

Insects



White Pine Aphid

Frank A. Hale, professor

*originally developed by Jaime Yanes, Jr., former assistant professor,
and Harry E. Williams, professor emeritus
Department of Entomology and Plant Pathology*

The white pine aphid, *Cinara strobi* (Fitch), occurs wherever Eastern white pines are grown. This pest uses its needlelike mouthparts to suck sap from twigs and branches. Severely infested parts of trees turn yellow and drop their needles.

White pine aphid adults are large (¼ inch long), long-legged, and spiderlike in appearance. The body is shiny dark brown with a white stripe down the middle of the back. White powdery spots on the sides are often present.

During the fall, winged females lay blackish eggs, end-to-end, in a row of eight or more on the needles. This aphid usually overwinters in the egg stage; however, if the weather is mild, some individuals from the last generation survive through the winter. Eggs hatch in the spring and resulting wingless females produce living young. As the season progresses, several overlapping generations may occur. By late summer, large populations may be present.

Droughty weather at this time will increase needle drop. Each new generation moves to fresh sites on the tree to feed. Adults of the last generation of the summer produce overwintering eggs in the fall.

Heavy infestations of aphids may kill young trees or may cause reduced growth. As the aphid feeds, it excretes honeydew. This sticky substance is the excrement from the aphid. A black sooty mold is commonly found growing on the honeydew. Sooty

mold reduces the quality of trees and may reduce the amount of sunlight available to the leaves. Ants also may be found feeding on the honeydew.



photos: David Cook

White Pine Aphid.



Control Measures

White pine aphid infestations may be prevented by treating trees with dormant oil before growth starts in the spring. Oil sprays are more effective at controlling white pine aphid eggs when the daytime temperature is above 50 F. For chemical control recommendations for spring and summer infestation refer to: <https://tiny.utk.edu/ag/insectandmite>.

Treat individually infested trees when more than 30 percent of the shoots have aphid colonies. Always refer to the insecticide label to make sure that the insecticide can be legally applied on ornamental plants at your site, such as residential landscape or commercial nursery.

Control ant colonies by applying bifenthrin or cyfluthrin to the mulch or ground around the base of the tree and the bark of the lower tree trunk. These ants feed on honeydew and protect aphids by discouraging the natural enemies of the aphids. This protection aids in the buildup of aphid populations.



photo: David Cook

Feeding.



photo: David Cook

Eggs on pine needle.

Disclaimer

This publication contains pesticide recommendations that are subject to change at any time. The recommendations in this publication are provided only as a guide. It is always the pesticide applicator's responsibility, by law, to read and follow all current label directions for the specific pesticide being used. The label always takes precedence over the recommendations found in this publication.

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