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Kansas Insect Newsletter

For Agribusinesses, Applicators, Consultants, and Extension Personnel

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New and current.....



Trap collection of ash/lilac borer

As determined by pheromone sticky trap collections, the 2006 flights of the ash/lilac borer began April 13 in the Manhattan area. This closely corresponds to the April 11 trap catch reported by Chuck Otte in the Junction City area. The rule-of-thumb for the initiation of insecticide treatments against ash/lilac borers is 10 days after the appearance detection of first male moths. Thus, insecticide treatments in northern Kansas should be underway. Not having trapping information from southern Kansas, but employing the general rule that insect activities in southern Kansas typically are two weeks ahead of northern Kansas, treatment initiation should be well underway.

For ash trees, sprays should be applied to entire tree trunks and larger limbs within sprayer's reach. If necessary, **WITH GREAT CARE**, use a step ladder to gain access to larger limbs beyond reach from ground level. Treatment coverage is more difficult for lilac and privet bushes and hedges due to their dense and low-growing nature of the twigs and branches that "hide" the major stems/branches of the plantings.

The active ingredient permethrin is available to the homeowner for use in combating ash/lilac borers. It is important to read product labels. Thus, although **Borer Miner Killer Concentrate** might seem to be the product of choice by its mere market trade name, ash/lilac borers and ash trees do not appear on the product label. And although lilacs do appear on the product label, it is registered for use against foliar pests only. Rather, consider **Hi-Yield Indoor/Outdoor Broad Use Insecticide** or **Hi-Yield Lawn, Garden, Pet and Livestock Insect Controls** ---- each of these is registered for use against ash/lilac borers on trees and

shrubs. Product labels indicate that an initial treatment be followed by a second treatment 4 weeks later.

And approaching the finish line.....

It constant source of amazement is how quickly time passes. European pine sawflies and eastern tent caterpillars are nearly a month into their developmental cycle. And while they once were barely detectable due to their inability to cause much noticeable feeding damage when small, they are approaching the end of their feeding cycles.

Individual European pine sawfly larvae clusters have merged, and are rapidly consuming entire needles of each branch upon which they are congregated. In concert, they move to the next adjacent branch and repeat their feeding frenzy. The resultant is that they have given away their presence by virtue of “naked branches” which draw the attention of the “now-alarmed” homeowner. European pine sawfly larvae are easily eliminated using any number of insecticides available through local retail outlets marketing lawn and garden merchandise/products



Clustered European pine sawfly larvae



Entire needles consumed



Damaged Mugo Pine

Eastern tent caterpillars and their “tents” are more readily visible as they increase in size. While feeding forays are concentrated on leaves adjacent to web masses, damage becomes more widespread in their constant search for an additional food source. There is little point in implementing control at this point in their feeding cycle. Simply let them run their course. After caterpillars have “disappeared”, trees will put out a new flush of leaves, and it will be as if the tent caterpillars never occurred.



Defoliation - May 11



Defoliation - May 26

Bob Bauernfeind

Carpenter Bees (*Xylocopa virginica*):

Beginning April 13, 2006 Carpenter bees were seen in the Manhattan area resulting in several phone calls to the office. Typically, carpenter bees are first seen around the last week of April/early May and can be

noticed as late as mid-June. Carpenter bees are often confused with bumble bees since they are about the same size. The difference is the black, non-hairy, metallic-like abdomen.

A picture of a hole from house siding is below. Most are approximately ½-inch or about the size of a dime. For a good photo of damage and an adult go to http://www.pollinator.com/gallery/xylocopa_virginica.htm.

Home and business owners call complaining of “dive-bombing” or “attacking” behavior. These are usually the male carpenter bees which vigorously defend their mating territories against anyone or anything which enters the area. Most complaints will involve people, kids or pets. Males do not sting, in fact, they have no stinger. Female bees can sting, but rarely do.

Recommended control is to identify the carpenter bee holes. Using a duster container with a pointed end, apply permethrin or malathion dust directly into the hole(s). Wait approximately 24 to 48 hours after application of product to allow the bees to adequately spread the dust throughout their galleries which usually run horizontal 6 to 7-inches past the entrance. After waiting, plug the hole with a cork, plaster, putty, wood plug or other appropriate material. Seal the area with paint, varnish or other sealer for the best protection against future attacks.

Properly sealing holes made by carpenter bees is important to prevent other organisms such as wood-destroying fungi or other stinging insects from moving into these galleries. Carpenter bees ‘prefer’ unfinished wood to those which have a good sealant or coat of paint. However, this does not mean they will not attack sealed wood surfaces.

Some other state extension publications list ‘Sevin dust’ (carbaryl) as an alternative for control in the holes. In Kansas, carbaryl dust is not labeled for this use. Labels should list the structure as the site of application OR under the “Pests controlled” section of a label, ‘carpenter bees’, ‘wood-destroying insects’, ‘bees and wasps’, or some variation of these should be listed to use that pesticide product.



