

# Got Grubs? MSU Researcher Shares Advice for What To Do About Them

By Wesley Maurer, Jr.

While researching the widespread grub infestation in St. Ignace last week, we came across an article

written by Terry Davis of the Department of Entomology at Michigan State University. His advice is just what we needed, and

he has given permission to reprint it here. In it he talks about what you can do and should not do to control these pests.

He wrote this article in mid-April, and his dates refer specifically to the mid-state region, but he said we likely are suffering from the same invasive grub, the larva of the European chafer, which, in the adult stage, is similar to what we know as the June bug.

Keep in mind that spring in St. Ignace is two to three weeks behind Lansing, so add several weeks to the dates he cites in the article.

The European chafer, Mr. Davis told us, arrived here from Europe and has been spreading northward. The grubs feed in the spring on grass roots, killing large sections of lawn and, in some cases, entire lawns. If your lawn has large areas of yellow or brown grass, or dead grass, peel back the sod and you probably will expose the grubs.

He makes several points to supplement the article:

- Grubs will soon stop eating and go into their pupa stage, so trying to kill them now may be a waste of

time and money. Applications now will be useless when the beetles lay new eggs in July, so wait until July and treat for the new eggs.

- The chemicals you use in the spring may not be the chemicals you want to use in July, and some grub chemicals sold in stores won't kill grubs at all. He lists the effective products in the article.

- Grubs from your neighbor's lawn didn't infect your lawn. Grubs don't travel across lawns, he noted; they move down in the soil during winters, but probably not even below the frost line when this far north. In the spring, they move up to feast on grass roots. A rumor that one chemical on the market will stop grubs from crossing into your yard from your neighbor's yard is not true. When the grubs turn to beetles, they will come out of the ground and fly over any chemical barrier in the ground, and the eggs won't be affected by the chemicals used to kill the grubs.

- When European chafer adults are active from mid-June to mid-July, they do not become active until the sun is setting. They also do not

cause noticeable feeding damage as adults. As a result, unless you are looking carefully for them just after sunset in late June, you will be unaware that there are a lot of them in the area until you notice the damage from the larval feeding in the fall or (especially) spring. "It will almost seem like the grub problem magically appeared from thin air," Mr. Davis said.

- One good defense is a wet July. The European chafer doesn't like wet conditions, so when the beetles lay their eggs in July, a lot of rain or a well-watered lawn could send them elsewhere. If we don't get rain in July, he said, water heavily once a week.

- The other good defense is a healthy lawn. As he points out in the article, a healthy lawn can support a high concentration of grubs without any noticeable damage. Don't cut your lawn too short. A good rule of thumb is, what you have above ground is what you have below ground. He recommends mowing grass to 3 to 3.5 inches in height. That gives the grubs plenty of roots to eat without destroying the plant.

- To repair damaged lawns, he recommends overseeding the affected areas. Don't skimp on price. Use the best quality of seed available, he suggests, to get the highest germination and the fewest weeds.

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- Mr. Davis estimates the grubs will quit eating up here by the end of May and hatch into beetles three to four weeks later. They will lay their eggs 10 to 15 days after that.

## Home Lawn Grub Control

By Terry Davis

Department of Entomology  
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I have noticed dead patches in a number of yards along my way to and from Michigan State in the last two weeks. The rain we have had the last week or so will make it very clear where there are grubs actively feeding. Dead patches in lawns, especially lawns with sandy soil and areas that have a slope to them, are likely places for grubs to be active now. If you see a dead patch, dig up a few shovelfuls of soil at the edge of the bare spot and look for 5/8 inch long, c-shaped grubs. These are more than likely the larvae of European chafer if they are found in non-irrigated turfgrass. European chafer can suddenly appear and devastate a lawn with no warning as the adults are active at dusk during late

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## Museum Readied for Season



The Fort de Buade Museum on State Street is freshened up Tuesday, May 13, before the tourist season gets underway. Rob Cook (right), owner of Accent Builders in St. Ignace, and John Moses are scraping the paint on the building's decorative wood beams before they apply a fresh coat of white paint.

## Road Commission Hires Temporary Engineer

Hears Culvert Complaint in St. Ignace Twp.

By Amy Polk

Mackinac County Road Commission hired R.S. Scott and Associates to be its temporary consulting engineer until a permanent engineer is hired. Engineer and Manager Karrie Abbitt resigned last month, and the road commission posted the position and hopes to fill the vacancy by the end of July, commissioners said at their Tuesday, May 13, meeting. They are accepting applications through May and hope to interview candidates in June. R.S. Scott will work on a contractual basis for \$70 per hour.

