



May 30, 2003

PEST PLAYS HAVOC IN CEDAR WINDBREAKS

Does your cedar windbreak seem thin? Are you able to see through it this spring? Have you noticed bag-like things hanging from the branches? If so -- you may have an infestation of bag worms.

There is a large infestation of this insect in our area and they can destroy cedar windbreaks if not controlled. They can do a lot of damage to low growing juniper foundation plantings around houses as well. Check your junipers for bagworms now. Bagworms take the leaves surrounding their working/feeding area to coat the outside of the bag making it blend into its surroundings.

Bagworms hatching in late May and early June are very small, light colored worms with a dark head. The bags they hatch from are detected much easier than the worms that do the damage. They begin forming silky thread-like filaments right after hatching. Bagworm eggs overwinter within bags fastened to twigs.

Eggs hatch in May and early June. The best time to control bagworms is when they are in this larval, caterpillar stage. They have not formed the protective cases or "bags" and the chemical can come into contact with the caterpillar. The residual chemical left on the plant is ingested by the larvae as they feed causing a second mode of action for the product to control the insect.

In the summer, bags will begin to appear larger and more visible. Worm activity is at its height and control is becoming less effective. Bagworms feed mostly on juniper and arborvitae evergreens, but will feed on spruce and shorter needled pines. They may feed on deciduous shade and orchard trees and ornamental shrubs, but heavy infestations are unusual. Since deciduous plants can grow new leaves, damage is not as serious.

Bagworm infestations on smaller trees and shrubs can be controlled by removing bags before the eggs begin to hatch. Destroy the bags by crushing, immersing in soapy water or burning. If bags containing larvae are discarded on the ground, it is possible the larvae may return to the host plant.

Chemical controls are effective if applied during the early stages of development. For most effective insecticidal control and prevention of damage to trees and shrubs, apply sprays from early May to mid-June. Because of the 3 or 4 week hatching period, two spray applications may be warranted for maximum control of heavy infestations.

The following insecticides are registered for control of bagworms: Orthene, Dipel, Sevin, Dursban, Diazinon, Cygon, Malathion, Mavrik, and Eight. Do not apply Orthene to elm, crabapple, maple, cottonwood, redbud or weigelia. Malathion should not be applied on Canaerti juniper. Wettable powders are less likely to cause injury to host plants than liquid formulations. Use all insecticides with caution to avoid injury to bees, animals, or excessive exposure to humans. Always read, understand, and follow label directions. Remember that the label is the law. For pictures of bagworms, go to <http://gage.unl.edu/hort/Bagworms.htm#bagworms> For more



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