

Insec(tc)ure*: Are you insecure about your insect cures?

A University of Tennessee Urban IPM Lab Newsletter for the Pest Management Industry

Don't Forget YOUR Tick Prevention PPE

Karen Vail, UT Entomology & Plant Pathology

As the calls for tick remediation escalate through the warmer months, don't forget to protect yourself when implementing your tick management programs. It took us several years of conducting ant research in a semi-forested area before we realized the importance of repellents and specifically, permethrin-impregnated clothing and socks, in keeping ticks off your body. Recent research ([Ostfeld and Keesing 2026](#)) indicates that, at this time, we can't correlate a reduction in blacklegged tick numbers with a reduction in human disease incidence. Reducing tick numbers doesn't reduce disease incidence if people go to other tick-infested areas without wearing repellent. Here are a few resources to help you understand ways to prevent tick bites and reduce tick incidence on your clients' properties:

Managing ticks on school grounds, <https://solutions.tennessee.edu/publication/PB1895/> 9 pp.

Hard ticks as a public health threat, https://ag.purdue.edu/departement/extension/ppp/_docs/ppp-159-hard-ticks-as-a-public-health-threat-ada-compliant-april-2026-optimized.pdf 60 pp.

Asian Needle Ants Detected During Stinging Ants Training

Yesterday, the UT Urban IPM Lab, in cooperation with the Hamilton County Extension Office, provided presentations on the biology, behavior and management of fire ants and Asian needle ants (ANA). Attendees from the City of Chattanooga's Department of Parks and Outdoors tried their hand at calibrating a chest spreader, laying out a 0.25-acre field with flags, and mock-treating it. At the conclusion of the training, some of the inspired attendees checked out a natural area where logs were used to define the perimeter since ANA are often found under logs and feed on termites. They shared photos of the ants (they had better ones than the ones shown here), and we confirmed the ID with a quick visit. This article serves as a reminder that ANAs are more common than we expect and that you should be scouting for and managing them on your clients' properties. See our publication **The Asian Needle Ant: A Medically and Ecologically Important Emerging Pest**, <https://solutions.tennessee.edu/publication/W1379/> for details on the threat from this ant and ways to manage them.



Figure 1. An Asian needle ant worker. Note the long narrow gaster (abdomen) that does not bulge as it does in other ants.



Figure 2. Asian needle ants on decaying logs used to define the perimeter of a natural area.

Seeking Pest Management Companies in East Tennessee to Partner in Mosquito Management

Rebecca Trout Fryxell, UT Entomology and Plant Pathology

We are seeking pest management companies in East Tennessee interested in partnering to reduce mosquitoes that transmit La Crosse virus at residential case sites. This initiative focuses on integrated mosquito management strategies, community education, and targeted interventions to protect public health. Companies with experience in mosquito control, source reduction, and homeowner engagement are especially encouraged to respond. Participation may include collaboration on pilot projects, implementation of best practices, and coordination with public health and research teams. If your company is interested in contributing to this important effort, please self-identify by filling out this form [La Crosse Virus Residential Management Interest Survey - Fill out form](#). We hope to build partnerships and explore opportunities to rapidly prevent, detect, and respond to cases.

Upcoming Category 7 PMP Educational Opportunities

Wood-destroying Organisms (WDO) and General Pest and Rodent Control (GRC) Licensing Training, July 14 and October 27, 2026

<https://psep.tennessee.edu/licensed-pest-control-operator/>

Central Region Extension Office, 5201 Marchant Dr., Nashville, TN 37211

Register:

Link to register for licensing training **TPCA's PestEd: Virtual CEUs**

<https://tpca.info/Calendar>

June 24: Mosquito and Tick Surveillance in Areas with Limited Infrastructure

Pest Control Advisory Board to the Tennessee Department of Agriculture

<https://www.tn.gov/agriculture/news.html>

July 15, October 28, 9:30 am

Typical location: Ellington Agricultural Center, Porter Building, 436 Hogan Road, Nashville, TN

2026 TPCA Summer Conference

<https://tpca.info/event-6464633>

July 22 - 24

Crowne Plaza, Knoxville

12th Annual Bed Bug, Cockroach and Rodent Management Meeting

<https://tiny.utk.edu/2026BBEvent>

August 5

UT Conference Center, Knoxville

ACE (Associate Certified Entomologist) Prep Course Fall

<https://tiny.utk.edu/ACEPrepFall2026>

August 17 - December 7

Virtual, Monday evenings 5 - 6:30 pm ET

GET Educated.

