

Horticulture Newsletter

September 2024

Clark County Extension Service
1400 Fortune Drive
Winchester, KY 40391
859-744-4682
clark.ext@uky.edu
<http://clark.ca.uky.edu/>



A Word from the Agent . . .

Salutations September and greetings my friends! I hope you are welcoming September with open arms like I am, despite it meaning the year is flying by! This is a great time to plant trees and shrubs, if it's something you've been considering. It's also a great time to lift and divide perennials that may

be getting too large or overcrowded in their current location. You can plant the new divisions in new locations, or you can share/swap them with friends and neighbors. Continue doing rain dances, as we need to get some more moisture in the ground, if we want to see good fall color.

We got some good things coming up including a home composting class and our annual Fall Fest. It will be the 3rd year for our Fall Fest and there will be new things added to it that you will NOT want to miss out on. Help us out by telling everyone you know about the Fall Fest! Watch our social medias for some possible teasers about what to expect!

Lastly, don't forget that I am here to help you out with any of your horticulture needs. Reach out with any of those questions you may have and I hope to see you around the county!

Carrie Spry

Clark County Extension Agent for Horticulture
carrie.spry@uky.edu



KEEPING YOU
Informed



Clark / Powell

Beekeepers Association Meeting

Monday, September 9
6:30 pm

Clark County Extension Service
1400 Fortune Drive, Winchester, Kentucky
~ POT-LUCK MEAL ~

Zoom option available for those who cannot attend in person. Call 859-744-4682 to be added to the email list to receive the link.



Tj: The Samurai Wasp

By: Ric Bessin, Extension Entomologist

Upon its accidental arrival in the U.S., as with most other invasive species, brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) numbers expanded quickly in the absence of natural enemies that it left behind in its native Asia. For a number of years, we have studied how our native natural enemies attack BMSB and found that they are not effective in keeping it from damaging crops. But that came to an end in 2014 when *Trissolcus japonicus*, often referred to by researchers as just Tj, wild populations were found in Maryland. Like BMSB, it had found its way to the U.S. accidentally. Researchers working with Tj have given this wasp the informal common name of 'samurai wasp.' Despite its small size of 1 to 2 mm, *Trissolcus japonicus*, or Tj, is an important natural enemy of the BMSB in Asia.



Figure 1. Along with being a serious home invader, brown marmorated stink bug (BMSB) is a serious pest of fruit, vegetable, and field crops in the U.S. (Photo: Ric Bessin, UK)



Figure 2. This female *Trissolcus japonicus* wasp is an important egg parasitoid of brown marmorated stink bug in Asia (Photo: Elijah J. Talamas, ARS USDA)

Tj is an egg parasitoid of stink bugs. A female inserts a single egg inside a stink bug egg, then the Tj larvae hatches and kills the stink bug egg. Since BMSB lays eggs in groups of 28 to 35, Tj must place an egg into each of the stink bug eggs to control egg hatch of the entire mass. A Tj female will typically have 42 eggs at any one time, more than enough for a BMSB egg mass. Since its original detection in 2014, Tj has been found in New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Virginia, New Jersey, Michigan, California, Washington, Oregon, Delaware, and Utah. Since 2007, Tj has been studied in quarantine laboratories in several locations in the U.S. to determine if it would be suitable for release and control of BMSB. But before approval was granted for release, Tj was detected in the field. Genetic matching studies have found that these wasps were from a different population than those in quarantine.

In Asia, Tj is able to parasitize up to 60% to 80% of BMSB eggs. If that level is realized in the U.S., Tj will provide significant control of BMSB. However, studies done in quarantine found that besides BMSB, Tj will also lay eggs in the eggs of spined soldier bug, but to a much lesser extent. Spined soldier bug is one of our predatory stink bugs and is considered a beneficial insect.

