

North Carolina Pest News

Departments of Entomology and Plant Pathology



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In This Week's Issue . . .

CAUTION !

The information and recommendations in this newsletter are applicable to North Carolina and may not apply in other areas.

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See current and archived issues of the *North Carolina Pest News* on the Internet at: http://ipm.ncsu.edu/current_ipm/pest_news.html

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND GENERAL INFORMATION

Wheat Research Field Days Schedule for North Carolina

The locations and dates for the 2011 Small Grain Field Days are provided below. These field days are sponsored by the NC Cooperative Extension Service, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, NC State University.

Southern Coastal Plains Small Grains Extension Field Day: Tuesday, May 10, 2011 at 4:00 p.m.; Wilton Shooter and Sons Farms, Route 301, Rowland, NC; Leaders: Georgia Love (telephone: 919-737-2884) and Dr. Randy Wiesz (telephone: 919-515-5824); additional information is available at http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/index.php?page=events&event_id=21447.

Distributed in furtherance of the acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. North Carolina State University and North Carolina A&T State University commit themselves to positive action to secure equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, national origin, religion, sex, age, or disability. In addition, the two Universities welcome all persons without regard to sexual orientation. North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and local governments cooperating.

Beaufort County Field Day: Thursday, May 12, 2011 at 4:00 p.m.; Benson and Russ Farms, 3761 Old 97 Road, Pantego, NC 27860; Leader: Gaylon Ambrose (telephone: 252-975-5887).

Union County Field Day: Tuesday, May 17, 2011 at 4:30 p.m.; Everette Medlin Farm, 6602 Morgan Mill Road, Monroe, NC 28110; Leader: Andrew Gardner (telephone: 704-283-3739).

Northeast Ag Expo: Thursday, May 19, 2011 at 3:00 p.m.; 102 White Hat Road (park at White Seed Lot), Hertford, NC 27944; Leader: Lewis Smith (telephone: 252-426-5428); additional information is available at http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/index.php?page=events&event_id=20985.

FIELD AND FORAGE CROPS

From: Jack Bacheler, Extension Entomologist

Brief Update on Cotton Insects

This week, I'll keep things short with cotton planting probably just resuming. I do not expect to be receiving any cotton insect reports for about another week, or so. However, in some years thrips are evident in significant numbers before cotton has reached the cotyledon stage. Because of the predicted later 2011 thrips flights, we hope that damaging levels of thrips on cotton just coming out of the ground will be rare this year.

We were able to plant five thrips tests at the Upper Coastal Plain Research Station in Rocky Mount on May 3, with the help of Dominic Reisig's crew. With the following night's rainfall and the following two nights' temperatures in the mid-40's, these conditions should be a good test for both the vigor of the young seedlings and for the "ability" of at-planting treatments to withstand unfavorable conditions.

Thrips studies planned for 2011. This growing season, our projects will evaluate: 1) all of the old and new seed treatments; 2) the timing and efficacy of foliar treatments for thrips; 3) the potential impact of a starter fertilizer in getting seedlings past the thrips-susceptible stage quicker; 4) increased amounts of insecticidal seed coats for extended thrips control; 5) the impact of early versus late cotton planting for thrips control; and 6) the effectiveness of some new in-furrow spray treatments for thrips control. If any of the above treatments extends the duration of thrips control on seedling cotton by about a week to 10 days beyond the three weeks of protection commonly observed, this will be a major advancement in controlling this consistently troublesome pest.

No oddballs yet. So far I have not received reports of burrower bugs, grasshoppers, snails, vegetable weevils, cutworms, sugarcane beetles, false chinch bugs or other early season oddball pests on cotton. However, a growing season free of one or more of our unusual insect pests would be rare.

Cotton Insect Teletip Down

As result of North Carolina State University's recent switch to a new telephone system, University Communication Services personnel are trying to reestablish a mailbox so that producers, Extension agents and consultants have telephone access to our Wednesday cotton insect updates. This information is also available at <http://ipm.ncsu.edu/cotton/insectcorner/radio/index.html>.

