

## **Moving Houseplants Indoors**

**By Kathleen Cue, Nebraska Extension Horticulture Educator**

September is the best month for transitioning our houseplants from the outdoors to inside. At this time of year, we don't have the impending crunch of time when frost is imminent and our only choice is to hastily move plants indoors. By planning ahead, we have the time to pay attention to our houseplants by pulling away dead leaves, chasing out the spiders and checking plants for damage by critters. By waiting until frost is imminent, our haste increases chances of accidentally bringing in aphids, whiteflies, scale insects and mealybugs, exposing unaffected plants to a possible infestation.

Ladybugs do an excellent job of keeping insect pest populations low. Unfortunately they often disperse as we bring our houseplants indoors. Pest insects will then become a bigger problem when unchecked by ladybugs. If your houseplant has a high infestation, consider discarding the plant rather than risk spreading problems to your other plants.

One winter, I kept seeing tiny grasshoppers in my kitchen window. A grasshopper had laid eggs in the soil of a houseplant that I had outside over the summer! I was able to drench the soil with a solution of 1 teaspoon of dishwashing liquid to 1 cup of water to kill the immature insects. This simple technique can be used while houseplants are still outside. The same solution can be put into a spray bottle and applied to the upper and lower leaf surfaces to kill aphids and whiteflies.

Keep a pair of scissors or pruners handy to cut away damaged or diseased leaves. Now is also the time to give plants a good haircut. They'll fit better on plant shelves and there won't be as many dead leaves falling to the floor.

### **Emerald Ash Borer Seminar**

Emerald Ash borer was recently found in Fremont. Learn more about this invasive pest and how to manage your ash trees at a free emerald ash borer workshop, Monday, September 24, 6:00 pm at the Dodge County Extension, 1206 West 23<sup>rd</sup> St. Fremont, NE. Please pre-register by calling 402.727.2775.

### **Creating Pollinator Habitats Workshop**

Learn about plants that benefit pollinators with the option of building a solitary bee hotel to take home, Thursday, September 27 at 5:30 pm. Cost of workshop is \$15 per person or for couples sharing materials; \$25 per person for program and bee hotel materials. Dodge County Extension, 1206 West 23<sup>rd</sup> Street, Fremont NE. Please pre-register by calling 402.727.2775.