

Garden Column for the Salisbury Post

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Below are more situations and problems homeowners with inquires to Cooperative Extension this week. You may have similar problems around your home.

Question: I have a strange weed that looks like snow in my yard. What is this weed and how do I control it? Answer: The weed many have called about is facelis (Facelis retusa). It is commonly called tramp weed. The unusual weather patterns experienced over the past few weeks; it is perfect growing conditions for the weed. Weed specialists at N.C. State University reveal that this is a winter annual that has produced seed for next year and will die out in several weeks. The weed is non existent in situations where the lawn is thriving and well irrigated. Mowing extremely close, less than three inches, also promotes weed growth. Glyphosate (Roundup) is the only logical method of weed control at this time now, but since the weed is a winter annual, pre-emergence weed control in the fall is the other option. However, it seems like the best method of control is good cultural practices.

Question: I have a fig bush that is black from the freeze last week. Should I prune it back now? Answer: Wait a few more weeks to determine exactly what is dead and then prune the bush back to living tissue.

Question: I have a cardinal peeking at my window. What do I do to discourage this crazy bird. Answer: Breeding season is here and the male thinks he's battling another suitor. Try putting up something to reduce the reflection or may a plastic owl to scare the bird away.

Question: Will lime kill ticks? Answer: No, lime is often used but insecticides for outdoors is best for controlling the pest. Read the label and follow to the letter.

Question: My "Nellie R. Stevens" holly is dropping leaves and turning yellow. Is there any thing I can do to prevent this or will it hurt the shrub? Answer: Many types of holly and magnolia drop their leaves in early spring and set a new crop of leaves. It's a normal process that takes about 2 weeks. The shrubs will resume normal growth in a few days.

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