



# HORT SHORTS

November-December-January  
2000/2001



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Amy Stone, Extension Agent  
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## HORT SHORTS – PESKY PESTS

Curious homeowners called the Extension office this fall wondering about these thousand-legged worms invading garages and foundations, and covering drives and sidewalks.

Millipedes, or "thousand-legged worms," normally live outdoors but may become nuisance pests indoors by their presence. At certain times of the year (usually late summer and autumn), a few or hundreds or more leave the soil and crawl into houses, basements, first-floor rooms, up foundation walls, into living rooms, up side walls and drop from the ceilings. Fall migrations during rainy and cool weather may result as a natural urge to seek hibernation quarters. Heavy continuous rainfall in newly developed wooded areas with decaying organic matter are often troublesome sites.

Millipedes do not bite humans nor cause damage to structures, household possessions, or foods. They crawl slowly and protect themselves by means of glands that secrete an unpleasant odor. If crushed they will leave an unsightly mess, and can stain.

Millipedes are attracted to dark, cool, moist environments, usually going unnoticed in the summer due to their nocturnal habits (activity at night) and tendency to disperse. They feed on living and decomposing vegetation and occasionally on dead snails, earthworms, and insects. Slight feeding injury can occur on soft-stemmed plants, in gardens and greenhouses. They cannot tolerate water-saturated soil, which forces them to the surface and higher ground. Likewise, dry, drought conditions can stimulate migration. In the autumn, it is believed they may migrate for better overwintering sites. If one or all of these conditions exist, sometimes hundreds or thousands (shovelful) of millipedes are found in garages, first-floor rooms, and basements. Others believe that migration may occur when the food supply dwindles in October and November.

For additional information on millipedes, and options for control, check out the Home

## GYPSY MOTH UPDATE

We are still waiting on the official word from The Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) regarding the gypsy moth suppression spray applications that were submitted from Lucas County. Applications for over 62,000 acres of land in Ohio were submitted to ODA for consideration for the suppression program. I have heard that ODA has completed the egg mass survey in Lucas County, and are now finalizing some details with the maps.

The next issue of Hort Shorts will include detailed information regarding the suppression program, as well as other educational programs being planned related

## HORT SHORTS WEBSITE OF THE MONTH



All-America Selection Winners Announced [www.all-americaselections.org](http://www.all-americaselections.org)

All-America Selection Award Winners are chosen by independent judges who can evaluate and score entries at judging sites around the country. Only entries with the highest average score are considered for an AAS Award. Winners generally have two or three significantly improved qualities over the closest comparison variety available to home gardeners. The 2001 winners are: Profusion White Zinna, Margarita Rosita Portulaca, Forever Blue Eustoma (Lisianthus), Avalon Bright Pink Nicotiana, Ring of Fire Sunflower, Honey Select Sweet Corn, Jolly Tomato, Giant Marconi Pepper, and Super Sweet Onion. Check out their website for photos, plant descriptions, display gardens, seed sources, and more!

This publication is provided to assist you in receiving the horticultural information necessary to enhance the quality of life for you and your family. If you have any additions or deletions to our mailing list – please call Amy Stone or Barbara Northrup at 243-MOTH (6684). Visit our website at <http://www.ag.ohio-state.edu/~luca>

**HORT SHORTS PLANT OF THE MONTH – SEVEN SON FLOWER *Heptacodium miconiodes***



This large multi-stemmed shrub grows rapidly to 20 feet in height with a slightly larger spread. It has a arching habit, with a fairly loose and open appearance. The Seven-Son Flower has attractive foliage, flowers very late in the season, and has an interesting light colored bark. It prefers full sun to partial shade, and requires a well-drained soil. This plant can be trained into a single-stemmed small tree to 20 or more feet in height.

The dark colored foliage emerges in late April and remains until early November. The leaves fall without changing color after a hard frost or early snow. Its creamy white flowers appear in abundance every year, yet produce a relatively modest display. Dr. Michael Dirr, in his Manual of Woody Landscape Plants, notes that the flowers are fragrant, and has indicated that butterflies are attracted to them.

*Heptacodium* can be propagated rather easily by cuttings. Several of Ohio's larger nurseries are growing the plants in the buckeye state. The Seven-Son Flower has been chosen by the Ohio Nursery and Landscape Association as a 2000 Plant Selection.

