

Insect ID Lab at Virginia Tech

Dr Pat Wooden, Lab Manager

16 September 2026



Who We Are



Eric Day

Lab Manager Emeritus

- Wood Boring Beetles
- Invasive Species
- Christmas Trees



Dr. Patricia Wooden

Lab Manager

- K-12 Outreach
- Wetland Systems
 - Endemics
- Invasive Species



Dr. Theresa Dellinger

Diagnostician Emeritus

- Bark Beetles
- Invasive Species

Who We Are



Amber Thompson

Diagnostician

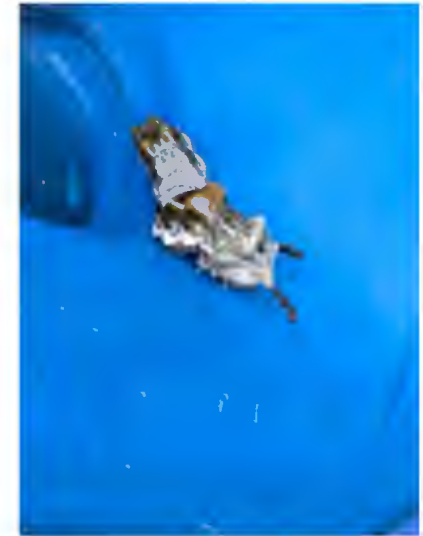
- 4H Programming
- Bees & Beekeeping
- Invasive Species



Nick Collins

Student Diagnostician

- Parasitoid Wasps
- Biological Control



Robin Crum

Student Diagnostician

- Urban Entomology
- Homeowner and Pest Control Extension

What We Do

IDENTIFICATIONS

VCE Agents &
Direct Submissions

PUBLICATIONS

Fact Sheets & PMG

SURVEYS

Invasive
Species &
Conservation

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

K-12, Guest
Speaking, &
Media



Changes in 2026

- Eric retired in late 2025
 - He now volunteers once a week on curatorial projects
- Pat started March 2026
- Tree retired in August 2026
- Amber joined in August 2026



Changes in 2026

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- Lab is receiving a face lift
 - New floors
 - New ceiling
 - Removal of defunct equipment
 - Fresh paint