12TH ANNUAL TENNESSEE

BED BUG, COCKROACH & RODENT MANAGEMENT MEETING WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 5, 2026

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE CONFERENCE CENTER | 600 HENLEY STREET | KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE 37902

Check-in starts at 7:00 AM | Meeting 8:00 - 4:00 EDT

Free parking in the [Locust Street Garage](#) with the UT

SCHEDULE

- > 8:00 – 9:00 **Housing Pest Management and Other Updates from the University of Tennessee** Dr. Karen Vail, University of Tennessee
- > 9:00 - 10:00 **The Rodent Playbook: IPM Strategies That Hold Up** Timmy Madera, The New Orleans Mosquito, Termite and Rodent Control Board
- 10:00 – 10:30 Break with Vendors
- > 10:30 – 11:30 **Creating Comprehensive Mosquito Control Programs** Cory Goeltzenleuchter, Northwest Exterminating
- 11:30 – 12:30 Lunch provided
- > 12:30 – 1:30 **Public Housing Termite Control Challenges** Wally Holden, Rentokil-Terminix
- > 1:30 - 2:30 **Cockroach Control: New Research and Trends for the Eastern US** Ben Grady, University of Kentucky
- 2:30 – 3:00 Break with Vendors
- > 3:00 – 4:00 **Stump the Speaker Panel**

Audience members ask the speakers to solve difficult cases

PMP CEUs Applied For

Who Should Attend?

- > Pest Management Professionals
- > Housing and other professionals
- > Anyone interested in solving housing pest problems!

Registration Fees

PMPs \$125

Others \$50

Online Registration Only

Registration closes July 29, 2026

Register at

<https://tiny.utk.edu/2026BBreg>

ACE (Associate Certified Entomologist) Prep Course Fall 2026

Are you certified in pesticide applicator category 7 with a minimum of 5 years of verifiable pest management experience in the United States? Then you may be ready to become an ACE, an associate certified entomologist. Before you can become an ACE, you will need to provide two letters of professional reference, be willing to adhere to the [ACE Code of Ethics](#), [complete the application and pay the application fee to the Entomological Society of America](#) and pass an online test of your knowledge of structural pest control. The program and its benefits are explained in its entirety at <https://entocert.org/ace>. The application process is separate from the training offered below.

To help you prepare for the exam, Dr. Karen Vail, Professor and Extension Urban Entomologist of the UT Department of Entomology & Plant Pathology will provide an ACE Prep Course this fall. All training sessions will be held virtually via Zoom from 5 pm to at least 6:30 pm on select Mondays. By offering online training, we no longer limit participants to being within a few hours' drive of campus! Sign up at <https://tiny.utk.edu/ACEPrepFall2026>.

2026 Training Date	Subject
August 17	Why Study Pests in the Built Environment
August 24	Integrated Pest Management and Tools
August 31	Insecticides and Modes of Action
September 7	Labor Day – No Class
September 14	Pesticide Safety, Laws & Labels
September 21	Insect Biology and Morphology
September 28	Ants
October 5	Fall Break – No class
October 12	Cockroaches
October 19	Flies
October 26	Stinging and Biting Arthropods
November 2	Stored Products Pests
November 9	Occasional Invaders
November 16	Wood-destroying Organisms
November 23	Common Commensal Pests/DI
November 30	Extended review
December 7* 5 pm – 8 pm	Exam

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Precautionary Statement

To protect people and the environment, pesticides should be used safely. This is everyone's responsibility, especially the user. Read and follow label directions carefully before you buy, mix, apply, store or dispose of a pesticide. According to laws regulating pesticides, they must be used only as directed by the label and registered for use in your state.

Disclaimer

This publication contains pesticide recommendations that are subject to change at any time. The recommendations in this publication are provided only as a guide. It is always the pesticide applicator's responsibility, by law, to read and follow all current label directions for the specific pesticide being used. The label always takes precedence over the recommendations found in this publication.

Use of trade or brand names in this publication is for clarity and information; it does not imply approval of the product to the exclusion of others that may be of similar, suitable composition, nor does it guarantee or warrant the standard of the product. The author(s), the University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture and University of Tennessee Extension assume no liability resulting from the use of these recommendations.

Programs in agriculture and natural resources, 4-H youth development, family and consumer sciences, and resource development. University of Tennessee Institute of Agriculture, US Department of Agriculture and county governments cooperating. UT Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.