

August 2009

*Pam Lee*

Pamela R. Lee  
County Director

105B E Washington St  
PO Box 59  
Carrollton MS 38917

Phone: 662-237-4413  
Fax: 662-237-6959  
paml@ext.msstate.edu

***Inside this issue:***

Ants in the House	2
Fall Army Worms	
Forage News	3
Dates to Remember	4

## WILDLIFE FOOD PLOTS

William McKinley, biologist with the Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, will speak about food plots for wildlife on Tuesday night, August 11, at the Community House in Carrollton.

Dinner, cooked by Donnie Perkins, will begin at 7:00 pm and will be followed by the program. For members of the Carroll County Forestry Association, the cost of the meal is included in their dues. Otherwise, the cost of the meal is \$10.00. Reservations must be made by Noon on Monday, August 10. For more information or to make reservations, call the Carroll County Extension Service at 662-237-2926.

“Most hunters associate good hunting areas with good deer habitat. If the area is pretty and you can see for a long distance, then it has to be good. If the area is an ugly sight and visibility is restricted, then it has to be bad. In reality, just the opposite is true.

Deer are browsers and rely on green succulent growth for the mainstay of their diets. Acorns are relished but they are only available for a short period of time each year. Green browse plants sustain a deer herd year-in and year-out. In most cases forest management practices such as clearcuts, thinnings, firelanes and regeneration encourage browse to grow.”

Tim Trogott



We have approximately 175 species of ants in the state but fewer than a dozen ant species commonly invade our homes.

**Carpenter Ants:** We have more than a dozen species of carpenter ants in Mississippi, but the black carpenter ant is the most common home-invading species. This is also the largest species of ant found in buildings. Carpenter ants do not eat wood, but they do build their nests in wood, preferring to tunnel in moist decaying wood. Carpenter ants normally nest outdoors, in trees, logs, and stumps, and these outdoor colonies do not need to be controlled unless they are sending foraging trails indoors. The best way to control carpenter ants is with specially designed carpenter ant baits—you don't need to find the nests to use baits. But, carpenter ant baits are difficult to find locally and usually have to be mail-ordered.

**Little Black Ants:** Yes, this really is the official common name of *Monomorium minimum*, and the name suits them well. At only 1/16 inch, these native ants are on the other end of the size scale from black carpenter ants. These are common outdoor ants that live in relatively small colonies. Occasionally they become pests by trailing, or even establishing colonies, indoors. Because the colonies are small and usually not very numerous, liquid or gel sweet baits placed near trails usually provide good control.

**Dark Rover Ants:** This non-native species is about the same size as the little black ant (1/16 inch), and is often mistaken for little black ant even though it is lighter in color. For the size of their colonies, dark rover ants produce relatively large numbers of swarms, and homeowners often see swarms before they have noticed nests or trails. Dark rover ants will usually take sweet baits, but bait one colony out and another quickly appears. Whether you use a professional or treat yourself, expect to have frequent reinvasions when you have dark rover ants.

**Argentine Ants:** These ants thrive in landscapes with lots of trees and heavily mulched flower beds and will actually displace fire ants in these kinds of situations. Because they displace fire ants, do not sting, and do not build mounds, Argentine ants would be considered beneficial if

only they would remain outside. However in landscapes with heavy Argentine ant populations, indoor invasions, due to both foraging trails and indoor satellite nests, are quite common. In favorable landscapes Argentine ants develop huge colonies consisting of hundreds of thousands of ants living in dozens or hundreds of small nest sites around the landscape. Because workers move freely between nests, Argentine ants are often thought of as having “super-colonies.” Argentine ants are difficult to control, and you are doing well if you can just keep the number of indoor invasions to a minimum. Attention to cultural controls, such as minimizing mulch and fallen leaves and pine straw near the building, pruning limbs that touch the building, and sealing potential entrance points, is critical when dealing with Argentine ants. Baits can be used to eliminate indoor satellite nests after the perimeter has been “secured”, but baits alone are usually not sufficient for this ant.

