

PENNSYLVANIA'S CHRISTMAS TREE SCOUTING REPORT

MAY 9, 2012

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

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GDD TOTALS AS OF TUESDAY, 5/8/12:

LOCATION	GDD TOTAL
Elizabethtown, Lancaster County	388
Hallstead, Susquehanna County	238
New Cumberland, York County	429.5
New Ringgold, Schuylkill County	359.5

ELONGATE HEMLOCK SCALE

While crawlers of elongate hemlock scale were already found to be active in Lancaster, Schuylkill and York Counties this season, the larger flush of



Figure 1: Adult female elongate hemlock scale (brown) with crawlers (bright yellow) [S.Gardosik, PDA]

crawlers may still be to come. Female scales (brown, elongate) in Lancaster and York Counties were found to have bright yellow eggs inside the scale covers. When crawlers hatch from these eggs, the heavier emergence will

begin. Crawlers who have not yet begun their spray series of insecticides for this pest may want to wait to see this upcoming flush of crawlers to begin their spray program.

To find elongate hemlock scales, look on the inside limbs located at the bases of true firs, hemlocks and Douglas-fir trees. The scales will be on the undersides of needles which have yellow speckling on the upper surfaces. A gray, waxy coating formed by the white male scales may also be found on infested foliage. An accepted control method for this pest is to apply an insecticide at the beginning of crawler emergence and to follow that with either two sprays (4 weeks between each spray) or with three sprays (3 weeks between each spray). For more information on control of this scale, visit:

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

PINE NEEDLE SCALE

Crawlers of pine needle scale began emerging on needles of Eastern white pine in Elizabethtown, Lancaster County this week. The tiny oval-shaped, paprika-colored crawlers moved out from underneath the white, oblong, cotton-like covers of the adult female scales. Feeding from this hard scale pest may cause chlorotic, or yellowed, spots on the needles. This



Figure 2: Pine needle scale [C. Thomas, PDA]

pest is often more of a concern to growers of Scotch and other hard pines, as populations tend to be heavier on these pines than on Eastern white pine. If the scale is heavy and a control action is necessary, an insecticide product can be applied with a second application following a week later. For more information on pine needle scale, visit: <http://extension.psu.edu/ipm/program/christmas-tree/pest-fact-sheets/needle-discoloration-and-injury/pine-needle-scale.pdf/view>.

LOOKING AHEAD

Last week, a few **bagworm** larvae were found inside the overwintering bags of bagworm in New Cumberland, York County. As of yesterday,



Figure 3: Overwintering bagworm casings [S. Pickel, PDA]

however, larvae had not yet begun to exit the bags in this same location. When the tiny gray & black caterpillars exit the pine-cone like bags on threads of silk, they will begin to chew the new growth of their hosts (all conifers). As they feed, they will begin to construct protective bags out of the needle material. The caterpillars will increase in size, building their bags and

becoming increasingly less susceptible to insecticide sprays. To prevent these pests from causing defoliation to valuable trees, growers should be watching bagworm bags closely at this time, so that insecticide sprays can be applied soon after the caterpillars have left the bags and are still small. For more information on these insects, visit: <http://extension.psu.edu/ipm/program/christmas-tree/pest-fact-sheets/needle-discoloration-and-injury/bagworm.pdf/view>.

For growers of hard needle pines (Scotch, red, Austrian, etc.) the soft scale pest, **striped pine**



Figure 4: Striped pine scale with crawlers on Scotch pine [B. Schildt, PDA]

scale, may be of concern. These helmet shaped scales with brown and white markings are large enough to see without the aid of a hand lens. The main symptom brought on by this scale is the

development of black sooty mold, which grows on the sugary liquid the scales excrete. When this scale is heavy and mold growth is excessive, trees become weekend and unsightly. While this pest is

typically not monitored until June, it can be expected that crawler activity will be early for this pest as it has been for many of the other pests we've observed this season. Yesterday, in Adams County, the eggs underneath these scales had not yet hatched, but in the next few weeks, peach/salmon colored crawlers may emerge and move along the needles and twigs to get to the expanding candles of the trees. Horticultural oil or an insecticide may be applied to control the crawlers at that time. For more information on striped pine scale, visit:

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

For your reference, the *2011 Insecticides and Miticides for Christmas Tree Pests* can be found at the Penn State Christmas tree Website, <http://ento.psu.edu/extension/christmas-trees>.

The next scouting report will be available on Wednesday, May 16, 2012.