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BACKYARD BEEKEEPING

BY SANNE KURE-JENSEN

Why keep honeybees? People keep bees to eat honey, improve personal health, increase garden or farm yields and improve global food security. Honey is a wonderful, natural sweetener which never goes bad. Many arthritis sufferers find relief with apitherapy. A honeybee visits 50 to 100 blossoms on a typical collection flight pollinating blooms and helping plants set fruit along the way.

Traditional healers used honey as a natural antibiotic and burn treatment. Apitherapy or getting a deliberate bee sting is a traditional treatment for Rheumatoid Arthritis, Multiple Sclerosis and shingles.

Please keep pollinators in mind when you design gardens and select plants; use high nectar value plants with a wide variety of bloom times so that pollinators don't have to starve while waiting for the next burst of bloom.

Pollinator-friendly gardens including nectar and pollen sources like Apple, Red Maple, Tulip Tree and Black Locust. You and your clients will enjoy these shrubs with fruit and/or glorious fall color; bees will love their nectar-loaded blooms: Raspberry, Blackberry, Blueberry, Sumac and Basswood. Other honeybee favorites include White Clover, Red Clover, Milkweed, Globe Thistle, Aster, Goldenrod and Dandelions.

Yes, Dandelions are among the BEST nectar sources for honeybees! Please don't pull these plants from your lawns. Please help educate clients and neighbors on the many benefits of growing dandelions in lawns and gardens.

Add some extra zip to your salad with a few young dandelion leaves. Traditional healers used

dandelions as a diuretic, so moderation is recommended. In the early 1900s, many families made dandelion wine. My favorite dandelion use is to let bees work their magic and turn them into delicious HONEY!

Beekeeping is a great choice for people who love nature and want to reduce threats to a declining population of pollinators.

Dandelions can actually improve your lawn; they have tap roots which accumulate nutrients and minerals from deep in soils. When the plants die and decay, these nutrients become available to shallow-rooted lawn plants.

Whether you're finishing your fall harvest or letting your garden stand fallow, consider using cover crops of buckwheat or alfalfa. These 'green manures' can be tilled in prior to planting, adding soil nutrition and offering pollinators delicious blooms.

Be sure to provide a shallow water source for pollinators and butterflies. You can use a birdbath or shallow dish with a few tapered rocks for the bees to land on whatever the water level.

Novice Beekeepers will benefit from introductory beekeeping courses, joining local beekeepers associations and reading trade journals or texts. Most state or regional Beekeeping Associations offer members great benefits like:

- Introductory beekeeping course
- Experienced and professional mentors



- Monthly association meetings
- Monthly or quarterly newsletters
- Invitation to annual meeting
- Access to association library
- Opportunity to sell honey through booths at fairs, trade shows and other event
- Discount rentals of honey extractors
- Bulk order discounts on honey jars
- Affiliation with national or regional organizations:
 - Eastern Apicultural Society: www.easternapiculture.org
 - American Beekeeping Federation: www.abfnet.org
 - National Honey Board: www.honey.com
- Agriculture Councils



Beekeeping is a great choice for people who love nature and want to reduce threats to a declining population of pollinators and contribute to global food security. As much as 70% of foods raised around the globe require insect or animal pollination. Wild and managed honeybees are threatened by shrinking habitats, diseases and increasing chemical use. Backyard beekeepers maintain and increase local food and vegetable harvests today and into the future.

Because bees often fly up to 3 miles on a collection flight, most honey cannot be certified organic unless the hives are in very large parks, forests or other uncultivated areas.

Offering honeybees a chemical-free home garden, agricultural field and wild or managed forest ensures thorough pollination, increased volume (often over 30% higher) and high quality produce from berries, vegetables and fruit plants. Honeybees need food throughout the year, not just during the growing season. They make honey as a way to preserve the bounty of spring and late summer blossoms for their long cold winter. Responsible beekeepers share with their bees at fall harvest time; bees need forty to sixty pounds of honey to survive the winter.

Please consider becoming a beekeeper or supporting one in your neighborhood! Enjoy the delicious honey, plant for pollinators, share information on apitherapy, help the planet increase global food security and improve your garden or farm yield. For more information, contact your local beekeeper's association. ■

Photos, from top: A bee foraging for nectar in early spring, a swarm of honey bees ready to be captured, a hive set up.



WHY ORGANIC?

BY KIMBERLY A. STONER, PH.D.