**Odorous House Ant:** OHAs seem to be becoming less common as Argentine ants increase in importance. Odorous house ants are similar to Argentine ants in size (about 1/8 inch) and general colony structure and nest habits. Control is similar to that for Argentine ants.

**Acrobat Ants:** Acrobat ants are only about 1/8 inch long and have a distinctive, heart-shaped abdomen. These ants usually nest outdoors in small, single-queen colonies and spend most of their time foraging in trees and shrubs where they tend aphids and other honeydew-producing insects. Indoor infestations are usually due to colonies nesting in rotting wood. Buildings with hard foam insulation sometimes suffer heavy infestations as the ants seem to like to tunnel and nest in this material. Cultural controls, such as pruning limbs, can help reduce numbers.

**Imported Fire Ants:** These are usually outdoor ants, but indoor invasions occasionally occur, and when they do, they are often associated with stinging incidents. The best way to prevent indoor fire ant invasions is to do a good job of preventively controlling fire ants within a 25 to 50 foot band around the outside of the building. Extension publication 2429 “Control Fire Ants in Your Yard” provides detailed information on fire ant control. For immediate control of fire ants that have gotten inside, you can use household insect sprays containing pyrethroid insecticides, such as cyfluthrin, deltamethrin, bifenthrin, or permethrin.

See Publication 2443, Control Household Insect Pests, for more details on dealing with ants and other insects in your home.

Reports of fall armyworm infestations in hay fields and pastures have increased the last two weeks. Most reports thus far have been in southern and central portions of the state. Scout your hay fields and pastures weekly, especially well fertilized areas that are lush and green. Broadleaf signal grass can be used as an indicator plant. This is a preferred host of fall armyworms and if they are in the area you will find them feeding on this grass.

Two types of armyworms are commonly found feeding in hay and pastures in Mississippi. True armyworms and fall armyworms. True armyworms are problematic in early spring and fall armyworms occur in late summer (beginning mid- to late July).

The adults (moths) are rarely seen during the day, but will become active in the late evening and during the night. Female moths will lay eggs in the lower leaves of host plants. Feeding will begin shortly after the eggs hatch. These young larvae will feed in the lower canopy, close to the ground, until they are approximately 1 inch long. Once the worms reach this size, they are capable of consuming large amounts of foliage.

Begin looking for true armyworm outbreaks in early spring and fall armyworm outbreaks mid-to late July. Fields should be scouted on a regular basis during periods of armyworm activity. Barnyard grass

and broadleaf signal grass are favored hosts of armyworms. These are good indicator plants, if there are no worms on these hosts; your Bermuda grass is probably ok. Consider cost, efficacy, mode of action, size of the larvae, grazing and haying restrictions before choosing a product.

**Threshold:** To prevent extensive damage, treatment when 5-7 small worms are found per square foot of surface area. There are a number of products available for control.

For more information about controlling fall army worms, call the Extension office or check out the Mississippi Crop Situation newsletter, found under Newsletters at [www.msucare.com](http://www.msucare.com).

## FORAGE NEWS... ROCKY LEMUS

Teff is a warm-season C4 annual grass that originated in Africa with great potential for hay production in the Southern US. It can be used as a summer rotation crop in fallow areas where only annual ryegrass is utilized as winter forage. Teff is characterized by a small seed (about 1.3 million seeds per pound), a large crown, and fine stems (which increase curing time when used for hay production). Its inflorescence is a loose or compact panicle. It is not recommended for grazing since it has a very shallow root system. Teff can fill a gap in summer forage production and make excellent hay for horses and livestock.

