

North Carolina Pest News

Departments of Entomology and Plant Pathology



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CAUTION !

The information and recommendations in this newsletter are applicable to North Carolina and may not apply in other areas.

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See current and archived issues of the *North Carolina Pest News* on the World Wide Web at:

http://ipm.ncsu.edu/current_ipm/pest_news.html

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Pond Management Workshop

There will be a Pond Management Workshop held from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 6, 2006 at the Central Crops Research Station in Clayton, North Carolina. Topics include water quality, fertilization, sampling procedures, weed management and dam safety. There will be demonstrations, talks, equipment displays and refreshments. Applications have been submitted for pesticide re-certification credits.

This workshop is a joint effort of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services' Agronomic Division, North Carolina Cooperative Extension and North Carolina Department of Environment and Natural Resources' Land Resources. For details, contact J. Kent Messick, North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services' Agronomic Division (e-mail: kent.messick@ncmail.net; telephone: 919-733-2655).

FIELD AND FORAGE CROPS

From: Jack S. Bachelier, Extension Entomologist

Cotton Thrips

During the past week, cotton seedlings have advanced very little while degradation of the active ingredients on Cruiser, Avicta and Gaucho Grande treated seed continues. Presently, cotton planted during the April 19 to 25 time period will be susceptible to thrips and in need of treatment by about May 10 to 16, or about three weeks after planting. With the high thrips levels often found in Virginia and in North Carolina, do not underestimate the possibility of significant damage to cotton seedlings if not treated at the first true leaf stage. Although thrips levels are presently on the low side, this situation will change quickly if we get some hot, dry weather. On the plus side, with our generally good moisture levels, a return to warmer weather should signal far better seedling "grow-off" conditions. In most situations, Temik 15G applied at the 5 pound per acre rate should provide good thrips control for up to 5 weeks after planting, assuming good moisture levels. Next week, talk about cutting back a little on thrips protection will be appropriate, but we are still a little early for that.

Cotton Aphids and Spider Mites

In almost all cases, economic levels of spider mites and/or cotton aphids do not occur in our area until at least a week or more after a foliar treatment for thrips. Historically, spider mite infestations primarily advanced from cotton field borders inward, most often during very hot, dry weather. Last year, however, mite infestations mostly occurred throughout reduced till cotton fields one to three weeks following foliar sprays behind seed treatments, and at lower temperatures. It will take a few years to see if we may be developing a pattern of increased spider mite infestations following foliar sprays following seed treatments. Fortunately, even though 2005 was a high mite year by North Carolina standards, just under 3 percent of our cotton acreage was treated for spider mites. Still, spider mites are no picnic for the producers who have them. Cotton aphids can occur almost any time during the growing season, though population

that develop about mid-July and later here are typically reduced to non-treatable levels by a common parasitic fungus. In 2005, approximately 7 percent of our cotton acreage was treated for cotton aphids.

Slugs in Cotton

I have received several calls about slugs in reduced till, wet cotton. Unfortunately, there is no economically feasible remedy for this sometimes stand reducing, leaf feeding problem. Baits are just too expensive in row crop agriculture, salt would cause more harm than good, and 2 to 4 kegs of beer per acre just isn't very practical (unless it's Friday night).

That's about it for this week. By this time next week, hopefully stands will have come through these cool rainy conditions and seedlings will be on their way.

ORNAMENTALS AND TURF

From: Christine A. Casey, Extension Entomologist

Barking up the Wrong Tree

This is not exactly an insect report, although I do often recommend mulch to provide habitat for ground-dwelling natural enemies such as carabid beetles. Landscapers and homeowners with dogs should be aware of the risk posed by the use of cocoa bark mulch. This mulch is a by-product of the cocoa industry, and the cocoa bean hulls that make up this product contain theobromine. Dogs' natural desire to dig and chew means that a pet might consume this mulch, and depending on the quantity consumed and the weight of the dog, minor to serious medical problems can result. For more information, see the following web site:

http://www.aspca.org/site/PageServer?pagename=pro_apcc_publicationscocoa

From: Colleen Y. Warfield and Charles S. Hodges, Department of Plant Pathology

New Finding of Pine Wilt Nematode on Deodar Cedar

Japanese black pine is routinely tested for pine wilt nematodes (*Bursaphelenchus xylophilis*), especially those from coastal North Carolina where this pine species is commonly infested. In mid April, a specimen of deodar cedar from the coast tested positive for pine wood nematodes. As a result, we have begun testing other deodar cedar specimens for pine wilt nematodes and have found two specimens from Durham and Orange counties to be positive. We have also found this nematode on a Japanese black pine in Wake County. These findings suggest that the pine wilt nematode may be common in central North Carolina as well as on the coast.

Symptoms include a general wilt of the needles, followed by yellowing and death. Sometimes only a portion or branch of a tree may show symptoms. Eventually the entire tree will die. Highly susceptible species, such as Japanese black pine may die within 1 to 3 months after the first appearance of symptoms. When sampling plants, the best specimens to collect are wilting or dead branches or stems that are one to two inches in diameter. Larger branches facilitate the recovery of the nematode.

The nematode is spread by longhorn beetles (*Monochamus* spp.) such as the pine sawyer. We do not have any information on the relative susceptibility of deodar cedar compared to Japanese black pine. Affected trees should be removed as soon as practical. Burn, bury or debark the wood. Native plant species are not known to be hosts of this nematode, but several introduced species are known to be susceptible. See *Ornamental Diseases Information Note Number 6* (<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/pp/notes/Ornamental/odin006/odin006.htm>) for more details on the pine wood (or pine wilt) nematode.

From: Peter T. Hertl, Department of Entomology (Turf Entomology)

Now is the Time to Begin Fire Ant Management

The combination of warm spring weather and rain always brings an increase in fire ant activity. Where it is likely that people will come into contact with these stinging pests, there is probably a need for control.

Spring is an excellent time to get started on fire ant management and effective management starts with a good plan. Fire ant eradication is not feasible, so consider your management strategy carefully. First, target the mounds in areas where people are most likely to be stung. Using a mound drench is the best method to quickly remove colonies where immediate control is necessary. Fire ant baits offer the most cost effective and environmentally friendly control where time is less critical.

Many effective baits and contact insecticides are available. Most products only provide control for a limited time. Once initiated, a fire ant control program is a long-term commitment. Abandoning treatments usually results in even higher fire ant populations. Therefore, tailor management according to your budget and realistic need for control at your site. Successful fire ant management requires diligence, commitment to a sound program, realistic expectations, and an understanding of the ants and the products used to control them. Specific information on control of fire ants can be found in the publication *Control of the Red Imported Fire Ant* (<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/Urban/ifa-treat.htm>) and the Texas A&M University fire ant web site (<http://fireant.tamu.edu/>). Additional information on treatment and quarantine is available from the North Carolina Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services' Plant Protection Section (<http://www.agr.state.nc.us/plantind/plant/entomol/ifamap.htm>).

Recommendations for the use of chemicals are included in this publication as a convenience to the reader. The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services in this publication does not imply endorsement by North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University or North Carolina Cooperative Extension nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned. Individuals who use chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. Be sure to obtain current information about usage regulations and examine a current product label before applying any chemical. For assistance, contact an agent of North Carolina Cooperative Extension.

Employment and program opportunities are offered to all people regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