*The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station
Chair, Organic Land Care Committee*



What is Organic?

The word “organic” as we use it here, comes from organic agriculture. The ideas and methods of organic agriculture have been developed over the last 60 years through a rich exchange among farmers, researchers, and activists all over the world. The mission of the NOFA Organic Land Care Program is to extend the vision and principles of organic agriculture to the landscapes where people live their daily lives. The primary goals of the NOFA Organic Land Care Program are:

- Maintaining soil health;
- Eliminating synthetic pesticide and synthetic fertilizer use;
- Increasing landscape diversity; and
- Improving the health and well being of the people and web of life in our care.

The full definition of Organic Land Care – how we apply those goals to the real world – is fleshed out in our publication *Standards for Organic Land Care: Practices for Design and Maintenance of Ecological Landscapes*. This publication covers a very broad range of landscapes and environmental issues. Some important points that apply to organic lawns and turf include:

- No synthetic pesticides, including insecticides, fungicides, and herbicides
- No synthetic fertilizers
- No genetically engineered organisms
- Building healthy soil that can support diverse soil life as well as strong growth of healthy grass
- Reducing the potential for nitrogen or phosphorus pollution by limiting the amount of organic fertilizers applied and adjusting the timing of application
- Using good cultural practices to encourage the strong growth of healthy grass and reduce the need for irrigation and other inputs
- Increasing diversity of plant cultivars and species where appropriate – depending on how the lawn will be used and the standards of the client.

(Note: There is, of course, a completely different meaning of the word “organic,” referring to molecules with carbon atoms, as in “organic chemistry.” This is not the meaning we are using here. This other definition sometimes causes confusion with respect to fertilizers. Fertilizers that include ingredients like sewage sludge or urea, which would not be acceptable under organic standards for agriculture or land care,

sometimes are labeled “organic” under the “organic chemistry” definition.)

Concerns About Pesticide Use

The demand for organic lawns and athletic turf is driven by concerns about human health and the environment. Organic management is beneficial to health and the environment in many ways: eliminating the use of synthetic pesticides, building a diverse, robust ecological system that holds nutrients and water, reducing pollution due to leaching and run-off, and recharging groundwater and streams with clean fresh water. Because concerns about pesticides are foremost in the minds of the general public, I will focus on pesticide issues here.

A pesticide, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, is “any substance intended for preventing, destroying, repelling, or mitigating any pest.” Pests include a wide range of “living organisms that occur where they are not wanted or cause damage to crops or humans or other animals.” In addition to insects, these include weeds, fungi, bacteria or viruses that cause disease in plants, and animals such as mice or slugs that attack desired plants or occur where they aren’t wanted¹. (See the resource list at the end of this chapter for further information and references to the scientific literature.)

Pesticides may be needed in certain situations to protect against the spread of human pathogens. However, the evidence for harmful effects of pesticides on human health and the environment has increased steadily ever since the first alarms were raised by the book *Silent Spring* in 1962. As the evidence has accumulated, some pesticides that once were widely used have been restricted or banned. These pesticides were, of course, hazardous to human health and the environment all along, but the hazards were only recognized and established through scientific studies after many years of use.

There are several reasons why it takes so long to fully understand the hazards of pesticides, even those currently on the market today:

There can be a long time between pesticide exposure and appearance of chronic disease. Cancer in humans,

for example, may show up 20 – 30 years after exposure to a carcinogenic pesticide².

There may be a critical time in development when pesticide exposure will result in major effects much later in life. Studies have shown that fetuses and young children are particularly sensitive to the effects of pesticides³. These effects may show up as cancer, as deformities of the reproductive system, or as effects on the development of the nervous system, which affect learning and behavior, but are only detected years after the exposure.

New studies are also showing that exposure of a parent to pesticides is associated with birth defects, cancer, and reproductive effects in the next generation. This includes exposure of fathers, not just pregnant mothers.

Scientists continue to discover new risks associated with pesticides that were not known 20 or 30 years ago. The entire field of endocrine disruption, the study of the interference of synthetic chemicals in the normal signals carried by hormones throughout the body, has developed tremendously since the landmark book on the subject, *Our Stolen Future*, was published in 1996. One of the surprising discoveries has been that pesticides and other synthetic chemicals can have adverse effects on hormonal systems in mice at very low concentrations – much lower than had previously been considered a hazard. There has been great resistance to incorporating this information into government regulatory requirements because it would require setting limits for human exposure hundreds or thousands of times lower than they are today.

