

Grasshoppers are always a problem

by Rick Hirsch, County Extension Agent

Grasshoppers are among the most widespread and damaging pests in Texas. Approximately 150 species of grasshoppers are known to exist in the state; however, only five species cause 90 percent of the damage to crops, gardens, trees and shrubs. These insects cause some damage every year, but become very destructive during outbreak periods. An often asked question during outbreak years is, "Why are there so many?" Weather is the main factor affecting grasshopper populations. Outbreaks are usually preceded by several years of hot, dry summers and warm autumns. Dry weather increases nymph and adult survival.

Warm autumns allow grasshoppers more time to feed and lay eggs. Cool, wet weather slows nymphal development, reduces the number of eggs laid, and increases the incidence of diseases.

Grasshoppers have a high reproductive capacity. The female can lay an average of 200 eggs during a single season. Under favorable conditions, up to 400 eggs can be laid. Approximately 40 eggs can be laid even if unfavorable conditions exist. Thus, 10 times more eggs can be produced during favorable conditions. With an average of 200 eggs per female, 198 eggs or young grasshoppers would have to die if the population were to remain the same. If, instead of only two adults surviving, there are four, six, eight, ten or fifty, then the adult population the following year will be increased two, three, four, five or twenty-five times, respectively.

Farmers and ranchers should watch for grasshoppers early in the season and begin control measures while grasshoppers are in the nymphal stages and still within hatching sites (roadsides, fencerows, etc.). There are a number of advantages in treating grasshoppers early: 1) fewer acres will have to be treated and less insecticide is necessary to obtain control; 2) grasshoppers are killed before they have had the opportunity to cause significant crop loss; 3) smaller grasshoppers are more susceptible to insecticides than larger hoppers; 4) early treatment before grasshoppers reach maturity prevents migration of the winged (flying) adult stage and egg laying, which may help reduce the grasshopper threat for the following crop year.

Grasshopper infestation levels can be estimated by surveying for nymphs or adults. One method is the square-foot method. In the area to be sampled, count the number of grasshoppers that hop or move within a square foot area. With 15 to 20 paces between each square-foot sample, conduct 18 square-foot samples and divide the total number of grasshoppers by two to obtain the number per square yard. If the grasshoppers are predominantly first to third instar, (wingless and generally less than 1/2-inch long), divide the number by three to give the adult equivalent. Consider fourth instar nymphs and above as adults. Control will generally be necessary when square-yard counts reach the threatening level of 21 - 40 in the margins or 1 - 14 in the field.

When grasshopper populations reach intolerable levels, or when crops are threat-

ened, a treatment program may need to be considered. You can contact the County Extension Agent or your Ag retailer for more information on recommended insecticides.

Profit-Robbing Horn Flies: There are numerous fly species that prey on livestock, such as stable flies, horse flies, face flies and horn flies. Of these pests, the horn fly is the most economically damaging to the cattle industry, causing annual losses in excess of \$876 million.

Horn flies breed in fresh cow manure from early spring to fall and the larva requires an undisturbed fecal patty for development. Populations usually peak in the late spring and again in the late fall.

Researchers consider 250 flies per adult animal to be an economic factor, but with horn flies, thousands may infest a single animal.

Horn flies are blood suckers, feeding up to 40 times a day and spending its entire life on the host. This is very irritating and annoying to cattle. The annoyance interferes with the cows' feeding and resting, causing reduced weight gains and lower milk production. Heavy fly populations can reduce calf gains up to a quarter of a pound per day, resulting in a \$15 or more loss per calf.

Horn flies prefer cattle as a host but also affect horses, sheep, and goats. They are usually found on the back of the animal host, congregating at the withers, between the front shoulders, but move around to the sides and belly during the hotter or cooler times of the day.

Treatment can be accomplished by applying insecticides with spray, pour-on, dust or fly control ear tags. There has been some resistance build-up over the years with pyrethroid ear tags. If this is the case, rotation of pesticides should be considered, but make sure you are changing the active ingredient and not just the tag color.

