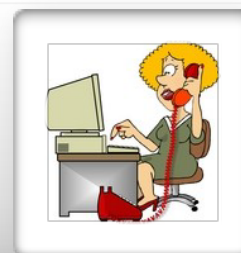


From the VCE- Bedford Master Gardener HELP DESK



*A Bedford Area Master Gardener Association (BAMGA) newsletter column
Editor: LindaE, VCE Master Gardener Volunteer, Help Desk Coordinator
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The following are a few questions that have come into the Bedford VCE Office MG Help Desk in August within the past few years. Do the answers come immediately to you?

QUESTIONS:

1. A client brought in a seed pod from a plant that she stated was "invasive" and described it as "6' high x 7' wide" and asked that it be identified. The client was asked to bring in a branch and/or leaf samples to aid in identification.



Walter American Hazelnut
Photo from www.wildflower.com

2. A client called wanting to know when she should cut back her peonies and daisies.
3. At one of the recent Family Farm Tours a client wanted to know how to get rid of the Johnsongrass growing in her lawn.

ANSWERS:

1. The plant was identified as *Betulaceae Corylus americana* (Walter American hazelnut). A member of the Birch family, it is native to and widespread in eastern North America, Maine west to Saskatchewan and North Dakota, south to eastern Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Georgia. In Virginia it can be found in the Mesic to dry upland forests, well-drained floodplain forests, rocky woodlands, and old fields. It is frequent-to-common in the mountains, Piedmont, and inner Coastal Plain; rare in the outer Coastal Plain.



Johnsongrass
Photo from www.NCSU.edu

The species adapts well to a range of soil pH and types, and prefers full sun to part shade in average well-drained soil. It is a deciduous multi-stemmed shrub, grows to a height of 8-12 feet with a crown spread of 10-15 feet and spreads by rhizomes or suckers. If desired, remove root suckers to prevent large thickets from forming.

According to grownative.org, in spring, " male flowers appear in 2 to 3 inch long, yellow-brown catkins and female flowers develop as small, reddish, inconspicuous catkins. In July, female flowers mature into egg-shaped, 1/2 in. long, edible nuts which are encased in husk-like bracts. Quail, grouse, blue jays, squirrel and deer feed on various parts of the plant. Fall color varies from combinations of orange, rose, purplish red, yellow and green to dull yellowish green." [1] [2] [3] [4]

2. The client was instructed to wait until fall after the foliage had died back and cut foliage down to the ground.

3. *Sorghum halpense* (Johnsongrass) was introduced to the Americas in the early 1800s from the Mediterranean region and was originally used for forage. It has subsequently spread to most warm-temperate regions of the world and can be found in virtually every county and city in Virginia. It is listed by the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services as a noxious weed.

Chemical control of Johnsongrass includes the use of a non-selective herbicide (e.g. glyphosate) or fluazifop alone or in combination with fenoxaprop. Please note: there is NO SELECTIVE control for Johnsongrass; whatever herbicide kills it will also kill the lawn grass. The only option is to kill the Johnsongrass infestation and reseed as necessary. See VCE PMG for specific formulas and application rates. Consumers should always read and adhere to pesticide labels for appropriate use.

Cultural steps include for controlling Johnsongrass include: mowing the lawn short; correcting the pH balance; and appropriate fertilization of the lawn grass (won't eradicate but will keep down seeds). [5] [6] [7]

REFERENCES:

- [1] <http://vaplantatlas.org/index.php?do=plant&plant=784>
- [2] <http://dendro.cnre.vt.edu/dendrology/syllabus/factsheet.cfm?ID=208>
- [3] http://plants.usda.gov/plantguide/pdf/pg_coam3.pdf
- [4] <http://grownative.org/plant-picker/plant/american-filbert-hazelnut/>
- [5] <http://www.invasivespeciesinfo.gov/plants/johnsongrass.shtml>
- [6] http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/natural_heritage/documents/fssoha.pdf
- [7] https://pubs.ext.vt.edu/456/456-017/Section-7_Low-Management_Crops_and_Areas-9.pdf

All references accessed July 21, 2014

Answers provided herein were based on specific situations and growing conditions. These recommendations may or may not be appropriate for all circumstances.

For specific recommendations for your particular situation please contact your local Cooperative Extension Office.

Bedford County Extension Office: (540) 586-7675 / **Email:** Help Desk @ BedfordMG@vt.edu

Websites: www.BedfordMasterGardeners.org and <http://offices.ext.vt.edu/bedford/>

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