

## NEW TICK DANGER

by Lyn Chimera

**T**he lone star tick (*Amblyomma americanum*) was common in the southeast US but has spread northward to New England and is now in NYS. It is identifiable by the cream colored spot on its back (see photo). This is a major concern because of the diseases it carries.

The bite of the lone star tick can trigger a very dangerous syndrome called “alpha-gal allergy” that causes a person to become allergic to all meat from mammals AND all their products including dairy, wool and fiber, gelatin from their hooves, and even char from their bones. Talk about as restricted diet! The reactions can vary from hives, if a person wears something with mammal fibers to a drastic drop in blood pressure and throat closure due to anaphylactic shock. Unfortunately this tick thrives in a wide range of habitats, from shady forests to sunny lawns or roadsides. This is a truly scary critter! Unlike the black legged tick, the lone star tick hustles toward its prey, even across pavement or dry sand so it’s much more aggressive. We all need to be very diligent after being outside. Information at: <http://blogs.cornell.edu/nysipm/tag/lone-star-tick/>

A quote from that site, “Imagine a tick that travels three times as fast as the black legged tick, has excellent vision, and hatches in stinging swarms that can put fire ants to shame.”



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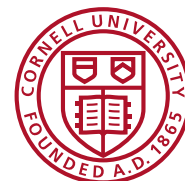
## WATER CONSERVATION

by Mary Ann Bald

**W**ater is a precious commodity in many areas. Water supplies worldwide are being stretched thin and today conservation of it is the hallmark of an ecology conscious garden. Start conservation efforts by maximizing the soil’s ability to retain water. Add organic matter to the soil and cover the ground with a thick layer of mulch. Water less frequently, but water deeply to be sure to soak the roots.

Consider installing a drip irrigation system which uses 30 – 50% less water than conventional hose watering; by reducing leaching it helps plants grow better. When free water comes from the sky, be prepared with a catchment barrel placed under your eaves’ downspout.

You can install a gray water system, which channels the drain water from your shower, bathtub and washing machine (if you don’t use chlorine bleach or strong detergents) to trees, shrubs and perennials. Gray water irrigation isn’t recommended for annuals.



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