

Yard Tips 5
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By Floyd W. Taylor

ARMY WORMS ALERT!!!

I have found army worms in my yard and will be spraying them ASAP with Triazicide, a Spectracide product. It should be available at Walmart. Chris Dumesnil also has found army worms in his yard. If they are in anyone's yard in Raintree, they are most likely in everyone's yard in Raintree. Several years ago, there was an army worm infestation which damaged some untreated yards in Raintree and destroyed or damaged yards all over the Metro area. Army worms love bermudagrass, and if left unchecked, they may well destroy your yard.

Army worms are the larval stage of the Army Moth. Don't wait until you see damage to your turf or see army worms in your grass before you take action. In fact, you may not see them in your grass, because their camouflage is very effective. Once army worms get started, they multiply in huge numbers, so it's critical to get them early before they decimate your turf grass. The worms are about an inch to one and a half inches long. They are dull green to gray or dull yellow in color. Pick one up and crush it, and you will observe bright green goo squishing out - that is the chlorophyll the worms have ingested from eating your bermudagrass. Nasty critters!

Also, there are tent caterpillars in Raintree. Tent caterpillars are the larval stage of a small moth that constructs nests made from woven silk. To control them you have to spray the nests with an insecticide specifically formulated for tent caterpillars or bagworms. Tent caterpillars feed on the leaves of the trees where their nests are. If left unchecked, their unsightly nests can just about cover all of the branches of a tree while tent caterpillars devour their host trees to the point of killing some of them.

As you go through the gate on your way out of the subdivision, look directly across the street. You will see a medium

sized tree that is thoroughly infested with tent caterpillars. You do not want that in your yard!

Seasonal Tips

Fall is just around the corner. We welcome the cooler temperatures, but cooler temperatures also bring a few tasks unique to the Fall season,

Resist high pressure sales pitches from yard and garden retailers to fertilize your yard to get it ready for winter, and whatever you do, don't apply a high nitrogen, low phosphorus, low potassium fertilizer after September 15th. Once we start seeing Fall temperatures, your bermudagrass will start slipping into dormancy and will cease processing nitrogen from your fertilizer, and it will leach away into your soil. It's not a bad idea to apply a low nitrogen, high phosphorous and high potassium fertilizer in early Fall to stimulate root growth in your turf grass, especially if your grass is newly established. Fertilizer is not needed, however, for an established, healthy turf.

Fall is when you plant tulip, daffodil and Jonquil bulbs, which bloom early the next Spring. There are no tricks to planting these bulbs. Wait until the soil temperature is 60 degrees or less. Plant the bulbs pointed ends up about six inches deep, which gives you about four inches of soil over the top of the bulb. Plant about eight inches deep if your soil is light and/or sandy. That's all there is to it. You will be rewarded, starting in March of next year, with beautiful blooming flowers.

Noella Christman is the reigning Raintree tulip queen. Every March since she arrived in Raintree, Noella's yard has erupted with a spectacular display of hundreds of beautiful tulips. It's sheer folly to think anyone can upstage Noella, but it would do the neighborhood a lot of good for everyone to try. Think about how beautiful

the neighborhood would be with hundreds of tulips in all of the yards.

There's still time to order tulip bulbs, and they will be on the racks in lawn and garden stores soon. If you really want to get a great deal on a lot of special tulip bulbs, go on line and enter "Holland tulip bulbs" on Google. The dollar is doing very well against the Euro now, so you should be able to get some very good deals now. A number of Dutch web sites do a lot of e-mail orders to the States. You won't have a problem finding one that will fit your needs and be easy on your budget.