Engineer Brian Olsen, one of R.S. Scott's engineers who works in the firm's St. Ignace office, will be the primary engineer for the road commission, but has support from the rest of the firm, said Mark Straley, vice president of R.S. Scott, during interviews at the meeting.

"If he can't do it, we have five other engineers who could fill in if he's not here or not available," Mr. Straley said.

Mr. Olsen is the City of St. Ignace engineer and has experience with local road projects. The firm is familiar with the local terrain, Mr. Straley said, and has also worked on Michigan Department of Transportation projects. The firm has branch offices in Atlanta and Alpena, as well as St. Ignace.

In addition to R.S. Scott, commissioners interviewed five other candidates at the Tuesday meeting, including retired MDOT Bureau of Aeronautics engineer Oliver House of St. Ignace Township, Northwest Design Group of Petoskey, Wade Trim of Gaylord and Traverse City, Wilcox Associates of Alpena, and Thomas Hendricks from the Alpena area. R.S. Scott had one of the lowest hourly rates of all the candidates.

Mr. Olsen will take over engineering responsibilities in the absence of a full time engineer and manager and is expected to do the engineering work for county road projects on an as-needed basis. He will work on projects and estimates as they come up, commissioners established at the meeting, but will not do design work.

"We want to make sure our projects move," Commissioner Lester Livermore said. "Whatever we can do to keep our projects moving."

Mr. Olsen will be asked to attend the next road commission meeting Tuesday, May 27, but will not be required to attend meetings on a regular basis.

Bonnie Talman, who works in the road commission's East District Garage, was named crew leader and temporary acting foreman to replace Frank Stempki, who resigned from the position this month. He was named to the position in April.

The road commission will do what it can within this year's budget to remedy a culvert problem on Belonga Road in St. Ignace Township. Residents along the road complained about extensive flooding they think is caused by an improperly installed culvert. The residents offered to correct the problem themselves if the road commission supplies materials, but commissioners said that cannot happen.

"We paid \$200,000 for that road, and I think [the culvert problem] should have been spotted on the engineering end," said St. Ignace Township Supervisor Dale Nelson. "I think the county [road commission] should be responsible to make sure that culvert is in right."

Portage Township Supervisor Don Ferris will seek the township board's permission to contribute to a road project on North Gould City Road, one mile between Sandtown and McConnel roads. Commissioners confirmed that the road commission will try to schedule the work this year if he gets the necessary approval. The project is expected to cost more than \$140,000, based on last year's estimate.

Five road commission candidates are running for the two seats now held by commissioners Lester Livermore and Paul Amacher. Commissioners announced who was running at the meeting, as May 13 was the filing deadline for the November 4 election. Three of the candidates, Tom Doty, Frank Harness, and Robert Smith, are from Clark Township. Joe Durm is from St. Ignace and Richard Oliver is from Portage Township. Mr. Doty formerly worked for the road commission. Mr. Durm is a former Mackinac County commissioner. Mr. Harness is the Clark Township Road Committee liaison to the road commission. Richard Oliver ran for a seat on the road commission last year, and has served on the Mackinac County Board of Public Works and Economic Development Corporation. Mr. Smith is the former Clark Township Supervisor and also ran for a seat on the road commission last year.

## Forest Clean-up Draws 13 Volunteers

By Paul Gingras

A better-than-usual turnout of 13 volunteers helped clean areas of the eastern Hiawatha National Forest Saturday, May 10. They removed large volumes of trash and appliances dumped illegally, notably at Castle Rock Road near I-75, an area the Forest Service has identified as a problem area for dumping year after year, said Lyn Hyslop, acting recreation program manager for the eastern unit of the Hiawatha.

Most of the trash was dumped off the side of a hill, Ms. Hyslop reported.

"It was just a mess," she said, describing the effort as "arduous."

Volunteer Donna Thompson of St. Ignace helped with the clean-up, and agreed that removing the trash was difficult.

"We really enjoy doing this. It is good for the woods," she said.

She wants to make sure the forest is in good shape for residents and for "the many visitors who come to the area to enjoy the Hiawatha," such as mushroom hunters, she said. Much of the trash is not visible until one gets out of a car and walks into the forest.

To make the forest a better place to hunt for himself and other sportsmen, Tom Briggs of St. Ignace began the clean-up project 16 years ago. Mr. Briggs, his wife, Billie, and retired forest service member Joe Hart composed the first team.

Over the years, the effort has made a major difference, Mr. Briggs said.

