



Sod webworms

There are several species of caterpillars that occasionally damage turfgrass in Mississippi including fall armyworms, cutworms, and sod webworms. Although fall armyworms are the primary pest we see in pastures and rangelands almost annually, we often see the both the sod webworm and tropical sod webworm on the coast, usually beginning in August. The good news is these sod webworm pests aren't always reaching the economic threshold; the bad news is we may be getting into the two- to three-year cycle for higher than normal numbers. However, drier conditions may hinder some of the numbers. We'll see.

Tropical sod webworm moths look much different than the moths of other sod webworms. Moths are often noticed before damage is observed, with large numbers of low-flying, small, whitish or brown moths being flushed up from the lawn and surrounding ornamental shrubs, or being attracted to lights at night. Because these insects do not survive freezing weather, they are more common in the coastal counties.

Heavy outbreaks are sporadic and can cause severe short-term damage, with turf having a dead, ragged appearance, and with trails of webbing present among the grass blades. In heavy infestations, small brown patches of affected turf may run together forming irregular, brown patches.

Sod webworms will damage all types of turf grass but especially favor St. Augustine, bermuda, and centipede so careful, frequent scouting is necessary to detect a developing infestation before it causes damage. There may be two or three generations per year so several applications may be necessary in a growing season.

Foliar spay products such as Sevin concentrate containing Beta-permethrin, Spinosad, and Ortho Bug-B-Gone Insect Killer containing Bifenthrin are a few choices to consider although there are granular products available. These include Spectracide Triazicide and Talstar among others. Please read and follow all label directions.



Lawn damage caused
by sod webworms



Small spots of dead
grass indicative of sod
webworm damage



Sod webworm larvae

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Native Pollinator Plants

September is an exciting month for gardeners and nature lovers across Mississippi. Monarch butterflies and hummingbirds are migrating through Mississippi and native plants can provide the nectar and habitat they need to continue their incredible journeys.

Monarch butterflies are especially dependent on finding flowering plants during migration. As they move south toward their overwintering grounds in Mexico, adult Monarchs need abundant nectar sources to fuel their long-distance flight. While many ornamental flowers can provide nectar, native plants are particularly valuable because they are adapted to Mississippi's climate and have developed alongside our native wildlife.

One of my favorite ways to support migrating Monarchs is by planting native fall-blooming flowers. Goldenrod, asters, native sunflowers, ironweed, Joe-Pye weed and mistflower can provide an abundance of late-season nectar. Their flowers also bring beautiful splashes of yellow, purple, pink and blue to the landscape at a time when many summer annuals are beginning to fade.

Hummingbirds are also making their way through Mississippi in September. These tiny birds seem almost tireless as they migrate, but they need plenty of food along the way. Native plants such as cardinal flower, coral honeysuckle, bee balm, Turk's cap, salvia and native honeysuckle can provide nectar while adding color and movement to the garden. Their tubular or brightly colored flowers are especially attractive to hummingbirds.

When selecting native plants for pollinators, I encourage gardeners to think beyond individual plants and create a continuous supply of flowers. A garden with plants blooming from spring through fall is much more valuable to pollinators than one with only a few flowers available at any given time. Grouping several plants of the same species together can also make it easier for butterflies and hummingbirds to find their next meal.

By providing flowers throughout the growing season, Mississippi gardeners can turn their landscapes into welcoming rest stops for migrating pollinators. Let's give these remarkable travelers a garden full of flowers and a reason to stop awhile.



Garden Calendar: September

Get Ready

- ♦ Make sure you've ordered daffodils and other spring bulbs for October planting.
- ♦ Build or buy compost bin in anticipation of autumn leaves.



Plant

- ♦ Plant cool season leafy root vegetables: Carrots, Beets, Turnips, Lettuce, and Spinach.
- ♦ Sow hardy annuals: Sweet Alyssum, Calendula, Annual Pinks, Snapdragon, and Sweet Peas.
- ♦ Sow rye grass seed in winter lawns.

