



BORER DAMAGE TO TREES – AN OPPORTUNISTIC INSECT

By Dr. Moon

The Uri Storm Event of February 2021 was devastating to trees throughout Texas. In the following years since that event, there have been early fall freezes that have continued to cause tree death or weaken trees further, leaving them susceptible to diseases, fungus, blights, and plant predators such as borers and other insects. Following an event such as Uri, tree death can occur for 5 to 7 years. Uri created a perfect environment for these

insects and diseases to thrive in weakened trees and even spread to healthy trees.

Ash trees were hit particularly hard due to the severe freeze damage they suffered. The bark was damaged on the trunks, and the upper branches had dieback. The ash trees that survived were weakened, and the Emerald Ash borer moved in, expanding its range and increasing in population to launch a more severe attack.

If you have ash trees in your landscape, you should treat them for borer control yearly. Merit is a systemic borer control, which means it is absorbed by the tree and distributed throughout the tree's tissues, providing long-lasting protection. Homeowners can purchase *Bio Advanced Tree and Shrub* (Granular) from garden centers, Home Depot, or Lowe's, and this product contains Merit as well as a tree fertilizer. Treat your trees one time per year with this granular product as per label instructions. As a personal note, I also treat my trees yearly with this product to prevent borers. Your landscape contractor treats susceptible trees in the common areas yearly for borer prevention as well.

All trees have some form of insect or disease that can attack when a tree has been damaged or weakened. Oak trees, lacebark elm, American elm, and Chinese Pistache are also susceptible to borer damage. Cedar Elm has been mostly unaffected.

Regular maintenance is key to preserving the health of your trees. Check your trees to see if you have borer holes or sloughing bark on trunks. If you do, treat with the *Bio-Advanced Tree and Shrub* and mark your calendar to do it again at the same time next year. Remember, annual treatment is not just a recommendation; it's a necessity to keep your trees healthy and pest-free.



Evidence of Borer Damage



Control

A Guide to Building a Mosquito-Repelling Oasis in Your Backyard

Many of us look forward to spending time outdoors, enjoying our outdoor space and backyards. However, with the arrival of warmer months comes the inevitable invasion of mosquitoes. These pesky insects can turn a peaceful evening on the patio into an unbearable experience. Thankfully, by creating a mosquito-repelling oasis in your backyard, you can enjoy the outdoors without the constant buzzing and biting. Here are some suggestions for those who want to reclaim their outdoor spaces.

First and foremost, understanding the habitat of mosquitoes is essential. Mosquitoes thrive in areas with standing water, as this is where they lay their eggs. To combat their presence, it's crucial to eliminate any stagnant water in your yard. This includes regularly checking and emptying items such as bird baths, planters, and lawn furniture that may collect water.

Once you've addressed water sources, you can begin transforming your yard into a haven for yourself—and a deterrent for mosquitoes—by incorporating specific plants known for their bug-repelling properties. Lavender, for example, not only adds a beautiful pop of color but also emits a scent that mosquitoes find unpleasant. Planting lavender near seating areas provides both aesthetic value and natural repellent action.

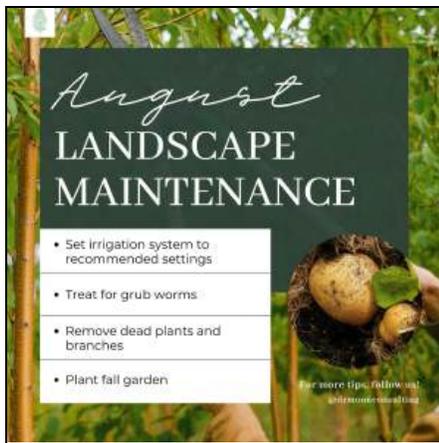
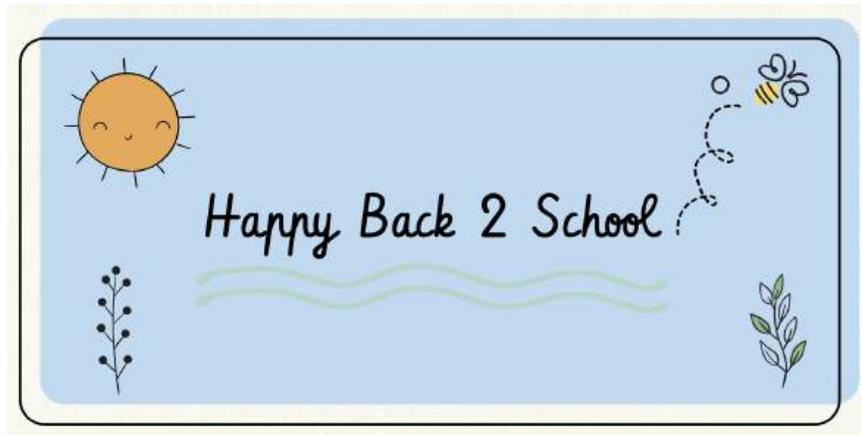
Additionally, marigolds are a favored companion plant, thanks to their strong scent that confuses and repels mosquitoes. Adding these flowers around your patio or outdoor living areas creates a vibrant look while enhancing your mosquito defense.

Lastly, engaging in regular yard maintenance is essential for maintaining your mosquito-free oasis. This includes mowing the lawn and keeping shrubs and trees trimmed. Overgrown areas provide hiding places for mosquitoes, allowing them to breed and thrive. A tidy garden not only looks better but also helps reduce the places mosquitoes can call home.

FIVE MOSQUITO REPELLING PLANTS THAT HELP ADD COLOR TO YOUR YARD

Lavendar	Lantana	Marigolds
		

Mint	Catmint
	



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