We are all exposed to a mixture of pesticides and other potentially harmful chemicals in our environment. A recent Environmental Working Group study found an average of 200 contaminants (industrial chemicals, pesticides, and other pollutants) per baby in the umbilical cord blood of newborns, and other studies have also shown a “body burden” of dozens to hundreds of these contaminants in every person in the U.S. This makes studies of environmental chemicals and

disease in the human population difficult because we are all exposed at some level – there is no control unexposed population. In addition, there is increasing evidence that combinations of chemicals can have much greater effects than each one separately, increasing the hazard, and also the difficulty of scientific study.

In order to evaluate the effects of pesticides on “non-target” organisms, the Federal government requires only tests to determine acute toxic effects on a few indicator species (such as bobwhite quail, rainbow trout, carp, and honey bees) before a pesticide can be registered. These tests cannot predict the effects of pesticides on the whole range of other animals, plants, microbes, and ecological systems.

There are few studies on the effects of long-term, low-level exposure on other organisms. In shore nesting herons, for example, the organophosphates and carbamates in the diets of the chicks do not kill them outright, but affect their behavior so that they are more susceptible to attack by scavenging beetles in the nest and by predators. Detailed studies of the effects of a mixture of pesticides, each at very low concentration, on frogs found multiple subtle effects: delayed metamorphosis, reduced size, and immunosuppression leading to bacterial infection. One study found that an insecticide and a fungicide, both known to be endocrine disruptors in mammals, also interfered at very low concentrations with the signaling between a leguminous plant and the symbiotic bacteria that fixes nitrogen in its roots.

Thus, the arguments for eliminating pesticides or increasing restrictions on pesticide use are:

There is considerable scientific evidence for associations of cancers, birth defects, hormonal disruption, and neurological effects with pesticides still used today.

There is also evidence of damage to wildlife and ecological systems.

Pesticides that are now recognized as hazardous were widely used for years, exposing millions of people and sensitive ecological systems, before the pesticide hazards were adequately recognized.

Even after hazards have been scientifically demonstrated, additional legal and political pressures were often required to restrict or eliminate even the most hazardous pesticides.

These relationships are inherently time-consuming to study. Even a strong relationship may be difficult to prove in a timely and efficient way. If, as demonstrated in animal studies, pesticide exposure of a parent can result in damage to the reproductive system for four subsequent generations, then the full effects of our current pesticide use may not be fully evident for many decades to come.

Lack of proof of harm is not necessarily evidence for safety. It can also mean that a possible harmful effect has not yet been studied, or that studies thus far have not yielded a clear result. As discussed above, some effects of pesticides take many years and a large research commitment to demonstrate conclusively.

Pesticides Used in Organic Agriculture and Land Care

In organic agriculture, and now in organic land care, the philosophy has always been to avoid the use of pesticides as much as possible through management of the entire ecological system to avoid pest problems. These non-chemical methods – such as planting insect and disease resistant varieties, avoiding monocultures, building healthy soil with diverse soil life, and altering growing conditions to reduce susceptibility to pests and disease – are listed as “Preferred” in the *Standards for Organic Land Care*, which were developed and published by the NOFA Organic Land Care Program.

However, in both organic agriculture and organic land care, some pesticides are allowed. Organic standards have always been much more restrictive than those of the U.S. government. The basic principles used in deciding which pesticides to allow are:

- Allowed pesticides should be based on natural products, not synthetic chemicals
- Natural products that are known to be highly toxic (such as nicotine) are not allowed

Some specific examples of pesticides allowed in organic agriculture and land care are:

- Microbial pesticides, such as *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt), spinosad, Milky Spore®, *Beauveria bassiana* (a fungus that attacks insects), and formulations of microbes that are antagonists or competitors against plant pathogens
- Botanical pesticides, such as pyrethrin, neem, hot pepper wax, and clove oil
- Certain mined products, such as horticultural oil, potassium bicarbonate, and diatomaceous earth
- Insecticidal soaps

These choices were made over the years in organic agriculture by farmers and activists, who did not have

the resources to do elaborate testing of the vast array of natural and synthetic pesticides in order to decide which posed the least hazard to human health, to ecologically sound farming systems, and to the environment. Although some scientists criticize organic agriculture and land care for using the distinction between natural and synthetic materials in making choices, this distinction has held up quite well over the decades.