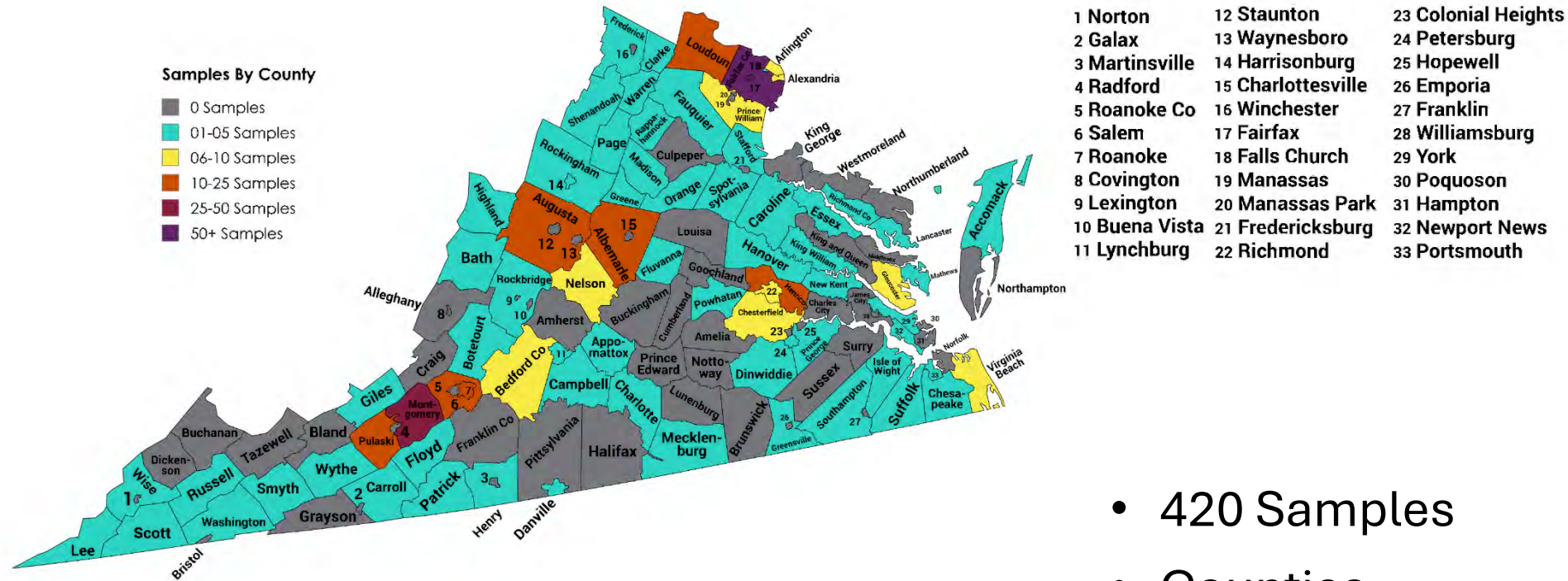


Changes in 2026

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- Lab is receiving a face lift
 - New floors
 - New ceiling
 - Removal of defunct equipment
 - Fresh paint
 - **Please provide notice if walking in**



2026 in Pests



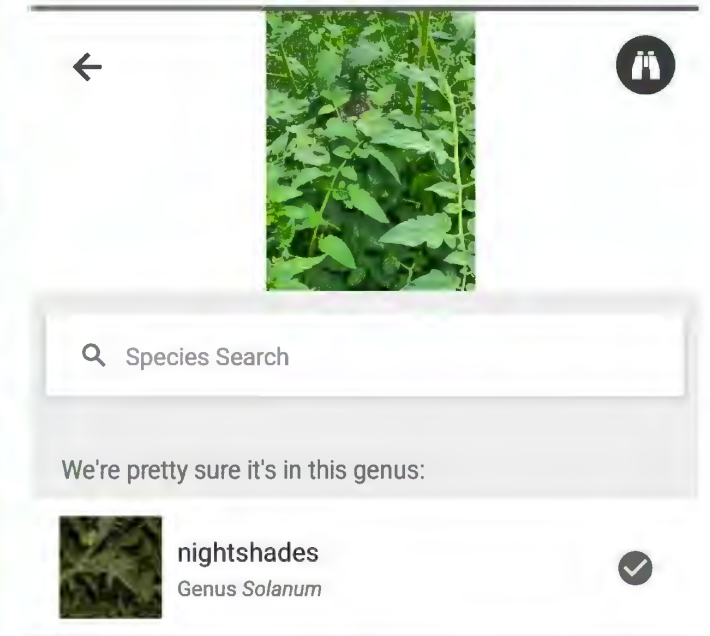
- 420 Samples
- Counties
- 11 Out of State
- 37 Plant Disease Clinic Clients

Why Submit Samples?

Why Submit Samples?



Why Submit Samples?



Why Submit Samples?



Carolina Sphinx
Manduca sexta
Visually Similar



Nancy Hinkle, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org



🔍 Species Search

We're pretty sure it's in this genus:



nightshades
Genus *Solanum*



Why Submit Samples?



Why Submit Samples?

- Additional information through reports and fact sheets
- Identifications provided free of charge
- Any agent can submit a sample, regardless of specialty
- Identifications of life stages, damage, and plant responses
- Client escalation as needed

- Fill out the Agent Form
 - Available on the VCE Publications site
<https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/444/444-113/444-113.html>

Virginia Cooperative Extension | www.ext.vt.edu

How to Submit Samples

Mail-In

- Agent Information
 - Must be submitting agent
 - New email spaces!
 - EMGs can fill out the remainder of the form, but reports are sent to the agent
 - Will cc Help Desks and Administrative Assistant if requested

Virginia Cooperative Extension
Virginia Tech • Virginia State University
Publication 444-113

Insect Identification and Diagnosis Request

Send physical Samples to: Insect Identification Lab, Dept. of Entomology (0319), Price Hall, Rm. 216
170 Drillfield Dr., Blacksburg, VA 24061
Images: email good, clear JPEG with a scan of this completed form to: InsectIDLab@vt.edu

Agent name _____	Grower/Homeowner _____
County/City _____	Address _____
Agent Email _____	Phone/Fax _____
Additional Email(s) _____	See back of form for important information on replies.
Signature _____	

1. Date Collected _____ 2. Host _____

3. For plant pests: Distribution: One plant ☐ Several Plants ☐ Scattered ☐ Clumped ☐ Widespread ☐
Damage: Roots ☐ Bark ☐ Twigs/Stems ☐ Leaves ☐ Bud ☐ Fruit ☐

4. For inside pests: In what part of the building or house was the insect found? _____

5. Insect abundance: None Observed ☐ One ☐ Few ☐ Common ☐ Abundant ☐ Extreme ☐

6. a.) Description of the problem, b.) How serious is the damage: _____

6. c.) Date insects or damage first found? _____ last year's crop? _____

7. Previous occurrence and control applied _____

8. Do you desire a control recommendation? yes ☐ no ☐

9. Commercial Grower or Farmer ☐ Homeowner ☐ Urban Pest Control Operator ☐ Medical doctor ☐
Park, School, Nature Center ☐ other _____

See back of form for collecting and shipping instructions.

