



The State of Our Future



2019 SPRING NEWSLETTER

THE PEST DISPATCH

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Tom Fraser, Professional Pest Control • tfraser@profpestcontrol.com



With another WPCA Spring Training Conference behind us, it was great to see how many of us braved the biggest snow event of the year! I was glad to see everyone made it safely to the seminar, and I didn't hear of any broken bones in the parking lot this year. Yay! And I wonder how many of your families who attended and spent their time in the waterpark even knew it was snowing out?

If you haven't had a chance to make it to this seminar in the past, I urge you to do so as we pull in some really fabulous speakers. We feature some of the same speakers who present at the NPMA PestWorld annual event, yet we charge a fraction of the cost to attend. For those who did attend, it is good that you take pride in what you do to educate yourself and/or your employees and stand behind this great industry!

The elections for WPCA Directors was held at the Annual Business Meeting, and the returning Directors were voted back in for two more years. They are: **Gary Dady** (Orkin), **Jerry Lohr** (Batzner/Rentokil), and **Jared Worth** (Wil-Kil). Also at the Business Meeting, we heard from **Mike Murray** of WDATCP about the EPA rules opening up for renewal.

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PG. 11 FEATURED ARTICLE



Arnold Ramsey FMC Corporation presents PestVets Veteran of the Year Award to Sterling Barbour, Revolution Pest Solutions, CA

(Continued from page 1)

We also had a full house of chemical reps again this year. It is so nice to be able to talk to these people and to learn of new ideas and new products that are available to us. They love the interaction with you, too, and they say that this is one of the best – if not **the** best – seminars for interaction with attendees. A hearty thanks to all the reps for helping make this a great conference. Without your support, this event would be a bust.

Also, a huge thank you to our speakers. We appreciate you, not only for braving this winter weather, but for helping us provide a great presentation and even some comedy relief. I know for some of you... winter is not your thing.

Now, last but not least, thank you to the entire WPCA Board for all the hard work you put into this great association. Without your dedication, it would make my job so much harder. They say that if you surround yourself with great people, it will make you look great and make your life easier. I'd like to say I look really good and my life is really easy! For those who don't know the dedication that is put into WPCA by this great Board, I feel the need to comment. These volunteer Board members give of their time, with some of them and their companies making no revenue while they're working on WPCA business. So, thank you all so much!

Now let's get back to work. The WPCA Board will start planning next year's Conference by the time you're reading this newsletter! If you have speaker or topic ideas, please reach out to any Board member soon so we can see what we can do to accommodate you. And I hope to see you at next year's event!

In closing, let's try to remember what Willie Nelson has taught us: "Once you replace negative thoughts with positive ones, you'll start having positive results."



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ODOROUS HOUSE ANTS: KEY ASPECTS OF BIOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT

PJ Liesch, Extension Entomologist, UW Madison Insect Diagnostic Lab • pliesch@wisc.edu



When it comes to ant samples at the UW Insect Diagnostic Lab, the top species seen at the Lab include carpenter ants, pavement ants, and the odorous house ant. Odorous house ants (*Tapinoma sessile*) were the most commonly reported ants at the Diagnostic Lab in 2018, possibly due to the rainy conditions which can force these ants indoors in their search for food.

With their commonness, most pest control professionals in Wisconsin have bumped into this species at some point and some technicians may bump into this species on a daily basis at certain times of the year. Luckily, several features allow for rapid identification of these ants. While not as small as pharaoh or thief ants, odorous house ants measure in at only an eighth of an inch long. These dark colored ants are considered “one-node” ants, although their node (or petiole) lacks the distinctive “hump” we readily see on field or carpenter ants. Instead, the node is flattened and is covered by the gaster (abdomen). This flattened node is a key identifying feature but does require a bit of magnification to see it out in the field. The easiest identifying feature of these ants—their scent—may sound odd, but can be a “quick and dirty,” yet helpful, way to confirm their identity in the field. When crushed, odorous house ants have an odor reminiscent of coconut (some say rotting coconut or even blue cheese). This scent can fade with older, dried-out specimens but is often quite noticeable in a fresh sample.

Odorous house ant colonies can occur both indoors and outdoors in the Upper Midwest. These ants don’t produce numerous mounds like our pavement ants do. Instead, odorous house ants are fond of residing in sheltered locations such as small hollow cavities beneath rocks or man-made objects,

amongst log piles, fallen leaves, mulch beds, and similar locations. *On a personal note, I have to clear my home’s fake rock “Hide-a-Key” of these ants once or twice each summer!* In natural areas, such as forests, odorous house ant colonies tend to be small (often <100 workers), but in more urban settings, these ants can produce much larger populations with multiple queens, thousands of workers, and multiple nesting sites. Under such conditions, their sheer abundance can lead to nuisance issues around a yard. Indoors, odorous house ants like to nest in hollow cavities such as wall voids, especially if a moisture source is nearby. These ants can easily wander indoors from outdoor nests when foraging, so careful observation by a technician can help determine where source(s) may ultimately be located.

When it comes to dealing with odorous house ants, always start by confirming their identity. Conducting a thorough inspection can help determine if a single nest or multiple nests are involved and where the nests may be located. Individual nests can be directly treated and eliminated, but keep in mind that multiple nests can be located in a yard. Baiting can also be helpful with these ants. Odorous house ants feed on a variety of food sources including honeydew, other insects, nectar, and human/pet foods. They often have a particular fondness for carbohydrate-rich materials, such as honeydew produced by aphids or scale insects. While their feeding preferences can be influenced by a number of factors, sugar-rich foods (such as honey) or carbohydrate-based baits are often a helpful starting point.

A helpful approach can be to bait multiple locations around a yard, followed up shortly thereafter with



Credit: Joseph Berger, Bugwood.org.

