

# PENNSYLVANIA'S CHRISTMAS TREE SCOUTING REPORT

2010, Report 12: June 9, 2010

Weekly newsletter compiled by Sarah Pickel, PA Department of Agriculture.

This week's report includes scouting information from: Jim Fogarty (Halabura Tree Farm), Karen Najda (PDA), Susan Newhart (Arcadia Trees), Linda Signarovitz (scouting consultant), Brian Schildt (PDA), and Cathy Thomas (PDA).

Growing Degree Day totals as of Tuesday, June 8<sup>th</sup>, were 930.5 in Elizabethtown, Lancaster County, 899 in New Cumberland, Cumberland County, and 717.5 in New Ringgold, Schuylkill County. As of Monday, June 7<sup>th</sup> there were 533 GDD in Montrose, Susquehanna County.

Emergence of *Cryptomeria* scale crawlers was still light this week in York County. Yesterday, in Northampton and Schuylkill Counties, crawlers were just starting to be found on Canaan and Fraser firs. *Cryptomeria* scale may be found on many conifer species, but the preferred Christmas tree species hosts are the True Firs. To locate this pest, look for yellow spotted needles at the base of the trees. Using a hand lens, examine the undersides of these spotted needles for bright yellow, oval-shaped crawlers among the white and yellow adult scales. [Fig. 1] Growers in areas where crawler emergence is still very light may want to wait until a larger number of crawlers can be found before applying the first of two recommended insecticide sprays.

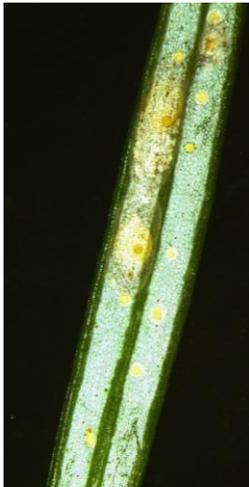


Figure 1: *Cryptomeria* scale crawlers [S. Gardosik, PDA]

The second application should be made 7 – 10 days after the first spray. As was recommended last week, freshly mowed tree rows will allow for better spray coverage at the base of the trees. To find a registered insecticide which targets scale, growers can reference the *2010 Insecticides and Miticides Update for PA Christmas Tree Pests* can be found at the site: <http://ento.psu.edu/extension/christmas-trees/scouting-reports>.

On Monday in Lancaster County, the first few peach-colored crawlers of Striped Pine Scale were found on Scotch pine. There were more crawlers found underneath the adult scales. Warmer temperatures at the end of this week may lead to a heavier emergence, which would be a better time to control the crawlers. This soft scale pest of hard pines can be easier to find than most scales. The brown and white helmet-shaped adult scale coverings may be larger than ½ cm and can also be located by looking for the black sooty mold covering the

needles, which develops on the sugary excrement of the scales.



Figure 2: Stiped pine scale crawlers and adults [B. Schildt, PSU]

Bagworm larvae are continuing to grow and increase their bag size in York and Schuylkill Counties. As the larvae grow, it will become more difficult to control them with insecticide sprays. On smaller farms with light infestations, hand picking the bags could be a less expensive and chemical-free means of control.



Figure 3: Juvenile bagworm [C. Thomas, PDA]

Needle and tip dieback due to *Diplodia* tip blight was found in York County this week. This fungal disease of hard pines (rare hosts: Douglas-fir and spruce), infects the new growth, causing the needles to be stunted and turn brown. Growers can selectively prune out dead or infected growth, but should clean pruners between cuts and remove pruned material from the field. Preventative fungicide applications can be made next spring while shoots are elongating.



Figure 4: New growth of Scotch pine infested with *Diplodia* tip blight [T. Olson, PDA]

The next scouting report will be available June 16, 2010.