Hardy from USDA zones 5 - 8, it is native to eastern China where it is rare. In fact, all the plants currently in cultivation in the US are from a single plant in the Hangzhou Botanical Garden, the seed first being introduced in 1980.

**HORT SHORTS FOR SEEDLINGS**

Catalogs will soon begin coming and coming and coming and coming. Finding the first catalog in the mailbox is a sure sign that spring is right around the corner - or a least that is the way I like to think!

Catalogs can be a valuable tool as you begin planning for the upcoming gardening season. Whether you grow your own plants from seeds or purchase them in flats or containers, catalogs allow you the opportunity to create a "wish list."

I have found post it notes to be very useful as I begin looking through plant catalogs. Marking pages with plants of interest is the first step. Once I have received the majority of catalogs and all my post it notes are used up, I begin going through each one again. I look at each plant that I just have to have, and ask myself some questions.

- ◆ What are the plant preferences (ie: sun/shade, soil type, its size and habit)?
- ◆ Do I have a site where that plant would survive, better yet, thrive?
- ◆ As I look at my landscape plan, how many plants would I need?
- ◆ What is the cost?

With that information, I begin to rank the plants. I use a one, two, three scale. One indicates that it is a no brainer - I have to have it. I love the plant and it is perfect for my landscape. Two indicates that I love the plant, but I don't have the perfect spot. Finally, a three indicates that yes I like the plant, but it would not last a day in my landscape. Even with this, the number ones usually out number the rest. At this point, I try to focus on a particular bed or section of the landscape, consider my budget, and then start filling out the order forms.

**SALT TOLERANCE OF PERENNIALS**

*By Laura Deeter, OSU PhD candidate and Assistant Professor, ATI*

Perennials are no longer relegated to the classic English border. They are the rising stars of the nursery industry, and have become staple fixtures of highway beautification projects, parking lots, and other public areas.

These urban situations pose many stresses including de-icing chemicals, particularly sodium chloride. The effects of sodium chloride on perennials had not been previously studied. A greenhouse study was conducted with the purpose of studying the sodium chloride tolerance of several commonly available and utilized perennials. Thirty-eight species of perennials were analyzed. The table below lists species that were found to be tolerant (T) or very tolerant (VT) of sodium chloride. They can be grown in places where soil applied sodium chloride is very high, including directly along the edge of the road.

It is important to remember, however, that greenhouse studies do not necessarily translate into "real world" survival. There are many factors that combine to ensure winter survival of perennials, and the presence or absence of sodium chloride is but one of them.

Common Name	Species	Rating
Splendens sea thrift	<i>Ameria maritima</i> 'Splendens'	VT
Powis Castle wormwood	<i>Artemisia</i> 'Powis Castle'	T
Silver Mound artemisia	<i>Artemisia schmidtiana</i> 'Nana'	T
Karl Foerster feather reed	<i>Calamagrostis acutiflora</i> 'Karl Foerster'	VT
Helen Allwood pinks	<i>Dianthus xallwoodii</i> 'Helen'	VT
Blue lyme grass	<i>Elymus glauca</i>	VT
Elijah Blue fescue	<i>Festuca cinerea</i> 'Elijah Blue'	T
Cherry Cheeks daylily	<i>Hemerocallis</i> 'Cherry Cheeks'	T
Stella d'Oro daylily	<i>Hemerocallis</i> 'Stella d'Oro'	T
Palace Purple alumroot	<i>Heuchera micrantha</i> 'Palace Purple'	T
Variegated hosta	<i>Hosta undulata</i> 'Medio-variegata'	T
Autumn Joy sedum	<i>Hylotelephium</i> 'Autumn Joy'	T
Sea lavender	<i>Limonium latifolium</i>	T
Creeping lilyturf	<i>Liriope muscari</i>	T
Perennial fountain grass	<i>Pennisetum alopecuroides</i>	VT

All educational programs conducted by Ohio State University Extension are available to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, creed, religion, sexual orientation, national origin, gender, age, disability or Vietnam-era veteran status.

Keith L. Smith, Associate Vice President for Ag. Admin. and Director, OSU

**We wish you a Happy 2001 !**