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FOREST & WOODLAND HEALTH INFORMATION ALERT-APRIL 2016

PINYON NEEDLE SCALE EGGS HAVE ALREADY BEGUN TO HATCH IN THE SEDONA AREA

Pinyon needle scale eggs have begun to hatch in the Sedona area. Egg hatch was noted last week from Midgely Bridge in Oak Creek Canyon, to Uptown Sedona and over to the Factory Outlets in the Village of Oak Creek.

Due to recent warm temperatures experienced in the area, many of the eggs have already begun to hatch. The “crawlers” are emerging from the egg stage on the pinyons and attaching themselves to the needles on the ends of the branches.



This is the stage of the complex life cycle for this insect, which initiates new infestations of pinyons every year. **The crawlers appear as tiny black dots stuck to the needles on the ends of the branches.**

It may be too late to remove the egg masses, which were laid by the female scales on the pinyons in February and March. However, not all eggs hatch at the same time. Check your trees and remove any egg masses whenever possible.

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Egg masses look like dirty cotton lint and are mainly located at the base of small pinyons. Unhatched eggs are protected by the cottony material, and have a distinct yellow coloration which stains your fingers.



On larger trees, egg masses can also be found at the base, on the trunk, at branch junctures and on the underside of larger branches.

Control of this stage of the insect on larger trees involves Step 1: Washing the eggs off branches and trunk with a garden hose equipped with a high pressure nozzle and allowing eggs and litter one to two days to dry. Step 2: Raking eggs, litter and debris out from under the tree, and Step 3: Disposing of the eggs in plastic garbage bags. Raking may not be practical if heavy brush, rocks or other material is present under the tree. However, washing the eggs off the tree is still recommended.

The scale crawler stage on the needles can be chemically treated using an EPA-approved insecticide. The insecticide label should state that the chemical is for treatment of “**scale crawlers.**” Trees should be sprayed as soon as possible, before the scale insect develops a thicker protective cover on the needles.

CAUTION! Insecticides used improperly can be injurious to humans, animals, and plants. Follow directions and heed all precautions on the labels. **Contact a qualified and licensed professional for the proper treatment of your tree(s).**

Unless there are local water restrictions, consider slow, deep, and infrequent watering of your infested pinyons around your home, as soon as the hot temperatures return. Utilize a properly installed and maintained drip system, or use a soaker hose placed around the dripline of the tree. Continue watering infrequently until the “monsoon” rains are well established.

Also refer to the Cooperative Extension watering brochure at:
<http://cals.arizona.edu/pubs/water/az1298.pdf>.

For further information about this spreading native insect in the Sedona area, contact: Bob Celaya, Forest Health Specialist, Office of the State Forester in Phoenix at (602) 771-1415
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