

# PENNSYLVANIA'S CHRISTMAS TREE SCOUTING REPORT

2011, Report 13: June 16, 2011

Weekly newsletter compiled by Sarah Pickel, PA  
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This week's report includes data from Jim Fogarty (Halabura Tree Farm), Karen Najda (PDA), Susan Newhart (Acadia Tree Farm), Tracey Olson (PDA), Brian Schildt (PDA), and Cathy Thomas (PDA). The links included in several paragraphs lead to fact sheets from the new PA IPM Program publication, *Integrated Pest Management for Christmas Tree Production*.

As of Tuesday, June 14<sup>th</sup>, there were 899 GDD in New Ringgold, Schuylkill County and 460 GDD in Montrose, Susquehanna County. As of Wednesday, June 15<sup>th</sup>, there were 1050 growing degree days (GDD) in Elizabethtown, Lancaster County, and 1021 GDD in New Cumberland, Cumberland County. Ground temperatures in New Ringgold, Schuylkill County have fluctuated between 66-75° F.

Cryptomeria scale crawlers continued to emerge in Lancaster and York counties this week. In Schuylkill



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

County, crawlers began to emerge and have already started to settle. The mobile crawlers are bright yellow and oval shaped (antennae and eyes are also visible with a hand lens), but settled crawlers that have begun to cover over are round and cream colored. [Fig. 1] While the crawlers are exposed or newly settled, they will be vulnerable to insecticides. The crawler emergence may continue for 3 or 4 weeks, so 2 to 3 applications may be necessary. Growers should check foliage before making

additional sprays to make sure crawlers are still emerging. To achieve control, it is especially important that insecticides reach the interior of the lower branches, where most scale populations are

concentrated. Growers should remember to mow the blocks where they will be making applications!

~ <http://extension.psu.edu/ipm/program/christmas-tree/pest-fact-sheets/needle-discoloration-and-injury/cryptomeria-scale.pdf/view>

The crawlers of Elongate Hemlock Scale can still be found on the foliage of Fraser and Canaan firs and Douglas-fir in Schuylkill and York Counties. Growers who began an application series for this pest should remember to continue through the full three month period. For more information on this scale, visit:

~ <http://extension.psu.edu/ipm/program/christmas-tree/pest-fact-sheets/needle-discoloration-and-injury/elongate-hemlock-scale.pdf/view>

Bagworms continue to increase in size on Douglas-fir in



Figure 2: Bagworm juvenile [S. Gardosik, PDA]

York County. As the caterpillars grow, they add plant material to their protective bags. [Fig. 2] The bagworms become less susceptible to insecticides as they grow. On small farms, or landscape settings with light infestations, the bags can be removed by hand and

destroyed to prevent damage next season. However, this is often not practical for most Christmas tree farms.

~ <http://extension.psu.edu/ipm/program/christmas-tree/pest-fact-sheets/needle-discoloration-and-injury/bagworm.pdf/view>

In Schuylkill and York Counties, there has been a resurgence of spruce spider mites. While these are often referred to as cool season mites, they can be active through much of the growing season. Growers who are finding damaging levels of spider mites could make an application at this time to prevent further damage. If growers who made applications of miticide earlier in the season are considering treating again because of a resurgence, it is recommended to rotate to a different miticide product in the interest of resistance management. (Also, the label for the miticide Savey

limits use to once per season.) As always, remember to read the labels!

~ <http://extension.psu.edu/ipm/program/christmas-tree/pest-fact-sheets/needle-discoloration-and-injury/spruce-spider-mite.pdf/view>

Lastly, one issue that growers in Bucks, Northampton, Schuylkill and York Counties have been seeing this season is tip dieback in Douglas-fir. It's likely that



growers in other counties are seeing this as well. New growth turns brown and stunted and the twigs darken, shrivel and curl downward. [Figs. 3 & 4] Samples taken in Schuylkill County



*Figures 1&4: Diplodia Tip Blight on Douglas-fir [both - T. Olson, PDA]*

were diagnosed by the PDA plant pathology lab to have Diplodia tip blight (also Sphaeropsis). Commonly a disease of hard-needled pines, this can be found on Douglas-fir and/or spruce when conditions are right. The disease is spread in wet weather, and we've certainly had plenty of wet weather this season. Since the disease is less common on Douglas-fir, it's likely that growers may not have a problem with this next season. If growers would like more information on Diplodia (including control info), they can visit the following links:

~ <http://extension.psu.edu/plant-disease-factsheets/all-fact-sheets/sphaeropsis-or-diplodia-on-pine>

~ <http://extension.psu.edu/ipm/program/christmas-tree/pest-fact-sheets/shoot-and-branch-injury/diplodia.pdf/view>.

A list of insecticides and miticides registered for use Pennsylvania, prepared by PA IPM Program scouting consultant, Brian Schildt, can be found on the Penn State Christmas tree website: (<http://ento.psu.edu/extension/christmas-trees>).

The next scouting report will be available June 22, 2011.