

Ash-Lilac Borers

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Ash-lilac borer is an amazingly common pest of ash trees, lilac bushes and even privet shrubs. Do not confuse this pest with the emerald ash borer which we don't have in our area yet. The adult ash lilac borer is a moth that looks like a wasp. They emerge in late spring, and this year they may be later than most, and females live about a week and lay up to 400 eggs. The young larvae hatch and immediately start to eat their way into the trunk or stem of the host plant. Once the larvae is in the plant there is no way to control them. Most homeowners don't realize they have ash lilac borers until stems in their lilac start to die in late summer. Or all of a sudden part of a small ash tree dies or the top breaks out in a wind storm. This is because the larvae tunnel around under the bark and cut off the flow of water and food. Once an ash tree gets about 6 inches in diameter it simply isn't badly enough damaged to be of concern. The first step is to keep the plants healthy, especially watering when it is dry. Then, on small ash trees and on lilac bushes, you need to start treating the base of the plant in mid to late May. Use an insecticide with permethrin or bifenthrin that's labeled for borers in ornamentals. Mix up according to label directions and then spray the trunk or the stems to the point of runoff. The whole idea is to thoroughly cover the area where the eggs will be laid with insecticide so when the eggs hatch and the larvae try to burrow into the plant, they contact the insecticide and die. You will need to treat about every three weeks through early August.

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Controlling Wild Violets

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. Wild violets are amazingly common in our area. While many folks love them, especially if they are in a wild or natural area, homeowners often despise them when they are in the lawn. It has been my experience that they tend to do best in shady areas which are often not growing good grass because of the shade. But none the less, homeowners often want to kill wild violets in the lawn. This is much easier said, than done. The plant is not really that vigorous or aggressive. It has a fairly simple root system - I think sometimes it would be easier to just pull the plants out. But for some reason, it is tough to kill with herbicides. I'm sure glyphosate would do a pretty good job on it, but it would also kill everything else in the area. Standard lawn weed control products like trimec, Weed-Out or Weed-B-Gon, with their combination of 2,4-D, dicamba and MCPA would be classified as fair to poor on wild violets. Triclopyr is the product of choice, but even it will probably require multiple treatments if you have a healthy stand of violets. Look for Turflon Ester or Weed-B-Gon chickweed clover and oxalis killer (not the regular weed-b-gon, but the chickweed clover and oxalis version.) While both of these products are labeled for fescue and bluegrass only the weed b gon product is labeled for zoysia or buffalograss. Again though, violets do better in shade, zoysia and buffalograss like full sun. Regardless, if you use a turflon product on buffalo or zoysia expect to see some discolored turf but it should snap out of it. Be sure to spray when it's calm and cool! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte.

Field Bindweed Control

This is Gardening with Chuck on 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck Otte, Geary County, K-State Research and Extension Ag & Natural Resources Agent. I've had several homeowners lately asking me about controlling field bindweed. Field bindweed is the deep rooted perennial vine with the white trumpet shaped flowers that blooms from June on all summer long. It has a massive root system and even though it dies back to the ground every year, it's always back and growing good come the next spring. There are non-chemical control methods that can work, but they take a lot of time and dedication. Ask me about those if you are interested. Even chemical control measures are going to take some time but I have found that you can usually get bindweed under control in about 3 growing seasons with a little persistence. Around gardens and shrub beds you are going to want to use glyphosate. Glyphosate is sold under many brand names including Roundup, Kleenup and many others. Keep in mind that glyphosate is non-selective - it pretty well kills anything green and growing. But you can let bindweed get a vine about one foot long, move the vine away from desirable plants and then carefully spray it with glyphosate or use a small paint brush and paint it on the leaves. If you are persistent, you will get it controlled. In lawns we can use many of our broadleaf weed killers to attack bindweed. Fall treatments are usually the most effective. In recent years we have found that the active ingredient quinclorac is very effective on bindweed. BUT, it is very persistent in the grass clippings so if you use one of these products you should never use the dried grass clippings in your compost pile or as mulch in your garden! This has been Gardening with Chuck on the Talk of JC, 1420 KJCK, I'm Chuck

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