

# Control Makes Fire Ants Bearable

BY WILLIAM BARROW JR.  
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Fire ants are a nuisance. They rank right up there with mosquitoes and yellow flies.

Brunswick County residents have been enduring fire ants since the early 1970s. At first, thoughts were that its spread northward could be stopped; the idea of eradication even crossed a few minds. However, after years of watching, waiting and experimenting, it seems the red imported fire ant is here to stay.



BARROW

Current infestation in North Carolina is limited to the 17 southeastern counties between Morehead City and Charlotte. Spot infestations have been noted as far north as Raleigh. The potential for infestation continues in those counties east of an imaginary line drawn from Norfolk, Va., through Raleigh and down to Atlanta.

Since these unwelcome guests insist on hanging around, I assume it's our responsibility to make the stay as enjoyable as possible—for us, not them. From my point of

## GARDENING TIPS

view, that means keeping populations under control in frequently used areas of our yards, gardens and playgrounds.

The first step is proper identification: How do you know it's a fire ant? Red imported fire ants are reddish to dark brown and range in size from 1/8 to 1/3 inch in length. This insect lives in colonies or mounds. Four types of ants live in each colony: minor workers, major workers, males and females.

Since many common ants are the same color and size, the easiest way to identify fire ants is by their mounds. Fire ant mounds are typically four to eight inches in diameter and three to five inches tall. However, they may reach a height of 18 to 24 inches and may be 24 inches in diameter at the base. A gentle tap or brush of the mound will send dozens of ants to the top to check out the disturbance. Other ant colonies do not respond in this manner.

Two distinct methods are used for control. In highly traveled areas, use contact chemicals such as Diazinon, Orthene or Dursban. Mix one ounce of these liquid chemicals with a gallon of water and pour the entire mixture on one

mound. This drenching sends the active ingredient throughout the mound.

If granular forms of Diazinon are used, be sure to water in the material as described in the directions on the bag.

Orthene 75 SP is a soluble powder that can be sprinkled on the mound and left for the ants to take down throughout the mound. For best results, lightly tap or brush the mound to make the ants active.

Contact chemicals give results in 24 to 48 hours.

In less traveled areas consider using baits such as Amdro or Affirm. These materials should be spread uniformly over the infested area. The worker ants pick up the baits while foraging and take them back into the mounds.

While baits are effective they take longer to work; four to six weeks is not uncommon. Baits do not have to be watered in. They lose their potency after 72 hours if exposed to the sun.

Fire ants are spread throughout Brunswick County. And, as the temperature begins to cool and late season rains continue, their activity will likely increase.

If you need more information on how to treat these uninvited "guests," contact the Agricultural Extension Office at 253-4425.



STAFF PHOTO BY SUSAN USHER

## Lawn Offers Late Summer Color

Beds of roses, periwinkles and impatiens and a trim lawn of Bermuda grass edged in variegated liriope or "monkey grass" offer plenty of late summer color at the home of Rudy and Ellen Johnson, Great Oak Circle, Sea Trail. Their lawn was chosen as yard of the month for September by the Sunset Sands Garden Club. Presenting the Johnsons with a ficus are club member Ginny Winters (left) and Yard of the Month Chairman Mildred Bernard (right).

## Fund To Honor Young

Elizabeth Young of Southport is among six area residents and one organization soon to be honored by the Tri County Campaign Committee of the United Negro College Fund.

The awards will be presented Saturday, Sept. 23, at 7:30 p.m. in the civic room of the Whiteville City Schools Administration Building.

President Robert L. Albright of Johnson C. Smith University in Charlotte will be the guest speaker.

Mrs. Young, a supervisor with the Brunswick County Board of Education, is one of two people slated to receive the "Outstanding Educator Award." The other is Deliah Blanks.

Also to be honored are Jim High and Larry Williams, Outstanding Businessman Award; Arthalia S. Bennett, Distinguished Service Citation; Vangus Nichols, Service To Mankind Award; and the Whiteville Alumnae Chapter, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Civic Award. Tickets are \$15 for individuals and \$25 for couples. They are available from committee members and area locations. For more information contact The United Negro College Fund, P.O. Box 1729, Whiteville, N.C. 28472 or area co-chairpersons Virginia J. George and Joyce West. The area committee serves Brunswick, Columbus and Bladen counties.

## Southport Group Will Host Area Society

The Southport Historical Society will host the September 23 meeting of the Old New Hanover Genealogical Society in Southport's Franklin Square Park.

Members and guests of both groups will share a covered dish picnic lunch at noon, followed by a short meeting meeting and at 2 p.m., a program by Bill Reaves.

Reaves is the author of *Southport (Smithville) A Chronology, Vol. 1 (1520-1887)*. His program will focus on the early settlers of Southport and Brunswick County. The Old New Hanover Genealogical

Society was formed last March and has as its special attention the Old New Hanover Precinct, from which Brunswick, New Hanover, Bladen, Pender, Duplin, Sampson and Onslow counties were formed.

From 10 a.m. until noon, and

again for an hour after the meeting in the park, Southport Historical Society will hold an open house at its headquarters in the Old Brunswick County Jail on Nash Street. Visitors are welcome to tour the Old Jail and to view the slide show tour of Historic Southport.

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