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observations to help identify hotspots of activity and allow technicians to more effectively target this pest. When odorous house ants are noted around landscape plants, examining the plants for the presence of aphids or other honeydew-producing insects can be particularly helpful. In some situations, eliminating the plant pest may be an indirect way to reduce OHA problems on a property. When odorous house ants are wandering indoors from outside, exterior crack and crevice treatments can be a helpful component of an overall integrated pest management program.

Lastly, if you're looking for some great quick visual guides to help you identify odorous house ants and other common ants of North America, check out the free visual ID guides to one- and two-node ants available from the University of Nebraska at <https://lancaster.unl.edu/pest/ants>.

PJ Liesch appears on Wisconsin Public Radio's The Larry Meiller Show from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Wednesdays – March 20, May 15, July 17, September 18, and November 20, 2019.

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CERTIFICATION OR LICENSE?

Mike Murray, Pesticide Program Manager, Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection • michael.murray@wi.gov

People often interchange the terms certification and license. Commercial pesticide applicators need to remember they are not the same thing.

Pesticide applicator certification is required when you commercially use a pesticide, or if you use a restricted use pesticide in any capacity. The definition of “Use” in Ch ATCP 29.01(41) Wis Adm Code includes more than making an application. The code broadly defines use to include mixing and loading, handling open containers, disposing of pesticide, and other activities on the label.

Obtaining commercial pesticide applicator certification is similar to passing a hunter’s education course. You study and then take an exam to test your knowledge of the subject. The certification exam evaluates your practical knowledge for the safe and effective use of pesticides. There is a specific exam for each category of pesticide use, e.g. 7.1 Structural or 7.3 Termite. If you do not pass your first exam, you may retest after a 24-hour waiting period. Individuals failing a second or third retake exam must wait 30 days before testing again. After failing four times within a 6-month period, you must wait 6 months to retest.

Certification is valid for five years after passing the exam. The department assigns a unique commercial applicator certification number and issues a certification card issued. The card identifies the applicators name, certification number, certification category, and certification expiration

date. Commercial applicators must carry their certification card when engaged using pesticides. All certifications expire at the same time.

Like someone passing a hunter’s education course who must also purchase a deer hunting license to legally hunt a deer, a certified applicator must also obtain an annual individual commercial pesticide applicator license to contract for pesticide applications. The individual applicator license is required to 1) use any pesticide as an independent contractor for hire, or as an employee of an independent contractor for hire, or 2) use a restricted-use pesticide. Commercial applicators must be at least 16 years old. The licensing period begins January 1 and ends on December 31. A license number, which is different from an applicator’s certification number, is assigned to each individual. Applicators must carry their license when involved in commercial pesticide work.

Businesses that employ commercial applicators must have an annual pesticide application business license. This includes sole proprietors, who need the business license and the individual license and certification to legally contract for pesticide applications.

If you have questions, please contact me at 608-224-4551 or michael.murray@wi.gov.





2019 SPRING TRAINING

WISCONSIN PEST CONTROL ASSOCIATION 2019 CONFERENCE

YOUR SEASON STARTED HERE!

WPCA's annual Spring Training conference continues to grow and attract more attendees and exhibitors each year. This year's two-day educational event in mid-February attracted more than 175 attendees, who braved a snowstorm for the opportunity to sit in on a dozen seminars presented by industry experts.

Over 30 exhibitors showcased their latest products, services, and resources.

[VISIT WWW.WISCONSINPEST.COM](http://WWW.WISCONSINPEST.COM) TO SEE THE PHOTO GALLERY FROM THIS YEAR'S CONFERENCE.



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WPCA awards two annual scholarships, each in the amount of \$500, to deserving students. The WPCA Leadership Scholarship challenges today's college students to be tomorrow's leaders — those who will make their communities and the world better places in which to live, work, and play.

The second award is named in honor of Phil Pellitteri, who retired in early 2014 from the Insect Diagnostic Lab at UW-Madison. Phil ran the lab for over 30 years and often served as a valued resource and speaker at WPCA educational seminars.

Both scholarships are for children and spouses of WPCA members, and are open to qualified nominees with a minimum 2.5 GPA. Nominations, applications, and a 500-word essay for applicants must be submitted by April 30th.

The scholarships will be presented annually in the fall to two students who will be attending an accredited college, university, trade school, or institute of higher learning.

You can download the scholarship application form and rules by visiting www.wisconsinpest.com/scholarships.



PESTVETS: CONTINUING TO PROTECT & DEFEND

By Arnold Ramsey

The NPMA is committed to engaging veterans in their successful transition to a productive and rewarding career in the pest management industry. To that end, and with the support of FMC, PestVets actively promotes the recruitment of veterans to member companies and supports those efforts through various education and training opportunities.

PestVets has recently partnered with Recruit Military for deeply discounted job postings so that members can recruit veterans through the NPMA job board. NPMA members also receive a 15% discount at Recruit Military's job fairs and other events, in their pursuit of recruiting veterans in the pest management industry.

NPMA has created a veterans subcommittee within NPMA MentorMatch program. Pest Veteran of



the Month has taken off, with several veterans featured since its launch in addition to a Facebook page. At PestWorld, the PestVets Committee launched their Inaugural PestWorld Day of Service at the VA Medical Center in Orlando (photo above).

The Committee also participated in Operation Gratitude at NPMA Legislative Day and is engaged in several other initiatives that include expanding PestVets to state associations, recognizing NPMA member companies that recruit and hire veterans, among other efforts.

If PMPs would like to join and support our community of veterans and recruit veterans to work in our industry, then we encourage you to join by emailing email Jake Plevelich at jplevelich@pestworld.org.

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