



What's In Bloom

Catalpa: end
Clematis: full bloom
Climbing roses: full bloom
Cranberry viburnum: bloom
Elderberry: full bloom
Fringetree: end

Japanese tree lilac: full bloom
Mockorange: end
Privet: full bloom
Russian olive: end
Shrub roses: full bloom
Smokebush: full bloom
Smooth hydrangea: full bloom
Snowball viburnum: end

Insect Activity

DECIDUOUS TREES

Elm Leaf Beetle



Elm leaf beetle is a defoliator of elms, and both the adults and the larvae feed on the leaves, skeletonizing them. These insects overwinter as adults, and in spring, they emerge and feed on the foliage. Soon after, they lay eggs that hatch into larvae. The larvae feed for several weeks, and then pupate in the soil. Adults emerge in early summer for a second generation. First generation larvae are feeding now, so if you see adults or larvae feeding on your elm leaves, now would be the time to treat them.

If your elm tree is healthy, however, it can tolerate some feeding by this beetle. Also, natural enemies will also help keep the population in check. Populations fluctuate from year to year, so it is a good idea to monitor your trees to determine if treatments are necessary.

One of the most effective options is a systemic fungicide ap-

plied to the soil (where there is no possibility of spray drift). If the tree is large, a professional arborist may have to apply the treatment. Options are Merit and Bayer Advanced Tree & Shrub Insect Control. Neem oil is another option, as well as Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*--Dipel, for example). Bt must be applied to very young larvae.

Euonymus Scale



Euonymus scale is an armored scale that sucks plant nutrients from leaves, stems, and bark. It does not secrete honeydew, but it does weaken the plant over time, causing wilted, yellow leaves. Small amounts of this scale should not be harmful, but if your stems are covered, now is the time to start treatment as the crawler stage is active.

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Horticultural oil (Green Light Hort. Oil Spray, Green Light Scalecide) works well, and is safe to use. Malathion also works, but is harmful to beneficial insects.

Lilac Root Weevil



Adult lilac root weevil has begun feeding on a wide variety of plants. The damage caused by adult feeding is easy to see, but does not cause significant plant damage. They feed at night by cutting almost semi-circular notches at the leaf edges. As larvae, they feed on the roots of a variety of woody plants.

We do not recommend treating for lilac root weevil unless the owner feels the damage is too aesthetically severe. Adults can be controlled with pyrethroids applied to the foliage and to the base of the plant where the adults hide during the day.

Larvae can be treated with a drench of imidacloprid (Merit) or with parasitic nematodes of the genus *Heterorhabditis* ([click here](#) for supplier). Treatments should be made now and again in early summer when adult feeding on leaves is observed and egg hatch usually begins. Both imidacloprid and *Heterorhabditis* nematodes require that the soil be irrigated immediately after application and kept moist for several days afterward.

Two-Spotted Spider Mite



Two-spotted spider mites are just starting to become active with the warmer weather. They thrive in hot, dry conditions (when humans are wilting), feeding on more than 180 different plant species worldwide. They feed with piercing-sucking mouthparts, causing stippling of the leaves and loss of vigor due to decreased chlorophyll. These spider mites can be around all summer, and when the population is very large, webbing is often visible on the undersurface of the leaves.

Plants that are water-stressed are more vulnerable to spider mites, and dust that settles on leaves also exacerbates the problem. Also, excessive use of certain pesticides that kill a variety of insects (pyrethroids, organophosphates) also can spawn mite outbreaks. These chemicals kill the beneficial predatory mites that often keep spider mite pests in check.

Keep trees well-watered and minimize dusty situations. For severe mite outbreaks, control materials include acephate (Ortho Systemic Insect Killer Concentrate, Bonide Systemic Insecticide Liquid), sulfur (Bonide Sulfur Dust, Ferti-Lome Dusting Sulphur), horticultural oil (Ferti-Lome Scalecide), copper sulfate (Bonide Garden Dust, Green Light Rose and Flower Dust), malathion, or Sevin.

CONIFEROUS TREES

Spruce Spider Mite



Spruce spider mites are most active in “cooler” weather, i.e., spring and fall, on over 40 species of conifers. They overwinter as eggs on needles and hatch in early spring, sucking nutrients from the needles as they develop into adults. Several generations occur each season, with each adult laying up to 25 eggs over a period of a few days.

When temperatures consistently get hot (in the low 90s), adults lay “dormant” eggs, which lay in wait until fall, when it is again cooler. Many predators feed on these dormant eggs over the summer.

Symptoms include tiny yellow spotting and sometimes webbing can be seen. Sometimes the stippling symptoms are not manifested on the tree until the summer, when the spider

mites are not active. For this reason, it is important to monitor your trees for this insect. Beat a branch over a white cloth or cardboard tray to dislodge the insects. The mites will appear as tiny black or olive-green specks moving very slowly on the tray. Smear the mite across the tray. If the smear is greenish, it is spruce spider mite. If it is black, brown, or red, it may be a beneficial mite.

If you know you have spider mites, dormant oil sprays in late winter/early summer are very helpful. You can also apply horticultural oil/insecticidal soap sprays on the insects directly. Other products work as well, such as Ortho Systemic Insect Killer Concentrate (contains acephate) or malathion.

Precautionary Statement: All pesticides have benefits and risks, however following the label will maximize the benefits and reduce risks. Pay attention to the directions for use and follow precautionary statements. Pesticide labels are considered legal documents containing instructions and limitations. Inconsistent use of the product or disregarding the label is a violation of both federal and state laws. The pesticide applicator is legally responsible for proper use.

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