Do not write below this line.

10. File number _____	11. Date Received _____
12. Common name _____	
13. Comments _____	
14. Reply sent by email _____	15. Determined by _____

Virginia Cooperative Extension | www.ext.vt.edu

How to Submit Samples

Mail-In

- Grower/Homeowner Information
 - Only name will be in report
 - Address allows us to find more context

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Mail-In

- Sample Information
 - You may not have information for every blank
 - Provide the information you know

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How to Submit Samples

Mail-In



- Insects should be submitted in a small amount of ethanol in provided mailing tube
- Mailing tube should be stuffed with absorbent materials in case of spills in transit

How to Submit Samples

Mail-In

- Fill out the Identification Request Form
- Mail to:

Insect Identification Laboratory

216 Price Hall, MC 0319

170 Drillfield Dr. Virginia Tech

Blacksburg, VA 24061

How to Submit Samples

Mail-In

- Damaged Plant Material
 - Placed in a plastic bag, vented
 - Mailed in tube or box
- Keep in refrigerator until mailing
- Mail early in the week for freshness



How to Submit Samples

Virtual

- Take A Photograph
 - Good photographs are
 - Clear
 - On a contrasting background
 - Contain the entire insect
 - Have a size reference



Hannes Lemme, Bavarian State Research Center for Agriculture,
Bugwood.org

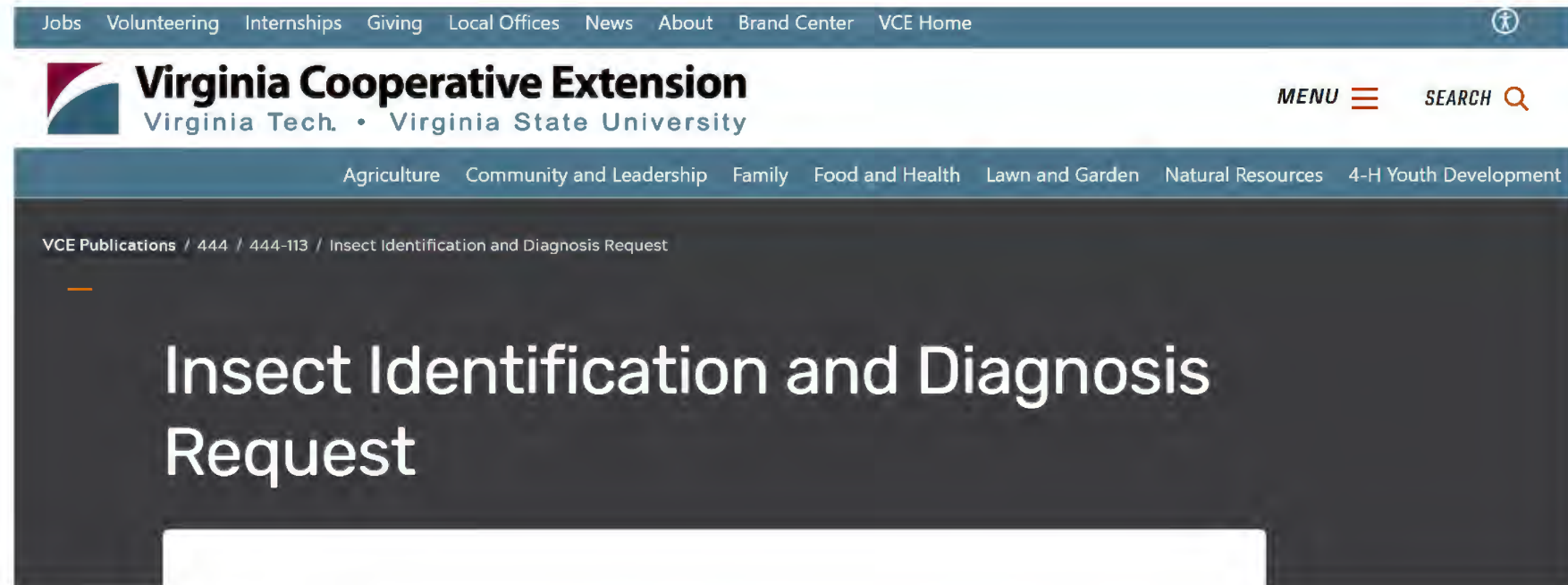


Kenner Love, VCE, VTIL submission

How to Submit Samples

Virtual

- Submit a Microsoft form
- Space to attach images



For digital requests, please submit via our virtual request form: <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/xXsrwQvppV>