Synthetic pesticides are more likely to persist, spread to non-target sites, and bioaccumulate than pesticides based on natural products because synthetic chemicals represent new chemical structures never before occurring in biological systems. Enzymes and organisms that completely break down synthetic pesticides to harmless components may not exist or may not act rapidly enough to prevent the pesticide from becoming a widespread pollutant. This has been seen many times in the history of synthetic pesticides

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and also many other synthetic chemicals. One example is DDT, whose toxic breakdown products have been found in the bodies of human beings all over the planet, from remote villages in Papua, New Guinea to the high Arctic. Another more recent example is imidacloprid, which was discovered in groundwater after only 9 years of use in Long Island.

The only pesticides based on natural materials with a history of long-term persistence, spread to non-target sites, or bioaccumulation are those based on mined materials, particularly lead and arsenic. These pesticides were widely used in conventional agriculture in the early 20th century, but were never allowed in organic agriculture because the toxicity of these materials was already well-recognized (although we know a great deal more now about their hazards, especially at low concentrations). All pesticide use involves some risk, including the use of pesticides allowed in organic systems. One should seriously consider all possible non-chemical alternatives before using any pesticide, and take appropriate safety precautions.

In some cases, pesticides may have benefits exceeding their risks. For example, when insects spread pathogens that cause human disease, it is appropriate to carefully evaluate the judicious use of pesticides against other alternatives in protecting public health. Pesticides may also be needed in other emergency situations, such as limiting the spread of new invasive species of insects or plant pathogens.

Lawns and athletic turf definitely provide benefits to humans, providing a pleasant and useful environment for our activities. Well-managed lawns and athletic turf also provide environmental benefits by reducing soil erosion and water runoff. However, synthetic pesticides are not essential for growing healthy lawns and turf. And much of the pesticide use on lawns and turf is for purely cosmetic purposes – to create a certain standard of appearance – which is not necessary for the human or environmental benefits. Thus, it can be argued that the risks of using synthetic pesticides to grow lawns and turf – particularly the risks to the health of the people applying the pesticides, to those living near and playing on the turf, and to the surrounding environment – are much greater than the benefits to

human health and the environment. The decision, in the end, is up to you, your lawn and turf professionals, and your community. ■

RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

Books:

Carson, Rachel. 1962. *Silent Spring*. Houghton Mifflin Books.

Colborn, T., D. Dumanoski, J.P. Meyer. 1996. *Our Stolen Future: How We Are Threatening Our Fertility, Intelligence, and Survival*. Penguin Books.

Krinsky, S. 2000. *Hormonal Chaos: The Scientific and Social Origins of the Environmental Endocrine Hypothesis*. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Schettler, T., G. Solomon, M. Valenti, and A. Huddle. 1999. *Generations At Risk: Reproductive Health and the Environment*. MIT Press.

Wargo, J. 1996. *Our Children's Toxic Legacy: How Science and Law Fail to Protect Us From Pesticides*. Yale University Press.

Internet:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency – About Pesticides:

<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/about/#not>

Fact sheets on particular pesticides:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency:
http://www.epa.gov/opp00001/factsheets/chemical_fs.htm

National Pesticide Information Center (Oregon State University) <http://npic.orst.edu/nptnfact.htm>

Scientific Reviews of Pesticide Hazards (Sometimes pesticides are included in broader reviews of chemical hazards.)

Overviews of the hazards of pesticides in the landscape to the public:

Ontario College of Family Physicians. 2004. Pesticide Literature Review: Systematic Review of Pesticide Human Health Effects.

<http://www.ocfp.on.ca/local/files/Communications/Current%20Issues/Pesticides/Final%20Paper%2023APR2004.pdf>

Overview of pesticide effects on humans and other vertebrates:

Parsons, K.C. et al. 2005. Sublethal Effects of Exposure to Cholinesterase-inhibiting Pesticides: Humans and Vertebrate Wildlife. Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences.

<http://www.manomet.org/pdf/SublethaleffectsofexposuretoChE-inhibitorsreport>.

Database of chemicals (including pesticides) and risk of breast cancer:

Cornell University. 2006. EnviroChem and Cancer Database.

<http://envirocancer.cornell.edu/eccd/print.cfm>

Specific references to the scientific literature:

U.S Environmental Protection Agency – About Pesticides:

<http://www.epa.gov/pesticides/about/#not>

Clapp, R. G. Howe, M.J. Lefevre. 2005. Environmental and Occupational Causes of Cancer: A Review of the Recent Scientific Literature. University of Massachusetts Lowell.

