

The Pesticide Periodical

Agricultural & Environmental Safety Unit

October 2025

Volume 1, Issue 10

agrilife.org/aes

TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION

Programs Through the Year's End

General Standards/Technician Training

- November 6th (Katy, TX)
- [December 3rd \(Plainview, TX\)](#)
- December 10th (Virtual)

8-Hour Structural Termite Category Training

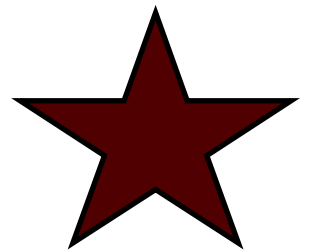
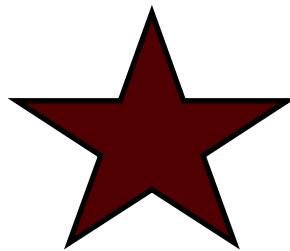
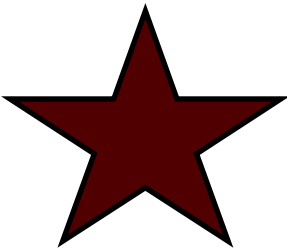
- November 5th (Katy, TX)

8-Hour Structural Pest Category Training

- November 12th (Virtual)

8-Hour Landscape Maintenance Training

- November 12th (Fort Worth, TX)
- [December 3rd \(Plainview, TX\) **Vegetation Management Category also included**](#)



Falling in Place Mr. Jake Wightman, Extension Program Specialist, Editor

Summer has come and gone before we knew it, but you wouldn't have noticed based on the weather. In fact, many counties across the state are experiencing burn bans and water use restrictions. Fortunately, overnight temperatures are steadily decreasing and soon enough I won't be sweating seeds when I take the dog out for evening walks.

A few reminders for folks preparing their homes, lawns, and gardens for the end of the year and upcoming cool season: be careful with your irrigation schedule. While it is still hot and dry, excessive irrigation overnight can cause fungal problems in your turf areas; [Take-all](#) and [Brown Patch](#) are waiting for the opportunity to strike! Remember, water infrequently and deeply for best results, and don't feel like you need to "compensate" for lack of rain—slow and steady wins the race.

Lower overnight temperatures also mean that the creepy crawlies are on the move getting ready for the cool season themselves. Now is a good time to practice cultural and mechanical pest control tactics: clean up any messes, human and otherwise, that may have accrued over the warmer months. This includes collecting plant and animal waste materials, sweeping cobwebs, and disposing of any unnecessary water-collecting items on the property. We hope you'll enjoy reading more about "creepy crawlies" in the next section of this month's Pesticide Periodical.

See you at a certification or recertification event soon, and be on the lookout for 2026 dates!

Why Does it Always Have to be Spiders...?

Miss Avery Brooks, AES Student Worker

Creepy crawlies like spiders enjoy lurking in cool, dark places and may even contribute to your Halloween decor, but they are nuisances in many households. Although these 8-legged arthropods are typically unwanted, they are beneficial to the environment as they feed on insects and other arthropods contributing to the balance of nature. There are over 900 species of spiders, but only a few are hazardous to humans, such as widow and recluse spiders. While black widows are well-known throughout the United States, people may be less familiar with the brown widow spider as it has recently been introduced into the U.S.

Female black widow spiders are jet-black with a distinctive red hourglass shape on the underside of her abdomen. Male black widow spiders are small and brown. It is more common to see a female black widow spider because she will eat her male mate after mating, thus the “widow” name. Black widow spider bites can feel like a pin prick and may not even be noticed. Symptoms include tremors, nausea, vomiting, leg cramps, abdominal pains, profuse perspiration, loss of muscle tone, a rise in blood pressure, and breathing difficulties. According to the Texas Department of State Health Services, black widow venom is 15 times more toxic than the venom of the prairie rattle snake. These spiders are commonly found in woodpiles, boxes, meter boxes, and many other undistributed areas.

Brown recluse spiders are golden brown and can be identified by a dark fiddle-shaped pattern near their head, giving them their colloquial name “fiddleback spiders.” Venom from the brown recluse has necrotizing enzymes that cause local or systemic reactions. The symptoms of a brown recluse spider bite are different from those of a black widow spider bite, including fever, chills, necrosis, and red, white and blue lesions at the bite site. These different symptoms can be attributed to the differences in venom make-up from spider to spider. Black widow venom is a neurotoxin whereas brown recluse venom contains necrotizing enzymes, which cause skin cells to break down at a cellular level. Brown recluse spiders are typically found in garages, firewood piles, bathrooms, bedrooms, closets, corners, crevices, and anywhere that provides them with a snug fit between plush surfaces.

Both widow spiders and recluse spiders tend to only bite when accidentally disturbed, trapped, or threatened. In structural settings, piles of clothes and wet towels tend to attract spiders, especially wandering spiders like the brown recluse. Prevention is the easiest and most effective way to control the presence of these hazardous spiders. Reducing the presence of bright outdoor lighting that attracts insects, trimming weeds from around buildings, sealing outside openings, removing spider webs, and shaking out shoes, clothes, towels, and linens that have been undisturbed for a long period are all good ways to prevent the chance of a spider bite and reduce the presence of these spiders. One of the best ways to manage spiders that have gained access to homes and structures is with sticky traps. While certain pesticides include spiders on their labels, integrated pest management practices are necessary for adequate spider management.