While we have not been able to detect Tj in Kentucky, a UK graduate student, Lauren Fann, has been trying since 2017. While USDA APHIS regulations prohibit us from bringing Tj across state lines without approval, once it arrives here on its own we will be able to conduct studies and potentially release it within the state. Ms. Fann's studies with BMSB eggs masses have found that with our existing natural enemies, only 3% to 4% of BMSB eggs are parasitized and about 40% are eaten by predators. Having another enemy of BMSB will help to moderate its populations for years to come.



Figure 3. A native parasitoid attacking eggs of green stink bug. (Photo: Ric Bessin, UK)

RECIPE

What's
Cooking?



Pumpkin Apple Muffins

1¼ cups all-purpose flour	½ teaspoon ground ginger	1½ cups fresh pureed pumpkin
1¼ cups whole-wheat flour	½ teaspoon ground nutmeg	½ cup canola oil
1¼ teaspoons baking soda	1¼ cups honey	2 cups Granny Smith apples, finely chopped
½ teaspoon salt	2 large eggs	
1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon		

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. In a large bowl, **combine** flours, baking soda, salt and spices. In a small bowl, **combine** honey, eggs, pumpkin and oil; **stir** into dry ingredients just until moistened. **Fold** in apples. **Fill** greased or paper lined muffin cups, two-thirds full. **Bake** for 25 to 30 minutes or until muffins test done. **Cool** for 10 minutes before removing from pan.

Note: Can substitute two cups granulated sugar for honey, decrease baking soda by ¼ teaspoon and increase oven temperature to 350 degrees F.

Yield: 18 muffins

Nutritional Analysis: 200 calories, 7 g fat, 0.5 g saturated fat, 35 mg cholesterol, 160 mg sodium, 35 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 20 g sugar, 3 g protein

Buying Kentucky Proud is easy. Look for the label at your grocery store, farmers' market, or roadside stand.

HOME COMPOSTING

Space is limited!!

Thursday, September 19

6:30 pm

Clark County Extension Service

(1400 Fortune Drive; Winchester, Kentucky)

**COME AND LEARN THE BASICS OF
COMPOSTING AT HOME!**

**Class taught by Carrie Spry,
County Extension Agent for Horticulture**

**** Attendees will receive a
countertop compost bin ****



To register: **CALL: 859-744-4682**
EMAIL: cynthia.carr@uky.edu

**Cooperative
Extension Service**

Agriculture and Natural Resources
Family and Consumer Sciences
4-H Youth Development
Community and Economic Development

MARTIN-GATTON COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE, FOOD AND ENVIRONMENT

Educational programs of Kentucky Cooperative Extension serve all people regardless of economic or social status and will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnic origin, national origin, creed, religion, political belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, marital status, genetic information, age, veteran status, physical or mental disability or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity. Reasonable accommodation of disability may be available with prior notice. Program information may be made available in languages other than English. University of Kentucky, Kentucky State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and Kentucky Counties, Cooperating.

Lexington, KY 40506



Disabilities
accommodated
with prior notification.



 Cooperative
Extension Service

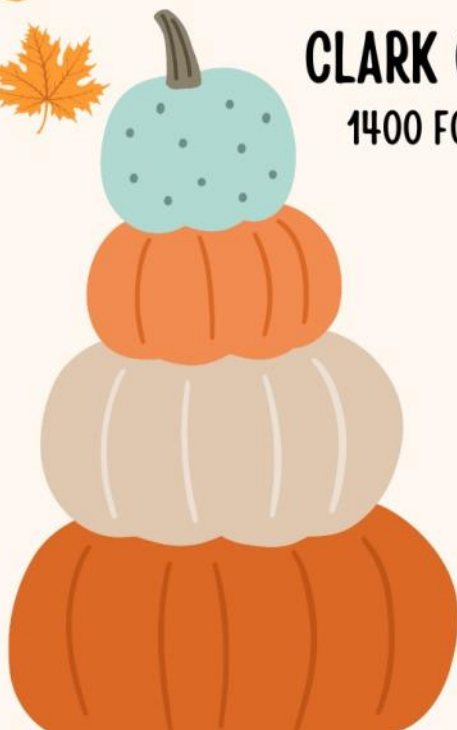
CLARK COUNTY EXTENSION
FALL FESTIVAL

October 5 | 5PM - 7PM

*Free Fun
for Everyone!*

Games - Food - Give Aways
Crafts- Pumpkins- Photo Booth

CLARK COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE
1400 FORTUNE DRIVE, WINCHESTER, KY 40391