Carpenter bee damage

Sharon Dobesh

Honey Bee Swarms:

During the last week-plus honey bee swarm calls increased dramatically. They have slowed down with the cooler temperatures lately. If you know of a beekeeper in your area which will collect swarms, please refer homeowners to them.

In the Entomology Department, we are trying to get a more comprehensive list of beekeepers who are willing collect swarms. There is currently a request with the Northeast Kansas Beekeepers Association and with the Kansas Honey Producers Association for a list of beekeepers willing to collect swarms. At this time we only have a few names in the local Manhattan area, one in Topeka and one in the Ottawa area.

Honey bee swarms can form for several reasons, however, during spring, it is usually a result of the increasing numbers in a hive and needing more room, or due to a failing queen. Swarm sizes can vary from a handful of bees to large swarms. Some swarms can take 50% to 90% of the hive with a swarm, and does usually include the queen.

Swarms will hang out on structures (buildings, homes, bridges), or in trees. Most active swarms try to find a new place to set up a hive within a few hours. However, this can take from a few hours to several days depending on the weather conditions and other factors such as ease of finding a new hive site.

If you need a contact for bee swarms, please contact Sharon Dobesh (785-532-4748 or sdobesh@oznet.ksu.edu) for beekeepers that we are aware of or I can refer you to the president of the Kansas Honey Producers Association to try to locate a beekeeper in your area.

Sharon Dobesh

Termite Season:

Among other swarming insects this spring will be termites. Thus far I am only aware of a few swarms in Kansas, one as early as February. During 2005, several pest control companies in Northeast Kansas were reporting lower than usual termite swarm calls, some by as much as 60% less. We have no way of knowing if this trend from last year will continue.

If you discover a swarm or termites in your home, the first thing to remember is not to panic. Termite control can be confusing, overwhelming and, for some, one of the most expensive undertakings in home repair and maintenance. Homeowners need to make sure they are comfortable and confident that the right decision was made.

Take the time to call at least 3 different companies for estimates. Several companies offer free estimates. Before hiring a company, carefully read and understand the contract, ask questions about the contract, products and procedures used, and be sure to ask for company references. Follow up with those references, and again, ask questions.

Other ways homeowners can investigate the companies they're considering to use is to call the Kansas Better Business Bureau and the Kansas Department of Agriculture-Pesticide and Fertilizer Program. The Better Business Bureau can let you know if they've received complaints about the company. Through the KDA-Pesticide and Fertilizer Program, homeowners may file an Open Records Request form to obtain a 'Business Compliance History', and learn if companies are licensed pesticide businesses.

When reviewing bids from companies, all bids should be relatively similar for similar product treatments. When comparing a bait station monitoring system with a barrier treatment, cost can, and usually will, differ significantly. Always request a copy of the label for the product to be used in the termite treatment, bait or barrier. The label will answer most homeowner questions during, and after the treatment is completed.

If a bait station monitoring system is chosen for control, clearly understand the monitoring and baiting schedule the company contract states to be conducted. Also, if homeowners have asked for a copy of the label, the contract monitoring schedule can be compared with the recommended schedule by the bait system manufacturer.

Today there are several options for termite control and homeowners need to take the time to understand termite control options, what to expect during and after an application, and understand what activities or actions might void the contract with the application company.

Sharon Dobesh

Alfalfa:

Alfalfa weevil larval feeding was more than 90% completed by 21 April in all fields visited south of Highway 36. Thus from the time the majority of the eggs hatched, about the week of 3 April, until adult emergence, there was only 2-3 weeks. This is abnormally fast but a reflection of the abnormally warm, dry weather during that time. There is some concern regarding adults feeding on foliage but we really don't have any information regarding an adult treatment threshold or efficacy of adult insecticide treatments. Feeding damage caused by adult weevils has generally been due to accumulating adults as the hay is swathed and therefore there are many adults concentrated in the windrows. Sometimes then they fed on the alfalfa stems causing "barking". However, adults probably won't consume as much as larvae, therefore, even if they remain in the fields for a few days they shouldn't cause as serious economic loss. As warmer weather returns the adults should disperse to over summering sites.

Alfalfa weevil development was 7-10 days behind, north of Highway 36. Their development and consequent feeding may not be as compressed as it has been south of Highway 36, because of the return of cooler weather, so continued monitoring is recommended.

Jeff Whitworth

Weekly Report from the Kansas State University Insect Diagnostic Laboratory:

The following samples were submitted to the Insect Diagnostic Laboratory from April 24 through April 26, 2006:

4-24-2006, Shawnee County: Clover Mites.

4-25-2006, Ellis County: Alfalfa Weevil on crop.

4-26-2006, Leavenworth County: Mantid Egg Case on Rose-of-Sharon.

4-26-2006, Shawnee County: Ground Beetle in hotel room.

If there are any questions regarding these samples or about the identification of any arthropod please contact the Insect Diagnostician at 785-532-4739 or at bbrown@ksu.edu.

Brand names appearing in this publication are for product identification purposes only. No endorsement is intended, nor is criticism implied of similar products not mentioned.

Sincerely,

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