Also, to help with resistance build-up, remove tags as soon as possible once they have lost their effectiveness, usually after four or five months. Tags emitting reduced doses seem to add to the resistance problem by prolonging fly exposure, thus making the surviving population more resistant to the insecticide.

The horn fly is one of the more easily-controlled pests because it never leaves the host. So, with control, producers can increase the herd's weight gains and profit while giving the cattle a break from these annoying pests.

Question of the Week: Q. What causes my tomato leaves to curl?

A. The exact cause of this tomato leaf roll is not fully known. Tomato leaf roll appears about the time of fruit setting. The leaflets of the older leaves on the lower half of the tomato plant roll upward. This gives the leaflets a cupped appearance with sometimes even the margins touching or overlapping. The overall growth of the plant does not seem to be greatly affected and yields are normal. This condition appears to be most common on staked and pruned plants. It occurs when excessive rainfall or overwatering keeps the soil too wet for too long. It is also related to intensive sunlight which causes carbohydrates to accumulate in the leaves.

(Rick Hirsch is the Henderson County Extension Agent - Agriculture for Texas Cooperative Extension. Visit his web page at <http://henderson-co.tamu.edu>)

TFFC to host fireworks show

The Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens will host its annual Fourth of July fireworks show.

The center will be open to visitors during regular hours, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. After 4 p.m., admission is free for the fireworks show.

Food items and beverages will be offered.

Parking is available in the main TFFC parking lot and in an overflow parking area on Peninsula Point Road.

For more information or directions, call (903) 676-2277.

Wooten tapped as Outstanding Teacher

Julie Wooten of Brownsboro recently joined outstanding teachers from across the state at "The U.S. Constitution and American History," an institute sponsored by Humanities Texas and The University of Texas at San Antonio.

"I love all the primary sources I received. My students are going to enjoy seeing and learning about original documents of history," said Wooten, who teaches world and U.S. history and Spanish at Brownsboro High School.

"The U.S. Constitution and American History" brought 40 teachers to The University of Texas at San

Antonio for four days of seminars, lectures and workshops. A companion institute was held at the LBJ Library and Museum in Austin.

"Humanities Texas was delighted to co-sponsor 'The U.S. Constitution and American History,'" said Executive Director Michael L. Gillette. "Giving a talented teacher like Julie Wooten the opportunity to interact with her peers and leading scholars will enable her to engage students with exciting new perspectives on constitutional issues in our nation's history."

The San Antonio institute faculty included members of UTSA's history department, as well as distin-

guished scholars from other universities, including Johns Hopkins political scientist Joseph Cooper; Lawrence Sager, dean of The University of Texas School of Law and bestselling historian H.W. Brands.

Christine Blackerby, educational specialist from the National Archives, also served on the institute faculty and provided participants with facsimiles of historic documents that support the teaching of U.S. history and government.

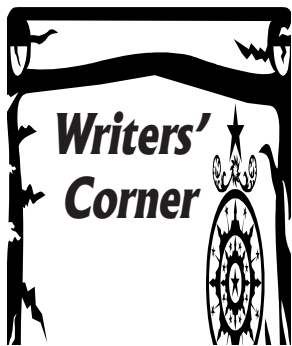
"The U.S. Constitution and American History" institutes were made possible with a *We the People* grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities and additional support from

the Houston Endowment.

The Texas Legislature recently approved a biennial appropriation of \$2 million for Humanities Texas to significantly expand its enrichment programs for classroom teachers throughout the state.

The state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities, Humanities Texas develops and supports programs across the state, including lectures, oral history projects, teacher institutes, museum exhibitions and documentary films.

For more information about Humanities Texas and its programs for educators, visit <http://www.humanitiestexas.org>



WHAT MAKES ME SMILE

The sunshine on my face,
The Son shining in my heart,
The flowers growing on the ground,
The flowers growing in my spirit.
The wind whispering in

the trees,
God whispering in my ear.

by Katrina Edwards

OUR FLAG

Stars in the blue, stripes red and white;
In the flash of guns they've been seen at night.
On the sinking ship in days modern or past
This flag breathed defiance, secured to the mast.
In times of peace while men onward plod,
This flag still led them nearer to God.