Fertilize

- ♦ Stop feeding mums when the buds start showing color.
- ♦ Acidify Azaleas and Camelias.



Water

- ♦ Slow down watering of Azaleas and Hydrangea to allow them to harden against winter freezes.
- ♦ Spray foliage of Camelias in anticipation of their bloom.
- ♦ Water potted plants and hanging baskets frequently.

Prune

- ♦ Disbud Camellias, Dahlias, and Chrysanthemums to produce specimen blooms. It is generally not a good idea to prune this late in the year, because new growth will be more susceptible to winter freezes.

Miscellaneous

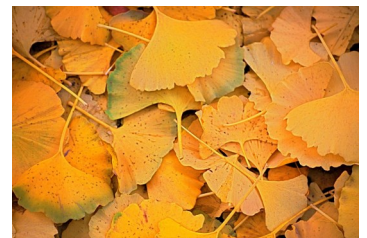
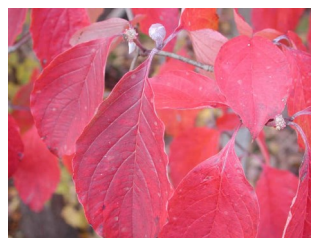
- ♦ Turn compost pile.
- ♦ Propagate by layering. Scrape underside of a strong branch, bend down to ground, cover with soil and weigh down with a brick. Water from time to time and end of branch will put out new growth; becoming a new plant.
- ♦ Pick flowers in bloom and dry for future arrangements. Bundle flowers together and hang upside down in a dry, sheltered area.
- ♦ Repot houseplants. Prune away damaged foliage and give a good dose of food.

In Bloom

- ♦ Canna, Cosmos, Copper Plant, Marigolds, Periwinkle, Plumbago, Crape Myrtle, Althea, Four-o'clocks, Salvia, Ageratum, Coleus, Lycoris, Aster, Begonia, Celosia, Chrysanthemum, Coral Vine, Ginger Lily, Gladiolus, Jacobina, Liriope, Morning Glory, Petunia, Phlox, Rattle Box, Rose, Spider Lily, Torenia, Vinca, White Zephyranthes Lily, Zinnia, Buddleia, Franklin Tree.

Fall Color

- ♦ Flowering Dogwood with showy, drooping red leaves.
- ♦ Ginkgo leaves turn pure yellow.





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Kudzu

Kudzu is one of Mississippi's most invasive plants. In fact, it has been given the name "the vine that ate the South" due to how much the vine has taken over many areas in Mississippi, Florida, and several other southern states. This perennial vine flowers from August through September in Mississippi. It can be found in all habitats except aquatic ones. Kudzu can live in most soil types and is relatively drought tolerate making it easy to establish almost anywhere in the state.



Once kudzu is established in an area, it is almost impossible to eradicate, but there are a few management options. Kudzu can be grazed by livestock; continuous grazing can eventually lead to stand loss. In areas that cannot be grazed, tilled, or mowed, mechanical methods such as hand removal can help in areas of small infestations. When removing, make sure the roots and all stems are removed from the soil as stems can propagate through fragmentation.

Chemical control through herbicides is available for kudzu control as well. Below is a list of recommended herbicides for kudzu management. Always read chemical labels to ensure you are not causing harm to any desired plants or trees near application area.

Table 1. Chemical control for kudzu.

Herbicide	Formulation	Method	Rate
Aminocyclopyrachlor (Method)	2 lb/ae/gallon	Foliar	10–18 oz/acre
Aminocyclopyrachlor + Chlorsulfuron (Perspective)	55.2%	Foliar	4.8–11 oz/acre
Aminocyclopyrachlor + Metsulfuron (Streamline)	52.1%	Foliar	9.5–11.5 oz/acre
Aminocyclopyrachlor + Metsulfuron + Imazapyr (Viewpoint)	61.7%	Foliar	16–20 oz/acre
Aminopyralid (Milestone)	2 lb/ae/gallon	Foliar	7 oz/acre
Aminopyralid + Triclopyr (Milestone VM)	2 lb/ae/gallon	Foliar	64–96 oz/acre
Clopyralid (Transline, Lontrel, etc.)	2 lb/ae/gallon	Foliar	21 oz/acre
Metsulfuron (Escort, MSM, etc.)	60%	Foliar	4 oz/acre
Glyphosate (Roundup, Accord, etc.)	3 lb/ae/gallon	Foliar	2% solution or 128 oz/acre
Imazapyr + Metsulfuron (Lineage Clearstand)	72.7%	Foliar	25 oz/acre
Picloram (Tordon, Trooper, etc.)	2 lb/ae/gallon	Foliar	64 oz/acre