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M.H. Ward. 1998. Pesticides and Childhood Cancer. Environmental Health Perspectives 106 (Suppl 3):893-908 (1998).

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Garry, V. et al. 2002. Birth Defects, Season of Conception, and Sex of Children Born to Pesticide Applicators Living in the Red River Valley of Minnesota, USA. Environmental Health Perspectives 110 (suppl 3):441-449 (2002).

<http://www.ehponline.org/members/2002/suppl-3/441-449garry/garry-full.html>

Birnbaum, L.S. and S. E. Fenton. 2003. Cancer and developmental exposure to endocrine disruptors. Environmental Health Perspectives 111:389–394 (2003).

<http://www.ehponline.org/members/2003/5686/5686.pdf>.

Welshons, W.V. et al. 2003. Large Effects from Small Exposures. I. Mechanisms for Endocrine-Disrupting Chemicals With Estrogenic Activity. Environmental Health Perspectives 111: 944-1006 (2003).

<http://www.ehponline.org/members/2003/5494/5494.pdf>

Environmental Working Group. Body Burden Profile: Overview of all test results.

<http://www.ewg.org/bodyburden/results.php>

Centers for Disease Control 2005. Third National Report on Human Exposure to Environmental Chemicals.

<http://www.cdc.gov/exposurereport/report.htm>

Cavieres, M.F., J. Jaeger, and W. Porter. 2002. Developmental Toxicity of a Commercial Herbicide Mixture in Mice: I. Effects on Embryo Implantation and Litter Size. *Environmental Health Perspectives* 110:1081–1085 (2002).

<http://www.ehponline.org/members/2002/110p1081-1085cavieres/cavieres-full.html>. Hayes,

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Parsons, K.C. et al. 2005. Sublethal Effects of Exposure to Cholinesterase-inhibiting Pesticides: Humans and Vertebrate Wildlife. Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences.

<http://www.manomet.org/pdf/SublethaleffectsofexpouretoChE-inhibitorsreport>

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<http://www.hort.purdue.edu/newcrop/proceedings1990/v1-511.html>

Ritter et al.1995. Persistent Organic Pollutants: An Assessment Report on DDT, Aldrin, Dieldrin, Endrin, Chlordane, Heptachlor, Hexachlorobenzene, Polychlorinated Biphenyls, Dioxins and Furans. International Programme on Chemical Safety.

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<http://ehp.niehs.nih.gov/docs/2005/8552/abstract.html>.

Andrew, A.S. et. al. 2006. Arsenic Exposure is Associated with Decreased DNA Repair In Vitro and in Individuals Exposed to Drinking Water Arsenic. *Environmental Health Perspectives* (in press).

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AN UNEXPECTED GIFT FROM THE GARDEN:

POISON IVY

BY NANCY DUBRULE-CLEMENTE

It was a glorious early spring weekend in Vermont, and I escaped from my busy garden center for a few days of camping. I set up my tent in a field of tall grass, right next to a lovely pond. I read, I slept, I built a campfire, and wandered around barefoot. All was right with the world. On the four-hour drive home, I started to feel a bit itchy. Not just on my arms, but in cracks and crevices all over my body. By the next day, rashes had broken out everywhere. I came to the full realization that Mother Nature had given me an unexpected gift as a result of my camping adventure: a nasty case of poison ivy. As I suffered and scratched my way through countless spring festivals and garden talks, I came to realize the enormity of misinformation about this plant circulating amongst my customers, coworkers, friends, and family. Let's start out this growing season by setting the record straight.

First of all, poison ivy (*Toxicodendron radicans*) is a native plant that is food to birds and many animals. (I say this in case you were wondering WHY it exists and what good it serves.) It can take many forms; most people think of it as a vine rambling up trees. I got it this time from a ground cover vine weaving its way through grass and weeds. It didn't have any leaves at all; it was simply bare stems, practically undetectable unless you were really looking. I know of an old fencepost that is covered with vines; they culminate at the top in a mass of branches and the effect is that of a poison ivy tree. The sides of the highway are covered in poison ivy vines intermingled with native orange butterfly weed (*Asclepias*

tuberosa). I have given the "poison ivy tour" to show innocent gardeners suffering from the rash what forms it can take, and they have always expressed amazement at the chameleon quality of this plant.