By: Nancy Kuhajda, University of Illinois

Vacuous dark eyes, scaly rat tail, 50 pointy teeth, and oh, that hiss! What is not to love about the opossum?

North America's only native marsupial gets little respect and often scares homeowners who stumble upon this nocturnal visitor snacking below the birdfeeder, rummaging through unsealed garbage cans, or pacing in the window well waiting to be set free. But opossums are really misunderstood nature warriors. And tell me, what other animal has a footprint that is a star?

With that long furless pointy tail, opossums are often mistaken as members of the rodent family. But Virginia Opossums (*Didelphus virginiana*) are members of the marsupial family *Didelphidae*. Adults weigh between six and 15 pounds and are 24 to 33 inches in length including the tail. Males are larger than females and their size is often compared to an average house cat.

Opossums are covered in white rough fur with grey to black tips. They have a thick undercoat and white guard hair. Guard hair function is fourfold: thermoregulation, waterproofing, camouflage, and sensory perception. The ears and tails of opossums are hairless and often subject to frostbites since opossums do not hibernate and are active in winter. Opossums don't build their own dens but find convenient homes in piles of woody vegetation, old abandoned animal holes, and tree cavities, or near human activity — under decks, sheds and slabs.

Females become reproductive in their first year and generally have two litters, one in winter and one in spring with an occasional third litter. Litters average from eight to 10 young but can be as large as 20. Gestation is an amazingly short 13 days. Young are born not fully developed, no larger than a dime, and are called joeys like their distant more well-known relative, the kangaroo.

It's all in the bag...what is that pouch all about?

From the birth canal, the hairless newborns which are barely beyond fetuses, 'swim' through their mother's thick fur to the pouch following a wet path created by the mom licking her fur. The pouch has 12 teats; 11

arranged in a circle with one in the middle, not all of which are functional especially in young females, so mortality can be with large litters. Once in the pouch, the newborns latch on to a teat which swells in their mouth to keep them attached for eight to 10 weeks.

As the young opossums outgrow the pouch, they climb onto their mother's backs grasping her fur for a ride along. As she brings the family with her to find food, the young begin to learn survival skills. Opossums are solitary animals, except when females are raising their young, and by three to four months old disperse on their own. Opossum life span is two years; they are preyed on by foxes, dogs, snakes, coyotes, raccoons, and bobcats — and of course, vehicles.

Playing Possum

When encountering a threat, the normally introverted opossum will hiss and bare all of those 50 teeth, the most of any of our mammals. If that strategy isn't successful, dying does — or at least appearing dead. The fascinating exhibition of playing possum — appearing to faint, have a glazed stare, offering an eerie grimace with wet drool. In the ultimate death display, a foul "smell of death" is excreted from the anal glands, with hopes of driving away whatever animal was expecting a good meal.

Humans are often tricked as well and will put the poor "dead" opossum in the nearest garbage can only to be surprised by a resurrected opossum staring at them waiting to get out and return to normal opossum business as usual now that the danger has passed.

Possum Tales about their Tails

Although in storybooks, opossums are often depicted sleeping, hanging upside down hanging on a tree by their tails, in reality, they can only hang by their tails for a short time. Nor is it true that opossum's young, hang off their tails. They do use the prehensile tail to help them climb trees and carry nesting materials.

Opossums are mesopredators. They are the omnivore poster child. They eat nuts, berries, insects, small mammals, birds, and carrion in the natural setting, and they aid in seed dispersal. In the urban setting, opossums are true garbage eaters feasting especially on pet and bird foods outside.



