



HOME & GARDEN

Home and Garden information center • 12005 Homewood Road • Ellicott City, MD 21042 • 1-800-342-2507

March 2009

Indoor and Outdoor Pest Tips

OCCURRENCES:

- Those delightful peeping sounds you may be hearing in your backyard are spring peepers, a small frog that lays its eggs in water. Many other frogs, including wood, tree, and pickerel frogs are also becoming active. To read more about spring peepers and listen to their chorus visit http://www.dnr.state.md.us/wildlife/northern_spring_peeper.html
- Many bird species begin scouting for nesting sites.

ATTRACTING:

Birds

- Black oil sunflower seeds and suet cakes are a good choice to attract and feed a wide variety of birds. To attract your favorite species you have to provide the right combination of food and feeders. Visit Project Feeder Watch for “Feeder Types” and “What to Feed Birds” at http://www.birds.cornell.edu/pfw/AboutBirdsandFeeding/abtbirds_index.html,
- Wild bird stores are good sources for feeders and seed. Make sure to keep all feeders clean.
- Many birds are now actively scouting your landscape for a place to nest this spring. Now is the time to put up a birdhouse (nest box) in your yard to encourage nesting. Clean out and inspect existing nest boxes in your yard to make sure they are in good condition for the breeding season.
- You can watch birds raise their young and also receive free pest control. Birds feed on many insects. Some bird species that use birdhouses (nest boxes) are:
- Bluebirds <http://extension.umd.edu/publications/PDFs/FS799.pdf>,
- Purple Martins <http://extension.umd.edu/publications/PDFs/FS792.pdf>,
- Tree swallows <http://extension.umd.edu/publications/PDFs/FS800.pdf>, and wrens.

NUISANCE:

- The USDA, APHIS, Wildlife Services program has a cooperative agreement with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Heritage Division, to provide the residents of Maryland with information on how to deal with nuisance wild animals. The USDA, APHIS, Wildlife Service operates a toll-free Nuisance Wildlife Information Line: 877-463-6497. Normal working hours are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. People calling after hours, or on weekends and holidays, may leave a message on the answering machine and calls will be returned during the next work day.
- Squirrels will come to eat the bird food you put out even when your bird feeders are advertised as “squirrel-proof”. To keep squirrels from robbing seed from feeders place a cover (baffle) over tube feeders or place a baffle on a post under the feeder. Keep feeders at least 15 feet from the house and vegetation so squirrels cannot jump onto the feeders.
- Moles and voles are becoming more active this month.
- Moles <http://plantdiagnostics.umd.edu/level3.cfm> create raised tunnels in lawns. Control by tamping down tunnels with your foot

Educating People To Help Themselves

Local Governments - U.S. Department of Agriculture Cooperating

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whenever they appear. Moles do not necessarily indicate a white grub problem. They feed on a wide range of soil critters.

- Voles <http://plantdiagnostics.umd.edu/level3.cfm> create tunnels underground or runways on the surface that are not raised. Look for entrance holes about 1 ½ inches in diameter. Sometimes tunnels are shallow and are open along the soil surface. Voles feed on plant material such as roots, bark, or the entire plant. Where voles are a problem try using mouse snap traps baited with apples. Cover with a shingle or piece of wood to increase effectiveness.
- Where deer are feeding on garden and landscape plants, apply a repellent, such as “Deer-Away”, “Hinder” or “Ro-Pel” to vulnerable plants. If deer pressure is heavy, try rotating repellents. Small deodorant soap bars, and other types of repellents are used with some success.

**Have a pest or gardening question?
Call the Home and Garden Information Center
800-342-2507 www.hgic.umd.edu**