If you walk through a patch of poison ivy, put your work boots away for the winter, and then put them back on in the spring, the oil that is most likely still clinging to your boots can still infect you!

Second, you get the rash from poison ivy by coming in contact with urushiol. According to the definitive reference on this plant, *Nature's Revenge* by Susan Hauser, "urushiol flows within the canals in the leaves, stems, roots, and skin of the berries." This oil has a depressingly long life. If you walk through a patch of poison ivy, put your work boots away for the winter, and then put them back on in the spring, the oil that is most likely still clinging to your boots can still infect you! It can last for many years, leaving its residue on tool handles, gardening jackets, and all sorts of other traps-in-waiting. If you plant naturalizing daffodil bulbs amongst the BARE STEMS of poison ivy; the urushiol on those stems will give you the rash, even in December! If you don't realize you've been exposed, this oil can cling to your trowel and shovel handle, pruning shears and their holster,



REMEMBER THE ADAGE: "LEAVES OF THREE, LET IT BE..."

Learn to recognize both the leaves and the hairy stems of poison ivy so you can avoid it in all seasons.

and the bucket that you carried the organic soil amendments in.

Third, you cannot get poison ivy either by walking by it or by scratching the blisters. Once you have it, it is NOT systemic within your body. If it continues to show up over a few days or a week on parts of your body which were not exposed to the plant or any of its parts, it is because you are either getting reinfected from the oil which could be present somewhere in your world OR the oil was diluted by your sweat and made its way to hidden cracks and crevices in your body.

To disinfect myself once I realize I have been exposed, I always carry the following arsenal in my car: isopropyl alcohol, Fels Naptha® brown soap, disposable surgical gloves, and Tecnu brand poison ivy wash. Realizing how easy it is to spread the urushiol, I first wash my skin with Tecnu, carefully following the directions and applying it to dry skin and rubbing it in for two minutes before washing off with water. I then clean my skin with rubbing alcohol. Finally, I wash all exposed body parts with the brown soap for good measure.

As an organic land care practitioner, I would never use Roundup® or any other toxic chemicals not allowed by the NOFA standards. To control poison ivy, I use a few methods. For small amounts, I boil up a kettle of water and pour it on the roots. NEVER burn poison ivy or use a flame weeder on poison ivy, as you can get the rash in your lungs, a common problem for firefighters. Organic herbicides such as acid-based Burnout or Weed Pharm work on the leaves of young plants, but they are not systemic and will not kill the roots. If I cut a large vine from a tree, I will fold a thick garbage bag in quarters, pin it down over the stub that I cut, and bury it with mulch. Any cutting tools will then have urushiol on them. For larger areas, I open up large cardboard boxes, plop them down on the plants, and bury the cardboard with 2-4" of organic mulch- leaves, shredded bark— anything will do. If any poison ivy finds its way into the light, I smother it again. When poison ivy is growing within landscape beds, I am forced to pull it out. First, I suit up with tall rubber boots, a long sleeve work shirt, surgical gloves on my hands, and Blulette thick rubber gloves over them. I have a heavy duty garbage bag or two at the ready. I work carefully and deliberately, pulling the vines and placing them in the garbage bags. If I have to cut any vines, I know that my pruning shears, the holster that holds it, and the belt that holds the holster will be contaminated with urushiol. If I dig it out, the handle of the shovel gets contaminated. I work slowly and deliberately, with absolute awareness of how easy it is for this oil to spread and great respect for its power to hurt me. If my face itches (which it ALWAYS does at this point), I don't scratch it! When done, I tie up the garbage bag and discard it. If I am on the crew, I label this bag so everyone knows it is "P.I." as we call it. I then wash my rubber gloves while they are still on my hands with Tecnu as described above, following up with rubbing alcohol. I remove them and keeping the surgical gloves on, I wipe down my rubber boots, my holster, my belt, my pruning shears, and my shovel handle with rubbing alcohol, using rags that I will later discard or paper towels. I then remove my boots. I wash my arms and hands thoroughly with Tecnu, followed by rubbing alcohol. We follow this regimen to "disinfect" ourselves. Urushiol is tricky stuff. If you take off your hat, open the truck door, touch anything, clean it well!



