

**...DR. BUG.
...DR. BUG.
...DR. BUG.**

- SEASONAL PROGRAMS
- OUTDOOR EVENTS
- TREE PESTS

urban pest control ltd.
R.R.3 Georgetown, ON L7G 4S6

RESIDENTIAL SPECIALISTS

"CALL DR. BUG"
www.drbug.ca

905.877.7014

SERVING HALTON SINCE 1981



dr. bug's bugbytes

BY ROBERT CAMERON

Mad as a Hornet

Actually, mad as a wasp since the European hornet is not common in this area, but who is going to stop and check when being chased by an angry swarm. The bald-faced hornet is not a true hornet but is in the wasp family as are the yellow jackets that have been getting so much press this season.

There are around 4000 wasp species in North America most of which are solitary and inoffensive. Yellow jackets are social wasps and live in colonies that can contain up to 4000 workers when at peak size. They can become very aggressive when defending their colonies bringing them into conflict with humans and animals. Wasps are beneficial insects as they feed on a wide variety of insects including many pest species.

Yellow jacket nests are started each spring by over wintering fertilized queens. Each individual queen will start her own nest which consists of a few cells in which she lays an egg. Once these eggs hatch and mature to adults, they will take over the care of the nest and the queen functions in a strictly egg laying roll. Workers consist of sterile females. In late summer, the queen will start to lay eggs which become queens and males. These reproductives will leave the nest and the fertilized queens will look for sheltered places to over winter. The founding queen, workers and males of the colony all die as winter approaches and the nest is not reused the next year.

Yellow jackets can build their nests in the ground, on tree or shrub branches and in the walls, soffits or attics of homes. They build the same type of nest in the ground or in a wall that you see hanging from a tree branch. Nests often go unnoticed until late in the season when they become large and very active. We often have homeowners telling us that the nest 'wasn't there last week', when in fact it has been building over the past 3 months. Foraging yellow jackets become the most annoying in late summer. Fallen fruit under trees, eating out on the deck or picnic table, garbage bins and recycling containers can bring them in swarms. They will travel considerable distances to a food source and it can be very difficult to find the nest.

Controlling yellow jackets looks easy when done correctly but can get exciting when things go wrong. There are more deaths in North America each year from bee and wasp stings than from all other venomous sources.

One of the most common mistakes is to plug the hole when nests are in the wall. If the nest is not dead, then the wasps often end up coming out inside the house. Make sure the nest is completely dead before plugging the hole. Nests can be a considerable distance from the entrance hole and it is sometimes necessary to drill small holes into the wall or ceiling inside the house in order to inject insecticide into the nest.

On the bug watch, crane fly adults have emerged over the last couple of weeks. Crane flies are not 'giant mosquitoes' nor are they 'mosquito eaters'. The larvae of crane flies which are large and tough skinned feed on lawns and grasses. Cluster flies started appearing at the end of the second week of September but do not appear to be as heavy as last year. Ladybugs should appear between now and Thanksgiving.

MILTON Greenhouses
FLOWER & GIFT SHOP

Fall Clearout Sale

222 Main St. E., Milton
905-878-9501
toll free: 1-888-878-9501

Giving You the Dirt

BY SEAN JAMES, N.P.D.,
PRESIDENT OF FERN RIDGE LANDSCAPING

Minor bulbs

Let's ignore the upcoming winter and skip right to spring. Whaddya say? We're into the thick of bulb-planting season and you should know there are more than tulips and daffodils to choose from. There's nothing wrong with the old standbys. My yard looks great every spring with very old, reliable plantings of bulbs. Fortunately, when the bulbs are done, perennials take over. When you plant perennials over bulbs it is called layering. Sometimes we even do it on purpose - not just because we forgot where we planted stuff last year.

This year I'm focusing on the delicate tiny bulbs, called "minor bulbs", which usually bloom very early and can even naturalize in the garden or lawn. "Naturalizing" describes when the plants drop seed that then grows and spreads in the landscape. Every year the collection of available species grows. Probably the best known and most reliable is Scilla, an incredible, true-blue flower about 4" tall which naturalizes very well. Scilla and most minor bulbs like to be planted about 4" deep. They can even be layered over larger, deeper-planted bulbs such as tulips and under perennials such as Hosta, ornamental grasses or Japanese Anemone.

Most folks are familiar with Crocus. Several large-flowered hybrids, (plants cross-bred by humans for showiness), are real crowd pleasers. I prefer the more delicate species Crocus. They bloom earlier and multiply well and the soft colours are easy on the eye.

Glory-of-the-Snow, Chionodoxa luciae, has soft blue flowers and, like most minor bulbs, it tolerates quite a bit of shade. Puschkinia libanotica, aptly named Lebanese Pushkinia is one of many minor bulbs that do not attract squirrels. Personally, I find it difficult to tell the Chionodoxa and Puschkinia

apart but it doesn't really matter because they are both beautiful.

There are several great species tulips including Tulipa linifolia, T. bakeri 'Lilac Wonder', T. tarda, T. kaufmanniana that give early colour to the garden. Everyone is looking for low maintenance gardens. (Actually, most folks are looking for no maintenance gardens - a concept which doesn't exist without a LOT of concrete.) Plants don't get much more low maintenance than species tulips. While not a minor bulb, an amazing species tulip is Tulipa acuminata with narrow, twisted petals which fade from red at their tips to yellow at the base.

Incidentally, "species" in the context of this article means varieties which have not been bred by man - more or less as found in nature. Granted, they may be special selections, which means particularly nice specimens that someone found and perpetuated for us to grow in our gardens.

There are even species Iris such as Iris reticulata and I. danfordii which bloom just as the snow is melting. Iris reticulata comes in various shades of blue from almost white to a rich blue while I. danfordii is bright yellow.

Look into the various forms of Fritillaria including F. meleagris - literally translating to "checkered checkered". See the flower and you'll see why. I love them although they almost seem too stylized to be natural.

As always, there's more to discuss but never enough room. To find new soon-to-be-favourites for your garden, check out www.gardenimport.com and several of our local garden centres, (my local favourite for bulbs is Milton Country Depot at the corner of Main and Bronte - lots and LOTS of nifty things this year!). It's never too late to look forward to spring. I usually start about June.

Consult
Design, Install, Maintain

Fern Ridge Landscaping
(905) 876-4852

email - sdjames@on.aibn.com Sean James N.P.D.

Pickets & Primrose

End of Season Tag Sale
Sunday Oct. 2, 10 - 3

50% OFF

- FURNITURE
- ACCESSORIES
- CHRISTMAS AND MORE!

12 Main St., N.
Campbellville
Tel: 905-854-5872
Closed Mondays

For All Your Heating & Air Conditioning Needs

Heating & Cooling Ltd.
Serving Milton & Area For Over 40 Years.
"We Take Pride In Our Work."

103 Steeles Ave.
Unit #6 & 7, Milton
(905) 878-4821

Visit Our Showroom Today!

NAPOLEON QUALITY FIREPLACES
Coleman