From: Dominic Reisig, Extension Entomologist

Kudzu Bug is Confirmed in More North Carolina Counties

Kudzu bug (a.k.a. bean plataspid, *Megacopta cribraria* Fabricus) has been confirmed on kudzu in Cleveland, Rutherford, and Lincoln counties in North Carolina (Fig. 1). Previously it had only been found in Macon County (in 2010). Because we have not extensively searched for this pest in the state, it could be on kudzu in your area. Kudzu bug is a legume feeder and will feed on soybean. We are concerned that this new invasive insect will become a major yield reducer in the future. It is a piercing sucking pest, like the stink bug, but it feeds on the stems and leaves of the plant, rather than the pods.

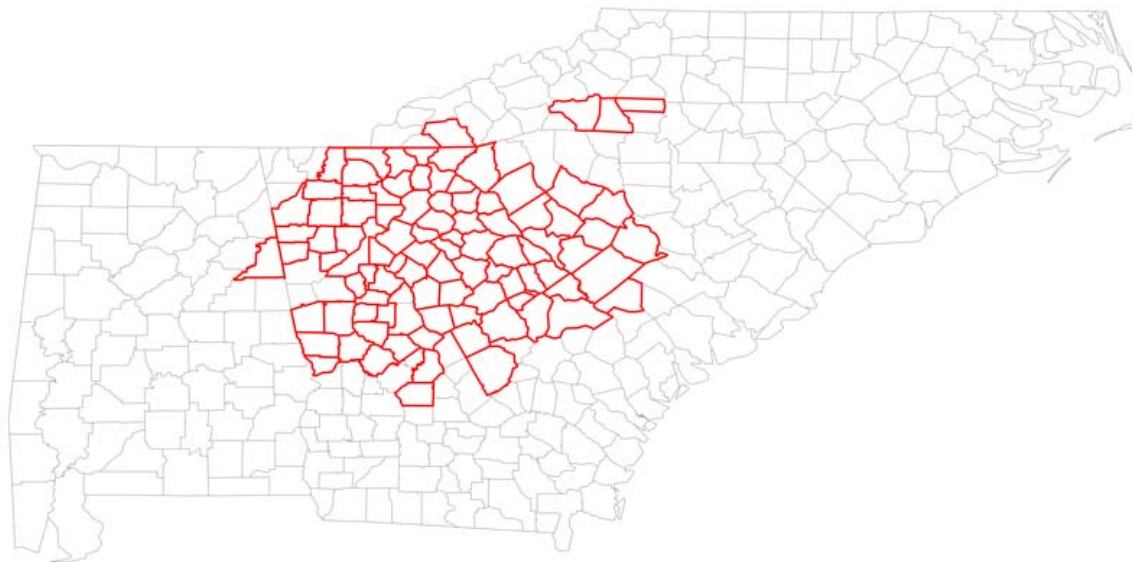


Fig. 1. Counties outlined in red indicate positive finds for kudzu bug.

In Georgia, the kudzu bug appeared on soybeans on July 1, 2010 near field margins. This pest is a strong flier and seems to be spreading rapidly. A preliminary threshold from Georgia data is 3 to 5 bugs per plant (one bug per sweep) in mid- to late-August. Large nymphs (Fig. 2) should be present before treating and these appeared in late-August in Georgia in 2010. A single pyrethroid insecticide application should be effective to reduce abundances, but this pest may migrate and re-infest treated fields. In a series of nine replicated tests conducted on soybean in Georgia in 2010, this pest accounted for an average yield loss of almost 20% in untreated plots.

We are tracking this pest and would appreciate if you would contact Dominic Reisig (electronic mail: dominic_reisig@ncsu.edu; telephone: 252-793-4428 x133) if you find this pest in a “non-confirmed”

county. If you could also provide GPS coordinates, **as well as the plant on which it was found**, it would enhance our ability to respond to this new threat. Please use caution not to spread this pest from field to field if you find this pest.



Fig. 2. Kudzu bug adults (two pictures on the left) and nymphs (picture on the right). Images from P. Roberts.

ORNAMENTALS AND TURF

From: Steve Bambara, Extension Entomologist

Southern Pine Beetles

Low levels of Southern pine beetles are probably present across the state (and south) at all times. Periods of stress to a tree(s) may allow the beetles to outbreak and create enough damage to kill a tree (Fig. 3). Drought is a big “stresser” and trigger. Poor tree hydration may prevent sufficient sap production for the tree to protect itself from beetle attack.



