

Entomology & Plant Pathology Weekly Review, April 3

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Weekly Review for April 3, 2024

This informal report by the Division of Entomology & Plant Pathology is a commentary on insects, diseases, and curiosities division staff encounter on a week-to-week basis. Comments and questions about this report are welcome and can be sent to your respective Inspector.

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Jared Spokowsky (Nursery Inspector & Compliance Officer) - Jspokowsky@dnr.IN.gov

On Good Friday I spotted my first swarm of the season from a neighbor's hive in Ripley County. I have also seen multiple reports of swarming across southern Indiana. I think we can officially say swarm season has started. Just because I know I'll get asked if the swarm is still available the answer is no. I notified the beekeeper and they were able to retrieve it.

I have also heard of more than a few people putting pollen patties on, which is something I would caution against this time of year. Bees do not benefit much from patties if real pollen is available. At this point, all of Indiana has pollen available. Making matters worse, patties can become brood factories for small hive beetles. If you're going to use them, I suggest making sure you check them regularly.

Lastly, flowering quince is in full bloom in my area and the bees are covering it.



Photo 1 – Ripley County Swarm on March 29



Photo 2 – Small hive beetle infesting pollen patty



Photo 3 – Honeybee on flowering quince

Angela Rust (Nursery Inspector & Compliance Officer) - ARust@dnr.IN.gov

Just a small update on the seasonal situation here in Perry County along the Ohio River. Redbud, forsythia, and crabapple are in full bloom. Dogwood is starting to leaf out. Carpenter bees have started buzzing about. Over the past week, I've seen just a couple of butterflies out such as eastern tiger swallowtail, red admiral, and spring azure. Around March 27, I noticed a 3-inch or so wide eastern tent caterpillar nest in the woods, but I have not seen widespread development yet. Dealers started getting in fruiting trees and shrubs and some small perennials a couple of weeks ago.

Will Drews (Nursery Inspector & Compliance Officer) - WDrews@dnr.IN.gov

It's that time of year. Nurseries, greenhouses, and nursery dealers are starting to get in stock or have stock that is now actively growing and ready for inspection. Here are some of the pests I have noted so far during inspections this year (more information about the pests is included in the captions.)



Photo 4 - Hemispherical scale insects on an elephant staghorn fern. The brown hemispherical ones are immobile mature females, which protect their eggs underneath. The lightly colored individuals are nymphs. (Also called crawlers because it's the mobile life stage of the pest.)



Photo 5 - Mealybugs (most likely citrus mealybugs) on an aralia 'Balfour' houseplant. Mealybugs are closely related to scale insects, and both are common pests of greenhouse plants. Mealybugs have a characteristic white appearance to them from a fluffy material coating their bodies. Unlike scales, adult mealybugs retain their legs and stay mobile.



Photo 6 - Two-spotted spider mites on hydrangea. Spider mites are also common greenhouse pests to watch for. Spider mites produce a fine webbing (seen at the tip of this hydrangea stem) and have piercing sucking mouthparts that create stippling on leaves. These small pests have four pairs of legs and are more closely related to spiders than insects.

Eric Biddinger (Nursery Inspector & Compliance Officer) - EBiddinger@dnr.IN.gov

Over the last few months, DEPP has invested a lot of time surveying for and scrapping spotted lanternfly (SLF) egg masses. We are starting to see populations spring up along railroad corridors in northern Indiana. Nymphs should emerge from the egg masses around mid-May. We would like to remind everyone that if you see a suspected SLF, snap a picture and email it along with the location and date it was taken to DEPP@dnr.IN.gov or contact your local nursery inspector.



Photo 7 – SLF egg mass scraping in Huntington (Photo by Kristy Stultz)



Photo 8 – A covered and uncovered SLF egg mass on a tire (Photo by Vince Burkle)

No reports this week

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