For more information on chemical control of kudzu, see our publication 3187-Kudzu: https://extension.msstate.edu/sites/default/files/publications/P3187_web.pdf.



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Northern Cardinal

The Northern Cardinal is one of the most recognizable birds found in southern gardens. With its vivid red plumage (in males) and distinctive crest, the cardinal is more than just a beautiful presence, it plays an active and important role in maintaining a healthy garden ecosystem. Many gardens benefit from the natural behaviors of the Northern Cardinal, especially when it comes to pest control, seed management, and overall ecological balance.



One of the most significant benefits of the Northern Cardinal is the role it has when it comes to controlling insect populations. Cardinals are most widely known as seed eaters, but during the growing season their diet shifts to a variety of different insects. This is especially important in the spring and summer when garden pests are most prevalent and most active. Cardinals feed on beetles, grasshoppers, caterpillars, and many other insects that can damage vegetables, flowers, and ornamental plants. By naturally reducing these pests, Cardinals help protect plants without the need for chemical treatment, and this makes for a more safe and more environmentally friendly garden.

In addition to insect control, Northern Cardinals also contribute to seed dispersal. They frequently consume fruits from native plants and following digestion the seeds are spread throughout gardens and surrounding landscapes. This helps promote plant diversity. A diverse garden supports a wider variety of beneficial insects, birds, and soil organisms, all which contribute to a healthier garden ecosystem and stronger plants.

Cardinals also assist indirectly with weed control. While they do eat seeds from desirable plants, they also consume seeds from most common weeds. By feeding on these seeds before they have a chance to germinate, Cardinals can help reduce the spread of unwanted plants in many gardens. This natural weed management can save gardeners time and effort all while reducing the reliance of herbicides.





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Chrysanthemum (mum) Care

Fall Chrysanthemums, commonly known as mums, are a seasonal favorite that add beautiful color to landscapes and homes. Available in a variety of colors—including yellow, orange, red, white, and pink, mums can provide an attractive floral display throughout the fall season. Here are a few care tips to help your mums thrive and maintain their blooms:



- **Check soil moisture daily.** Mums have shallow root systems and require consistent moisture.
- **Water thoroughly and regularly.** Keep the soil evenly moist but avoid overwatering or allowing the plants to sit in standing water.
- **Provide plenty of sunlight.** Place mums in an area that receives at least 6 hours of direct sunlight each day, along with good air circulation, to encourage ample blooming.
- **Protect blooms from intense heat.** When mums are in full bloom, moving them to a bright, shaded location can help extend the life of the flowers.
- **Maintain an ideal temperature.** Mums perform best in temperatures around 60-70 degrees Fahrenheit. Bringing container-grown mums indoors or into a protected area before a freeze can help extend their longevity.
- **Select mums with tight flower buds.** Choosing mums with many unopened buds can provide a longer-lasting floral display.
- **Use rich, well-drained soil.** Proper drainage helps prevent root rot while supporting healthy growth and flower production.
- **Remove faded blooms.** Regularly removing wilted flowers can encourage new buds to develop and keep plants looking healthy.
- **Plant or display as desired.** Mums can be planted directly in landscape beds or kept in their original containers.

For more information or guidance on caring for chrysanthemums, please visit your local Extension Office.



Weyerhaeuser



Walley



WILDLIFE FOOD PLOT MANAGEMENT



- SITE PREP
- SEED/SPECIES SELECTION
- ESTABLISHMENT AND MANAGEMENT



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