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What I didn't realize, and learned by checking out a comprehensive poison ivy website (www.poisonivy.aesir.com), is that once I have washed the oil off with the products that truly do dilute the oil, the protective coating on my skin has been temporarily destroyed, and that I should not return to the infested area as I am much more susceptible to the oil penetrating my skin again. This and hundreds of other fascinating facts can be found both on the website and in the book (*Nature's Revenge* by Susan Hauser). However, I must warn you to NEVER read about this plant when you have the rash; I did that and it was NOT a pleasant experience!

Nancy DuBrule-Clemente is the owner of Natureworks, an organic garden center and landscaping service in Northford, CT. For more information, visit www.naturework.com.

PESTICIDE INFORMATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

Pesticide Action Network (PAN) Pesticide Database: For toxicity and regulatory information for pesticides, see www.pesticideinfo.org

CONNECTICUT

CT Department of Environmental Protection: dep.state.ct.us or 860-424-3000

Pesticide Regulation: Pesticides are regulated by the Bureau of Waste Management of the CT Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). For more information, call 860-424-3369.

CT DEP Pesticide Notification List: If you want to be notified when your abutting neighbors are going to have their property commercially treated with pesticides, visit dep.state.ct.us/wst/pesticides/registry_prenotification.htm or contact the bureau at: Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Waste Management, Pesticide Management Program, 79 Elm Street, Hartford, CT 06106.

Restricted Pesticide Use Around Schools: A law bans use of lawn care pesticides on the grounds of children's day care centers and elementary schools, with an exception for athletic fields, which must use IPM (Integrated Pest Management—a program in which pesticides are applied only when necessary) for three years and transition to no pesticide use by 2010.

Poison Control Center: 800-222-1222

CT DEP Emergency Spill Reporting: 866-337-7745 or 860-424-3338

Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station: www.caes.state.ct.us For insect inquiries, call 203-974-8600. For disease or weed inquiries, call 203-974-8496

NOFA CT: www.ctnofa.org

MASSACHUSETTS

Pesticide Regulation: Pesticides are regulated by the Pesticide Bureau in the Division of Regulatory and Consumer Services of the Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR). Visit www.mass.gov/agr/pesticides or contact them at Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, 251 Causeway Street, Suite 500, Boston, MA 02114. Report any pesticide violations to the DAR at 617-626-1782.

Restricted Pesticide Use Around Schools: In addition to Federal regulations, Massachusetts has its own law restricting pesticide use in schools. Highlights include: parents must be notified, carcinogenic chemicals are prohibited, and pesticides for cosmetic reasons only are not allowed. For more information, visit www.massnrc.org/ipm

Poison Control Center: 800-222-1222

DAR 24-hour Emergency Spill Reporting: 1-888-304-1133

Massachusetts Agricultural Experiment Station: www.umass.edu/nre/experimentstation/expst-overview.html or 413-545-5913

MA Department of Environmental Protection: www.state.ma.us/dep or 617-292-5500

NOFA MA: www.nofamass.org

NEW JERSEY

NJ Department of Environmental Protection: www.state.nj.us/dep/

NJ DEP Pesticide Regulations: www.state.nj.us/dep/enforcement/pcp/pcp-regs.htm

NJ School Integrated Pest Management Program Laws and Regulations: www.nj.gov/dep/enforcement/pcp/ipm-laws.htm

To File a Complaint: 609-984-6568

To Report a Pesticide Spill or Accidental Misapplication call DEP'S 24-Hour Hotline: 1-877-WARNDEP (1-877-927-6337)

The Pesticide Control Program encourages citizen and industry awareness and cooperation with regard to pesticide incidents observed. Calling the Bureau of Pesticide Compliance with possible violations you have observed will help us determine if a violation has happened, help us take corrective or preventive measures, and ultimately help us in our efforts to protect health and the environment. In addition, any person required to be licensed as a pesticide applicator must immediately report spills that meet the “reportable pesticide spill” definition in NJAC 7:30, Subchapter 9.

For further guidance, visit: www.state.nj.us/dep/enforcement/pcp/bpc-complaint.htm

Poison Control Center: 800-222-1222

NOFA NJ: www.nofanj.org

NEW YORK

New York State Department of Environmental Conservation: www.dec.ny.gov

The Neighbor Notification Law, Rule and Regulation: www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/8529.html

This law requires 48 hour notice to neighbors for certain commercial lawn applications, posting of visual notification markers for most residential lawn applications, providing notice to occupants of multiple dwellings and other occupied structures, and posting of an information sign by retailers who sell general use lawn pesticides. This regulation is effective in a County, or in New York City, that has adopted a local law to “opt into” the Neighbor Notification Law in its entirety. Contact the involved local government, to confirm whether a neighbor notification law is in place.