Fig. 3. Pine stand two years after Southern pine beetle attack. Image from Steve Bambara.



Fig. 4. Southern pine beetle. Image by David Almquist (<http://www.forestryimages.org/>).

A Southern pine beetle (Fig. 4) outbreak could be just a few trees, an acre, or many acres. Now, if a tree is dying for any reason, other types of bark beetles that look similar can move in. Only a knowledgeable person could tell if Southern pine beetles killed a tree, or if different bark beetles are attacking a declining tree.

The prevailing recommendations, formulated many years ago, are that a tree trunk could be sprayed with insecticide to reduce further attack by new or additional beetles. It seems to have some protective benefit, but it is in no way a rescue treatment and would have no effect on any beetles already in a tree. Trunk sprays are not practical for large numbers of trees and are very expensive. Another common recommendation is that an infested tree could be cut and destroyed in order to decrease the reservoir of new beetles that could spread to other trees.

A severely infested tree and one that is showing symptoms of decline will not recover. It may remain standing for many months, but becomes a risk or hazard in an urban setting and may need to be removed before it falls. Unsolicited tree removal businesses may approach a homeowner with a proposal to remove a pine tree. Homeowners should request a second opinion and estimate. A professional arborist could determine if Southern pine beetles are present. Remember, a tree that is dying and poses a hazard should be removed before it does harm, regardless of why it died or whether it is a reservoir for Southern pine beetles. Are Southern pine beetles a threat to homeowners? Well, it could be, but if a lone pine tree in a yard is dying, that wouldn't be the first thing I would think of. If it is dying, and is a potential hazard, it should be removed. Common tree stresses are drought, flooding, construction damage, soil compaction, etc. (let's not forget tornadoes!).

For more information on Southern pine beetles, see *Ornamental and Turf Insect Note No. 82* on the web at <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/O&T/trees/note82/note82.html>.

Magical Exposure

Periodical cicadas are definitely emerging (Fig. 5), as we mentioned in the previous issue of the *North Carolina Pest News*. Send us your best picture and we'll post some of them!



Fig. 5. Cicadas. Image by G. Davidson, Chatham County, NC.

From: Steven Frank, Extension Entomologist

Crapemyrtle Aphids Not So Bad

Crapemyrtle aphids are common pests of crape myrtles. Small populations are starting to occur on the North Carolina State University campus. Feeding by these aphids can result in leaf yellowing and distortion. However the primary “damage” caused by these critters is honeydew deposited on cars. Crapemyrtle aphids often do not require insecticide treatments because they are kept in check by natural enemies. Currently populations are still small, but if you can find many green lacewing and lady beetle eggs and larvae. In this way crape myrtles serve as a nursery for natural enemies! For more information on this pest, including control options, visit *Ornamentals and Turf Insect Note No. 31* on the web at <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/O&T/shrubs/note31/note31.html> and follow @OrnaPests on Twitter.

Flower Thrips Attack Knockout Roses

The past couple years we have seen a lot of damage by flower thrips, *Frankliniella tritici*, on knockout roses (Fig. 6) in nurseries. They have proven a formidable enemy and the best control will come with early identification of the problem. Flower thrips are smaller than western flower thrips and can be beaten from plants into a tray or onto a clipboard. They cause characteristic deformation and discoloration of foliage on roses and other plants. Management is the same as for other thrips. For more information about these and other pests, visit *Ornamentals and Turf Insect Note No. 21* at <http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/ent/notes/O&T/flowers/note21/note21.html> and follow @OrnaPests on Twitter.



Fig. 6. Discolored, deformed leaves from flower thrips on knockout roses. Image by Steve Frank.

Recommendations for the use of chemicals are included in this publication as a convenience to the reader. The use of brand names and any mention or listing of commercial products or services in this publication does not imply endorsement by North Carolina State University, North Carolina A&T State University or North Carolina Cooperative Extension nor discrimination against similar products or services not mentioned. Individuals who use chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. Be sure to obtain current information about usage regulations and examine a current product label before applying any chemical. For assistance, contact an agent of North Carolina Cooperative Extension.