Gus'

QUICK TIPS

for

SEPTEMBER september

- 1 Add some fall blooming perennials to your garden. Good candidates include: Japanese anemone, Hardy ageratum, non-invasive Goldenrods, Hardy begonia, Toad lilies, Asters, Montauk daisy, Perennial mums, Joe Pye Weed, and a wide variety of ornamental grasses. Make sure to keep plants well watered and try to have them planted early enough to allow establishment before freezing weather.
- 2 Continue to seed and renovate lawns this month if needed. Good seed to soil contact is critical. Consider renting a power seeder if you are working with a large area.
- 3 Order spring flowering bulbs now or shop garden centers for the best selection. Bulbs may be planted right away or stored in a cool place for later planting.
- 4 Plant cover crops in the vegetable garden after plants have been harvested. These can be tilled in next spring to add valuable organic matter. Or consider killing the plants and rolling flat to serve as an effective mulch you can plant through excellent organic weed control. For more information on varieties go to: <https://kentuckyhortnews.com/2016/11/01/cover-crops-for-kentucky-gardens/>
- 5 Begin early garden cleanup with the removal of diseased plant materials. This will help prevent problems next year. Healthy plants can be left for late fall or early spring clean up.
- 6 Plant fall vegetables. You still have time to direct sow radishes, turnips, spinach and lettuces. You can still succeed with transplants of broccoli, and fast maturing cabbage varieties if planted right away.
- 7 Plant trees and shrubs. Fall is a wonderful time to plant woody ornamentals. Try to allow plants time to establish before the onset of severe weather.
- 8 Divide peonies, iris, and daylilies through the middle of this month.
- 9 Visit a local orchard or farmer's market for apples, pears, fall raspberries and other seasonal treats.

Fall Flavors:

By: An Anonymous Apple Lover



Pumpkin spice. Did you read that with disdain? Because I wrote it to be dripping with contempt. Go ahead and reread it with your best disdainful inner voice.

I may lose a lot of you on this. I may even anger my colleagues. But I do not like pumpkin flavoring. Why would so many people be upset about this? Now don't get me wrong, if someone puts a slice of pumpkin pie or pumpkin muffin in front of me, I will eat it. No need to let food go to waste.

At a time when everyone is divided and arguing about everything, let me add to that. And this may be the last straw for some. I am far from anti-autumn. I love the fall, but my flavor of choice is not pumpkin, it is apple. Yes, we are setting up camps for apple versus pumpkin.

So why apples? Well, first they are delicious. (Except Red Delicious. I love apples, but I'm not blind that some types taste like cardboard.) Have you ever eaten a freshly picked apple right off the tree? The sweet crisp crunch as juice runs down your arm. Walking down the orchard as the chill air keeps a perk in your step. Try eating a pumpkin right off the vine. You can't!

Is it legal to not like apple pie? Sorry pumpkin pie, your

texture is like eating silky mud.

And of course, apple cider. Need I say more?

One very common argument people will give in support of apples is this fruit is an American tradition, but here is where I must preside fairly over both fall flavors. The apples typically grown for consumption, are not native to North America. Yet, pumpkins have been cultivated by Native Americans for generations before any European settlers set foot on this continent. So, you may have me there. In terms of which camp hails from this part of the world, pumpkins are more American than any apple. Plus, pumpkin production supports a lot of jobs and a major industry for Illinois. Also, everyone else in my house loves pumpkin pie and apple pie. In fact, as a show of gluttony, my children will request both for their plates. Okay, perhaps pumpkins aren't all that bad.

Maybe we don't have to choose. Maybe both apple and pumpkin have their place in our society. Even if you won't find pumpkin-flavored items on my plate, you certainly will see it readily enjoyed by those around me. And you know, if there are any leftover pumpkin pie on my kids' plate, I just can't throw it away. *Someone* has to eat it. No food goes to waste in my house. Pass the whipped cream.