Wherever it flies, kissed by the air,
There is freedom of worship of God in prayer.

This veteran lies at last at peace,
And his guns of war must forever cease.
Our flag in its beauty has come to rest
Like the palm of God on the silent breast.

For those who die or for those who live
This flag is only for all who give.

Submitted by Otis Rainwater

Health Short

Information on Swimmer's Ear

by Karlie Heckaman PA-C

Swimmer's ear (also called otitis externa) is an infection of the outer ear and the ear canal. The ear canal is dark and warm; it can easily get infected with bacteria and fungus. Swimmer's ear is different than the kind of infection you get in the middle part of your ear. The kind that you get in your middle ear is called otitis media.

Patients can get swimmer's ear by swimming or excessive showering. These actions can cause you to get too much water in your ears. Water removes the protective ear wax, which makes it easier for bacteria and fungus to grow. It is important not to injure your ear by using Q-tips or other objects because this can cause an infection in the canal. Skin conditions like acne and psoriasis that occur on other parts of the body can occur in the ear canal and cause an infection. Also, patients need to be careful when using certain hair products or hair dye because they can also cause otitis externa.

The most common symptoms of swimmer's ear are pain or itching of the outside of the ear. The pain is often worse when the ear moves, such as when you are chewing. Some patients may feel like their ears are plugged and cannot hear as well. Patients may also have pus that drains from their ear.

Patients that suspect that they have otitis externa should see their family doctor. This condition can easily be treated with prescription ear drops. However, in more severe cases patients may need oral antibiotics. Patients with diabetes and young children should be seen by a physician immediately if you suspect otitis externa, to prevent any complications.

If you are diagnosed with otitis externa you should follow the exact directions of the medications that are prescribed to you and be sure to finish the antibiotics. Keep your ear as dry as possible for at least 7 to 10 days.

Take baths instead of showers. Try to keep water out of your ears when you wash your hair. Don't participate in swimming or water sports for at least one week. Also, do not put anything in your ear other than the prescribed medications. Symptoms usually improve within 3 days and should be completely gone after 10 days.

The best way to prevent otitis externa is to never put anything in the ear canal. This includes Q-tips, paper clips, liquids, or sprays. These things can damage or irritate your skin. Leave ear wax in the ear canal. The only reason to remove the wax is if your hearing is decreased. Then you should see your physician to see if your ears need to be washed. You should al-

ways try to keep your ears as dry as possible. Use a dry towel to dry your ears after swimming or showering.

Help the water run out of your ears by turning your head to each side and pulling on the earlobe in different directions. If you participate in water sports it is best to use a bathing cap or wet suit instead of ear plugs to keep the water out.

You can read more about otitis externa at www.familydoctor.org or call me at the Trinity Mother Frances Clinic, 903-849-5756. If you would like to submit a question or topic, please call the clinic.

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Meals on Wheels Menu

July 6 - 10
(Milk served with meals) Orange juice served in Centers)

MON: Stuffed green peppers, blackeyed peas, squash, cornbread, mixed fruit cup

TUE: Baked crusted talapia, tater tots, broccoli w/cheese, wheat bread, pineapple cup

WED: Herbed baked chicken, rice pilaf, summer veggie blend, wheat bread, Mandarin oranges

THUR: Turkey tetrazzini, green beans, cranberry sauce, wheat bread, peach cup

FRI: Egg salad, macaroni salad, cucumber & onion salad, wheat bread, banana

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Summer II ALL SUMMER 2009

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Monday, July 13, 2009	W,X,Y,Z
9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.	W,X,Y,Z
10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.	U,V
10:30 a.m. - 11:30 p.m.	S,T
11:30 p.m. - 12:00 p.m.	P,Q,R
12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.	M,N,O
1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m.	K,L
2:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.	G,H,I,J
3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.	D,E,F
4:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.	A,B,C
5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.	Open

LATE REGISTRATION:
Late Registration Fee \$25.00
Tuesday July 14; 9:00 a.m. 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday July 15; 9:00 a.m. 3:00 p.m.

Summer II Internet Registration is open now through July 10.

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