Black Widow

Smooth egg sacs



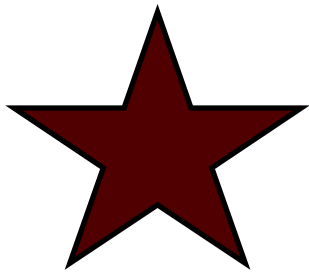
Brown Widow

*Note: Spiked egg sac

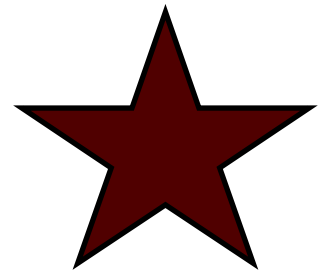


Brown Recluse

*Note: Fiddle-shaped marking



Send Announcements to
jacob.wightman@ag.tamu.edu
 For more information, call AES at
(979)845-3849




**TEXAS A&M
AGRI LIFE
EXTENSION**

DECEMBER 2-3, 2025

**South Plains Applicator
Conference**

HOSTED BY:
 KRISTIE KEYS (CASTRO/HALE/LAMB COUNTY)
 (325) 665-8790
 MARK CARROLL (FLOYD COUNTY)
 (806) 983-4912

**5 CEU's
Pending TDA
Approval**

**OLLIE LINER CENTER
2000 S. COLUMBIA ST
PLAINVIEW, TEXAS 79072**

DAY 1: CEU CONFERENCE
 Training for Municipal/Parks Employees, School Maintenance, Golf Course Grounds Keepers, Landscape Pest Management Professionals, Turf Management Professionals, Lawn Care Companies, Others Interested

- Turfgrass Maintenance & Drift
- Weed Lifecycle, Identification, & Integrated Approach to Weed Management
- School IPM
- Right of Way
- Nuisance Animals
- Hands-On Demonstrations (Start-Up Equipment/Chemical Needs)
 - Commercial/Non-Commercial
 - Structural
 - Drones

REGISTRATION & SPONSORSHIPS



DAY 2: PREPARATION FOR THE TDA COMMERCIAL/NON-COMMERCIAL PESTICIDE APPLICATOR LICENSE TRAINING
 Dr. Mark Matocha-Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Commercial applicator: operates a business or is employed by a business that applies restricted-use or state-limited-use pesticides to the property of another person for hire or compensation.

Noncommercial applicator: is required to be licensed, but does not qualify as a private or commercial applicator. A noncommercial applicator does not solicit pest control but works exclusively on the property of their employer.

Noncommercial political subdivision (NCPS): an applicator employed by a political subdivision of the state of Texas or a federal agency operating in Texas.

Categories:

- Landscape Maintenance (3A)
- Vegetation Management/Right-of-Way (5)

DAY 2: PREPARATION FOR THE TDA STRUCTURAL PEST CONTROL LICENSE TRAINING
 Mr. Jacob Wightman, Texas A&M AgriLife Extension

Structural Pest Control Service licenses and regulates pest management professionals who apply pesticides in and around structures.

- A review of the Pesticide Applicator General Standards Manual & SPCS Laws & Regulations
- An approved course to fulfill the structural apprenticeship/noncommercial licensing requirement of taking a minimum 6-hour approved technician training course.

Tentative Agenda

REGISTRATION CLOSING 11-21-2025

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

If you're a new IPM Coordinator and have not yet taken the six-hour mandatory IPM Coordinator training, this class is for you. This class fulfills Texas state requirements for IPM Coordinators under Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Title 4, Part 1, Chapter 7, Subchapter H, Division 7 School IPM.

Whether this is your first time, or you just need a refresher course, the course instructors help coordinators understand their role in the school IPM program and help prepare them for TDA inspections.

Course topics include:

- Legal requirements for schools
- Introduction to IPM
- How to monitor your schools under the new requirements
- Hands-on exercise to understand the difference between Green, Yellow, and Red Category pesticides

NEXT TRAINING:

December 9th, 2025

Texas A&M AgriLife Research and Extension Center at **Beaumont**

[Register here!](#)

5 CEU credits offered

Register for the South Plains Applicator Conference (Plainview, TX) today!

[8-Hour General Standards/Technician Structural Training Course](#)

[8-Hour Landscape Maintenance AND Vegetation Management Training Course](#) (Two categories in one day of instruction!)

AES Unit Staff

[Dr. Don Renchie](#)

[Dr. Mark Matocha](#)

[Mr. Jake Wightman](#)

[Mrs. Tina VanHorn](#)

[Mrs. Shelby Smith](#)

[Miss Avery Brooks](#)

[Miss Ava Fenton](#)

Office Phone (979)845-3849

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service is an equal opportunity employer and program provider.

Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service provides equal opportunities in its programs and employment to all persons, regardless of race, color, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, veteran status, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.