Varieties such as "Dessie" and more recently "Tiffany" teff have been the most popular. Teff grass could be planted from late-April to early June. Teff cannot tolerate frost and it is recommended to delay spring planting until soil temperature reaches 65 °F. Teff should be planted at a rate of 5 to 8 lbs/ac (uncoated) or 8 to 10 lbs/ac (coated) to a depth of 1/8 to 1/4 inch.

Because of the shallow planting depth, teff will need moisture during the first 10 days of establishment. Seed can be drilled or broadcast. It is recommended to cultipack or roll to ensure a firm bed that will maintain moisture. Under good moisture and

warm conditions, it could germinate within a week. Once established, teff is well-adapted to low pH soils and environments ranging from drought to water-logged conditions. The split application of 50 to 60 total pounds of N per acre for the season is usually adequate depending on target yields. Excessive fertilization should be avoided to prevent lodging and yield losses. Lime, phosphorus, and potassium should be applied based on soil test recommendations.

For more information on this forage, check out Forage News in the Newsletters found at [www.msucare.com](http://www.msucare.com).

## AUGUST DATES TO REMEMBER

**Aug 4—Healthy Back to School Foods** WIC Warehouse  
1:30—3:30 pm

**Aug 5—Vaiden Farmers Market**  
opens at 9 am

**Aug 6—Quick Bites Fall Floral Fashions**

**Aug 8—Vaiden Farmers Market**  
opens at 9 am


**Aug 11—Wild Game Food Plots**  
Carroll County Forestry Association hosts this super program with William McKinley, MDWFP. 7 pm. Cost: \$10 for non-members and guests Reservations must be made by noon, August 10.

**Aug 12—Vaiden Farmers Market**  
opens at 9 am

**Aug 13—Using Digital Cameras and Picasa** Learn to get more from your digital camera and how to edit pictures with Picasa, a free photo editing program. 9 am to 4 pm at the Extension office in Carrollton. Cost \$15.00 per person.

**Aug 14—CCDA Board Meeting**  
7:30 am at Miss Sippy's

**Aug 15—Vaiden Farmers Market**  
opens at 9 am

 **Aug 15—Black Hawk Gospel Singing** - 175th anniversary celebration event

**Aug 19—Vaiden Farmers Market**  
opens at 9 am

**Aug 22—Vaiden Farmers Market**  
opens at 9 am

**Aug 26—Vaiden Farmers Market**  
opens at 9 am

**Aug 27—Spanish Class Starts** 4:00 pm-4:45 pm Extension Office in Carrollton

**Aug 29—Vaiden Farmers Market**  
opens at 9 am

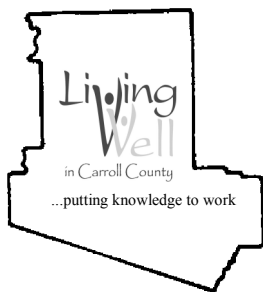
**Carrollton Pilgrimage**  
**October 2-4**  
**9 am to 5 pm**

Adults \$25 Children under  
12 \$5

Houses, Churches & More  
Call [662-237-6926](tel:662-237-6926) for more info

**Pioneer Day Festival**  
**October 3 9 am to 5 pm**  
Educational Booths,  
Arts and Crafts &  
Wild Game Cook-off.

For more info, contact Martha at  
[cnbrk38917@yahoo.com](mailto:cnbrk38917@yahoo.com)



### MSU-Extension Service

105B E Washington St  
PO Box 59  
Carrollton MS 38917

Phone: 662-237-4413  
Fax: 662-237-6959  
[paml@ext.msstate.edu](mailto:paml@ext.msstate.edu)

*This newsletter, like all of the services of the Carroll County Extension Service, is provided by the Carroll County Supervisors and the MS Legislature. Our purpose is to provide educational information that will empower people to make intelligent decisions relating to their vocations, their families, and their environment, making a real difference in the lives of Carroll Countians. Please help us thank the County Supervisors and the Legislators who represent us in Jackson for providing these services. Let them know that you use the Extension Service and that you want to continue to use the service!*