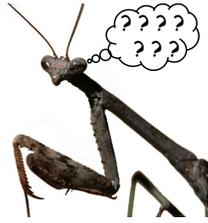


## Bug-Wise



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**Miscellaneous Springtime Insect Issues:** Springtime is a busy time, especially for gardeners and homeowners. It's a good thing the weather is so nice, because there's a lot of outside work to be done. Most of this work is gardening tasks or home repair and maintenance chores, but there are a few insect-related issues to keep in mind.

**Fire Ants:** If you want to keep fire ants from taking over your yard this year, or if you want to reclaim your yard from fire ants, spring is the time to act. Knock out fire ants with a one-two punch. Broadcast a granular fire ant bait, like Amdro or Extinguish Plus, over the yard and landscape. Do this even if you don't see any fire ant mounds. Unless your landscape is infested with Argentine ants or hairy crazy ants, there will be some young fire ant colonies that are just getting started. When you purchase your fire ant bait, also get a can of one of the dry mound treatment products containing acephate or deltamethrin as well and spot treat any visible fire ant mounds. See extension publication 2429, Control Fire Ants in Your Yard, for more information on fire ant control.

**Azalea Lace Bugs:** Check your azalea bushes for signs of azalea lace bugs. This is the most common, and most damaging, insect pest of azaleas, and now is the time to control these pests. But don't treat unless you are sure you have a problem. Look for leaves that are stippled with tiny white spots, or appear bleached or bronzed and check the undersides of leaves for dark spots of lace bug fecal material or live nymphs or adults. For long-lasting preventive control apply a soil drench treatment of imidacloprid (Bayer Tree & Shrub Insect Control) according to label directions. For faster control of heavy infestations, spray with Bonide Systemic Insect Control (acephate), in addition to the imidacloprid treatment. For severe infestations apply both treatments. See page 17 of extension publication 2369, Insect Pests of Ornamental Plants in the Home Landscape for more details.

**Wasps and Lady Beetles:** Do you have a problem with large numbers of paper wasps or Asian lady beetles emerging inside your home this spring? At this point all you can really do is use a fly swatter and/or a can of flying insect spray to deal with the wasps and a vacuum and/or broom

and dust pan to deal with the lady beetles. The good news is that soon they will all have emerged and be back outdoors where they belong. Once this happens you can take preventive action to keep this problem from happening again next year. Carefully check the outside of the house and seal any cracks or holes where these insects could get in the house next fall. See page 31 of extension publication 2443, Control Household Insect Pests, for more information on how to bug-proof your home. This information focuses specifically on lady beetles, but paper wasps are a bit bigger, and if lady beetles can't get inside your attic and walls, paper wasps can't either.

**Clothes Moths and Carpet Beetles:** With the onset of warm weather it is easy to forget about those wool suits and sweaters that kept us warm all winter, but the clothes moths and carpet beetles won't forget about them. Unless you take time to properly clean and store your winter clothes this spring, you could be in for some disappointing discoveries when you get them out again next fall. Don't just push your winter clothes to the back of the closet and forget about them and don't count on that old cedar chest to provide adequate protection. See page 20 of extension publication 2443, Control Household Insect Pests, for information on how to keep fabric pests from damaging your winter clothes.

**Termites:** Termites are active 365.25 days a year, but we tend to be more mindful of them in the spring because this is when they swarm. Having large numbers of termite swarms emerge inside a building is a sure sign the building is infested and needs to be professionally treated. It is also a good idea to be alert for signs of termite infestation when doing home repairs or maintenance or when working in flower beds around the foundation of a building. It is even more important to know when your house was last treated for termites. If you don't have an active termite contract on your home or at least have a record of when the house was last treated, it is probably time to have the house treated. See extension publication 2568, Protect Your House from Termites, for information on how to recognize signs of termite infestation and for answers to common questions about termite treatments.

**How Can I Find The Extension Publications Mentioned Above?** Just go by your local County Extension Office and ask for a copy. You can also find all these publications on-line. Just go to [www.msucares.com](http://www.msucares.com), click on "Publications" (far right in the black bar), and enter the title in the search box.

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This information is for educational and preliminary planning purposes only. Brand names mentioned in this publication are used as examples only. No endorsement of these products is intended. Other appropriately labeled products containing similar active ingredients should provide similar levels of control. Always read and follow the insecticide label.