Cooperative Extension
ORNAMENTALS
• H O T L I N E •

May 22, 2020

Issue 9

INSECTS

Brian Kunkel
Ornamental IPM Specialist

Pulvinaria scales are one of our most common soft scales found in landscapes now. Females are beginning to produce their ovisacs (eggs). *P. floccifera* crawlers should hatch within a few days to a week after being oviposited. This scale settles and feeds on the underside of leaves and are easily noticed due to their cottony ovisacs. We have three common cottony scales which include: cottony maple scale, cottony maple leaf scale and cottony camellia/taxus scale. Identify the species by the host plant.

Cottony camellia/taxus scale (*P. floccifera*) is the most commonly reported Pulvinaria soft scale. In the early spring, this small oval tan scale produces lots of honeydew as it feeds. It is frequently found on hollies, sweet box, Hydrangea, Rhododendron, Cephalotaxus, and its namesake hosts. Crawler activity occurs over a long time: 145 – 1365 (830 peak) GDD50.

Cottony maple scale (*P. innumerablis*) favor silver maple and hickory, however they may be found on other plants such as red maple, other maples, dogwood, birch, elm and willow. The crawlers are active from 462 – 2362 (1388 peak) GDD50. The adults and eggs are almost always found on stems and branches, with

(continued)

DISEASES

Nancy Gregory
Plant Diagnostician

AZALEA LEAF GALL can occur on young leaves or flowers, and shows up as a large distorted mass, often following wet weather. Due to infection by a fungus, Exobasidium, plant cells multiply and become larger and distorted. These swollen plant outgrowths usually start out green or pink. As the disease progresses, spores of Exobasidium are produced on the surface of the galls, leaving a white powdery look. Old galls shrivel and get hard, and the fungus survives in that tissue, or in bud scales or under bark. Rhododendron, camellia, and blueberry may also be affected, although there are some resistant cultivars of both azalea and rhododendron. Prune out the galls before the white spores are produced to control.

MONILINIA BLIGHT has been observed on Kwanzan cherries. This blight of twigs is caused by the fungus Monilinia, the same one that causes brown rot on peach, and a similar blight on flowering quince. Terminals that flowered about two weeks ago were infected during flowering by spores of Monilinia that are produced in response to rains. Infections begin on the senescing flowers and progress back, causing blight of leaves and death

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What's Hot!

It is a good idea to prune azaleas after flowering to reduce the spread of disease.

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Pest and Beneficial Insect- Online Workshop, 2 Pesticide Credits. June 11, 4-6 pm
Learn to identify insect and disease pests, as well as beneficial insects in the landscape. Find out what signs and symptoms are used to identify pests and diseases. Instructors: Dr. Brian Kunkel, Jill Pollok, Tracy Wootten, and Carrie Murphy,Pre-registration required: https://www.pcsreg.com/pests-and-beneficial-insects

Diseases (continued)
of twigs. The fungus overwinters in twigs and branches. Prune twigs and branches 10 inches below any affected areas, when weather is dry. Clean pruners between cuts and discard trimmed material. These recommendations are the same as for controlling fireblight on pear and apple, and bacterial blight on cherries. Fruit bearing trees such as cherry, plum, and apricot with Monilinia infections should be on a regular preventative fungicide spray program.

Camellia leaf gall. Photo credit: N. Gregory

For more information

on pests and practices covered in this newsletter, call your County Extension Office

Helpful numbers to know:

Garden Line (for home gardeners only)	831-8862
New Castle County Extension	831-2506
Kent County Extension	730-4000
Sussex County Extension	856-7303

View more photos at http://extension.udel.edu.ornamentals/

Insects (continued)

crawlers settling on leaves for the summer until they migrate back to the stems to overwinter as female scales. Egg masses may contain greater than 1,000 eggs.

Cottony maple leaf scale (*P. acericola*) occurs on many plants, but most often on maples, dogwoods, black gum, and Pieris. Adults and egg masses are found all over the plant, but usually on the leaves. This is the least common of the three species.

Many predators and parasites feed on these scales, which helps keep their populations in check. Dormant oil treatments may provide some control; however, treatments targeting crawlers are more effective. Horticultural oil, insect growth regulators (Distance or Talus), neonicotinoids, insecticidal soap, abamectin, flupyradifurone, and pyrethroids are other options.

TURF

John Emerson
Nutrient Management Agent

CORE AERIFICATION OF TURF is ideally done in April, May, or September, October. Benefits from core aeration, include alleviation of soil compaction, stimulation of new roots, reduction of thatch, faster soil drying, better water penetration and infiltration, improved soil wetting, increased gas exchange and efficient nutrient uptake. Grass is better able to withstand the summer stresses in Delaware when core aeration is incorporated into a yearly turf management plan. Ideally, turf should be actively growing before core aeration, to allow grass to heal quickly when injured by pulling out cores. Mowing and rainfall will help break up the cores that lay on the lawn surface. Always use a hollow tine core aerator to pull out plugs, rather than a solid tine aerator that simply pushes holes in the ground and compacts soil.

Editor: Susan Barton
Extension Horticulturist

UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

GROWING DEGREE DAYS
AS OF May 19, 2020

- Swarthmore College (Delaware County, PA) = 262 ('19 =535)
- Fischer Greenhouse (New Castle County, DE = 244 ('19 = 564)
- Research & Education Center - Gorgetown (Sussex County, DE) = 360 ('19 = 657)

Close cottony camellia scale. Photo credit: B. Kunkel

Azalea leaf gall Photo credit: N. Gregory