Pest Management for Schools, Daycare Centers and Parents: www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/42920.html

NYS DEC Division of Law Enforcement: 1-877-457-5680; email: r5dsptch@gw.dec.state.ny.us

Information to Include When Reporting a Violation: www.dec.ny.gov/regulations/2460.html

NOFA NY: www.nofany.org

Poison Control Center: 800-222-1222

RHODE ISLAND

RI Department of Environmental Management: www.dem.ri.gov

General Information 222-6800

After Hours Emergencies 222-3070

RI DEM Office of Emergency Response: If you know of an environmental incident in RI, such as a release of a hazardous substance — of any amount, whether on land, in water, or in the air — or if you suspect a release is imminent, during normal business hours (Mon-Fri, 8-4), call 401-222-1360, The Office of Compliance and Inspection; or anytime, any emergency, call 401-222-3070, “The Environmental Police” (the Division of Law Enforcement) at the DEM Hot-line.

RI DEM Pesticide Regulations: www.dem.ri.gov/pubs/regs/regs/agric/pestrg06.pdf

Pesticide applications and notification of pesticide applications in schools, pre-schools and child care centers in Rhode Island: Statute 23-25-37. Visit www.rilin.state.ri.us/statutes/title23/23-25/23-25-37.htm

Poison Control Center: 800-222-1222

NOFA RI: www.nofari.org

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VISIT US ONLINE:

WWW.ORGANICLANDCARE.NET

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Organic Land Care website. At the top, the logo "Organic Land Care" is displayed in a large, bold, serif font, with the tagline "NOFA Naturally Beautiful Landscaping" underneath. To the right of the logo, there are links for "SIGN IN" and "CONTACT OLC". Below the logo is a search bar with a "Search" button. A horizontal navigation menu contains the following items: HOME, ABOUT, CALENDAR, EDUCATION, ACCREDITATION, GREEN ROOM, STORE, and SUPPORTERS. The main content area features a large photograph of pink flowers with yellow and black swallowtail butterflies. A caption below the photo reads "Swallowtail butterflies and native Joe-pye-weed photo by E. Darke". To the left of the main content is a sidebar with several sections: "FOR PROFESSIONALS" (with links for About Accreditation, Credit Opportunities, Reaccredit, Product Lists, The Standards (pdf), Soil Testing Labs, and AOLCP Search), "ANNOUNCEMENTS" (with links for Organic Flower Bulb and Fundraiser for NOFA OLC), and a small image of purple flowers. The main content area has a heading "NOFA Organic Land Care" followed by "Beautiful Lawns, Gardens and Landscapes". Below this is the NOFA logo and a paragraph of text: "Our mission is to extend the vision, principles and expertise of organic agriculture to the landscapes where people live their daily lives. Our Standards for Organic Land Care has been recognized and used across the U.S. as a model for sustainable landscaping practices. In this site you can learn about our Standards, our Accreditation program for professional organic landscapers, and resources for homeowners, property managers and organizations seeking to adopt sustainable organic landscaping practices." Below this paragraph is a line of text: "A regional program of CT NOFA, authorized by the Northeast Organic Farming Association (NOFA) Interstate Council, in partnerships with NOFA state chapters (MA, RI, NJ, NY, NH, VT)." To the right of the main content is a "HOMEOWNER CORNER" section with links for Organic Lawns & Landscapes, Homeowner Workshops, Soil Testing, Product Lists, Ask a Question, and Why Organic?. Below this is a "LANDSCAPER SEARCH" section with the text "Find an organic lawn, garden or landscaping professional near you:" and a "Search" button.

LOOKING FOR
AN ORGANIC
LANDSCAPER?

INTERESTED IN
LEARNING MORE
ABOUT ORGANIC
METHODS?

Access the **Organic Landscaper Search** at our website, www.organiclandcare.net. Scroll down to the second box on the right, under "Homeowner Corner" and click on the "Search" button.

Provide your zip code and enter the services you seek in order to find an accredited professional in your area. You can also browse the Glossary of Services for search criteria ideas. Search results include a full description of the AOLCPs who provide services in your zip code area.

While on the www.organiclandcare.net website, look in the "**Homeowner Corner**" for seasonal articles written by experienced organic land care professionals and for do-it-yourself homeowner's tips.