How to Submit Samples

Virtual

13. As of March 1, 2015, the Insect Identification Lab at Virginia Tech will no longer accept samples in cases involving microscopic ("invisible") arthropods or biting/crawling sensations on the skin if submitted by private individuals. Individuals wishing to submit samples from the human body (i.e., skin, scabs, blood, tissue, etc.) must have the samples collected by a medical professional and submitted from the medical office directly in either alcohol or as a slide with accompanying documentation. In addition, we will also no longer accept samples of vacuum cleaner dirt/dust, floor sweepings, and things of a similar nature if they are related to microscopic ("invisible") arthropods or biting/crawling sensations on the skin. If any samples of these types are mailed to the Insect Identification Lab, even if sent by an Extension office, they may be discarded by the Lab Manager. For health and safety reasons extension offices should no longer accept samples collected from human skin and refer anyone with those type of sample to a medical doctor.

Exceptions: ticks, suspected nits, lice, and other parasites **visible to the naked eye** and submitted virtually or in alcohol may be accepted at the discretion of the lab manager, who reserves the right to accept or reject the sample.

For questions regarding this policy, email us at InsectIDLab@vt.edu or call us at (540) 231-4899 *



☐ I acknowledge this policy

How to Submit Samples

Questions

- Email us at InsectIDLab@vt.edu
- Old forms have idlab@vt.edu. That is no longer our inbox.
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5. Insect abundance: ☐ none observed ☐ one ☐ few ☐ common ☐ abundant ☐ extreme

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8. Do you desire a control recommendation? ☐ yes ☐ no

9. ☐ Commercial Grower or Farmer ☐ Homeowner ☐ Urban Pest Control Operator ☐ Medical doctor
☐ Park, School, Nature Center ☐ other _____

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UGA1220021

How to Submit Samples

Walk-In

- **205A Price Hall**
 - Open 9-4:30 Monday-Friday
 - Closed for University Holidays
- An opportunity to learn the insect and its damage
 - Call ahead for availability



Sample Reports

iClinic

- Reports are sent to the agent and additional emails (admin assistants, EMG Help Desks) included in the form
- We do not typically respond to the client directly

Sample Reports

iClinic

Identification/Recommendations

Identification: SPRINGTAILS

Category: Insects or Mites

Comments: Springtails found inside houses or buildings are associated with high humidity. They feed on algae, mildew, and other organic matter. Consider using a dehumidifier or increasing the air flow to reduce the moisture in rooms where these are found. Springtails found in bathrooms are often controlled by cleaning tiles and grout to remove the organic matter on which they feed. Floors, windowsills, or door jambs with large numbers of springtails may need to be similarly cleaned. Pesticide treatments alone will not address the moisture issues, but cleaning and reducing the humidity levels will discourage springtail populations without the need for pesticide application.

Springtails do not bite.

For more information, see: https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/content/pubs_ext_vt_edu/en/ENTO/ENTO-23/ENTO-23.html

Virginia Cooperative Extension Pest Management Guides

[Home Grounds and Animals Pest Management Guide](https://resources.ext.vt.edu/contentdetail?contentid=2377)(https://resources.ext.vt.edu/contentdetail?contentid=2377)

[Horticultural and Forest Crops Pest Management Guide](https://resources.ext.vt.edu/contentdetail?contentid=2376)(https://resources.ext.vt.edu/contentdetail?contentid=2376)

[Field Crops Pest Management Guide](https://resources.ext.vt.edu/contentdetail?contentid=2715)(https://resources.ext.vt.edu/contentdetail?contentid=2715)

[Mid-Atlantic Commercial Vegetable Production Recommendations](https://resources.ext.vt.edu/contentdetail?contentid=2379)(https://resources.ext.vt.edu/contentdetail?contentid=2379)

[Spray Bulletin for Commercial Fruit Tree Growers](https://resources.ext.vt.edu/contentdetail?contentid=2378)(https://resources.ext.vt.edu/contentdetail?contentid=2378)

Virginia Cooperative Extension

[Virginia Cooperative Extension](http://www.ext.vt.edu/)(http://www.ext.vt.edu/)

Public Engagement

In-Person & Virtual Events

- EMG Events
- Pesticide Re-Certification Courses
- Virginia Tech and VCE Workshops
- K-12 Outreach
- Providing Resources



Contact Us

InsectIDLab@vt.edu
(540) 231-4899

Any Questions?

