faded and look dusty. Is it a disease?

A. No, it is not a disease. You are describing the symptoms caused by lacebugs. Lace bugs are sucking insects. The lantanas will recover to provide a flush of bloom later this autumn. Mark your calendar to spray with Sevin, acephate, or spinosad every two weeks beginning a month before you saw the symptoms this year.

Q. I know it seems strange after a month of dry weather that we are still being bothered by mosquitoes, but we are! What can we do?

A. Empty all containers with sitting water ( search for pails, old dog dishes, tires, cans, etc). Put mosquito donuts in your rain barrels and water features. Spray pyrithrums or other labeled insecticides into thickets where the leaves stay wet from rain or sprinklers, and the mosquitoes congregate.

Q.Our favorite nursery does not offer the Roma Surprise or Surefire tomato varieties that you recommend for fall planting. Are there any other options?

A. Yes, use any of the heat-setting determinate tomato varieties. Consider BHN 968 (Cherry Surprise), 444, Phoenix, BHN 602, Heat Wave, Celebrity, Tycoon, Tygress, Bobcat, Valley Cat, Solar Fire, or Sunmaster.

Q. Am I wrong or has this been a summer of broken branches and uprooted trees? Why so many?

A. I agree that it seems that way in my neighborhood. There are several reasons. The generous rains have resulted in the trees being top-heavy with foliage. There have also been heavy winds to break off the overloaded branches . Every hollow limb or weak joint is vulnerable. As are whole trees with root systems growing on shallow soils.

Q. What does it take to control stink bugs? They ruined my peaches and are doing the same to my tomatoes.

A. Stink bugs are sturdy insects that are hard to control. Sevin(carbaryl) is the only insecticide that has worked well for me.

Q. Which lawn grasses can go dormant in the summer time without any permanent damage? I want to keep my water bill low.

A. Bermuda, zoysia, and buffalo grass enter a dormant-like state where they turn brown if they don’t receive rain or irrigation in the summer. They recover as soon as the rains return.