"We are getting a handle on it," he said. "It is a lot better than what it was. Hopefully, we can get more people to help out."

When the project began, there were "mammoth piles" of trash in the forest, some of which took three years of clean-ups to remove, he said. One road spur connected to Cheeseman Road was completely filled from end to end.

This spring, in addition to glass and household trash, volunteers struggled to drag mat-



Volunteers removed this pile of trash from the Hiawatha National Forest near St. Ignace Saturday, May 10. They removed 6,500 pounds of trash this year. The forest is much cleaner than when the project began 16 years ago, said coordinator Tom Briggs. Since the clean-ups began, volunteers have removed about 105,000 pounds of trash. Mr. Briggs is seeking more volunteers for the effort that takes place each spring and fall. (Photograph courtesy of the U.S. Forest Service)

tresses, box springs, sofas, dozens of tires, and tar buckets up the hill by hand. What they could not remove by hand, they attached to ropes and hauled up the grade with a truck.

The group also cleaned roadsides and an area near Round Lake Road, where they discovered a large industrial dryer, a hot water heater, swing sets, and a 100-gallon fuel oil tank.

The group removed car seats, bumpers, a wood stove, a hot-water heater, television sets, computers, and about 30 five-gallon buckets full of drywall mud. They filled about 50 garbage bags with water bottles, paper, wrappers, plastic grocery bags, and broken toys. The most common items on the roadsides were water bottles, food wrappers, and beer cans, said Kari Vanderheuel, recreation planner for the local forest service.

Volunteers found clothes that could easily have been donated to local charities, Ms. Thompson said.

The Forest Service will sort

the trash, take some to a landfill, sell some metal for scrap, and dispose of tires and batteries properly, Ms. Hyslop said.

"I am perplexed as to why they are dumping," she said. People with materials to throw away should take them to the transfer station in St. Ignace, make use of hazardous material collection days in the city, and take advantage of spring clean-ups offered by local municipal governments, she suggested.

Hiawatha Forest clean-ups take place each spring and fall.

Organizers would like to clean up more areas, but must focus on the worst spots, which remain the same every year. More volunteers would enable organizers to cover more ground, Ms. Thompson said.

Saturday was the 32nd clean-up organized by Mr. Briggs. If he can draw enough volunteers this fall, he hopes to form several small groups and assign them certain roadsides to clean.

To volunteer, call Mr. Briggs at 643-6185.



Volunteers pose during the Hiawatha National Forest clean-up Saturday morning, May 10, near St. Ignace. Pictured (back, from left) are Tom Briggs, Louie Colegrove, Steve Christiansen, Cole Christiansen, Ron Colegrove Jr.; (front) Donna Thompson, Lyn Hyslop, and Mary Christiansen. Not pictured are volunteers Robert Colegrove, Kirk Phillips, Kari Vanderheuel, Mary Nichols, and members of the public who arrived later in the day to help. (Photograph courtesy of U.S. Forest Service)

## St. Ignace Event Is August 23 - 24

Rendezvous

Powwow Adds

Genealogy Day

This year's Rendezvous at the Straits Powwow will include a one-day genealogical conference Friday, August 22, at Little Bear East Arena in St. Ignace. The Rendezvous Powwow celebration will be Saturday, August 23, and Sunday, August 24, at the New France Discovery Center at Father Marquette Park.

The genealogical conference is a natural extension for the Rendezvous, said organizer Darryl Brown, and it is open to the public. Area genealogists will be attending with their records and family histories. The event will be from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Karen Sabitine from Sault Ste. Marie is coordinating the conference.

A new Web site has also been launched to help promote the Rendezvous and can be viewed at [www.rendezvousatthestrains.com](http://www.rendezvousatthestrains.com).

A Rendezvous and Powwow is about entertainment as well as education, Mr. Brown said, and his experience has proven that established powwows attract a high proportion of repeat visitors.

"The most successful events are those that have the flexibility to grow," said Mr. Brown. "Adding the Friday Genealogical Conference is a perfect fit."

"We hope the Rendezvous Powwow will become a signature event that will soon attract thousands of new visitors," said Mr. Brown. The Rendezvous Powwow that was established in 2007. Support has come from agencies including the City of St. Ignace, the Michilimackinac Historical Society, the Visitors Bureau, the St. Ignace Area Chamber of Commerce, and the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians.

The living history encampment of the French voyageur is also expected to be expanded at the event this year.

For more information on the genealogical conference, contact Karen Sabitine at (906) 635-0971. For information on the powwow, contact Mr. Brown at (906) 635-6050.