



# PENNSYLVANIA'S CHRISTMAS TREE SCOUTING REPORT

## MONDAY, JUNE 26, 2017

Weekly newsletter compiled by Sarah Pickel, PA Department of Agriculture. This week's scouting data contributors: Jim Fogarty (Halabura Tree Farm), Karen Najda (PDA), Sarah Pickel and Cathy Thomas (PDA).

### GROWING DEGREE DAY TOTALS FROM 6/25/17:

LOCATION	GDD TOTAL
Elizabethtown, Lancaster Co.	1269.5
Indiana, Indiana Co.	1025
Montoursville, Lycoming Co.	1062.5
New Cumberland, York Co.	1346
New Ringgold, Schuylkill Co.	1183.5

### EUROPEAN PINE SAWFLIES

In Bucks and Cumberland Counties last week, sawfly larvae were found feeding on pine hosts and causing damage. There are several species of sawfly which feed on pines. The sawflies found on



European pine sawfly larvae [S. Gardosik, PDA]

Eastern white pine in Bucks county were European pine sawfly and the sawflies on red pine in Cumberland County were redheaded pine sawfly. The feeding from very young larvae will strip needles down to straw-like strands which curl. As the sawfly larvae grow, however, they will eat whole needles down to the needle base and can defoliate sections of branches. They are most often found feeding in colonies.

These larvae, which resemble caterpillars, are actually the larvae of an insect in the order of wasps and bees.

European sawfly larvae are gray-green with black heads. Redheaded pine sawfly larvae have yellow bodies with rows of black spots on their bodies and red heads (though the heads are brown when they are very young).



Redheaded pine sawfly larvae [Albert (Bud) Mayfield, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org]

Sawfly larvae can be found feeding on foliage from May through late June/early July. If growers are seeing damage, they may want to consider either spot treating larvae groups with insecticide or treating a whole block if damage is at 25%. For more information on Sawflies, please visit: <http://extension.psu.edu/pests/ipm/agriculture/christmas-tree/pest-fact-sheets/needle-discoloration-and-injury/pine-sawflies.pdf>

### CRYPTOMERIA SCALE

Last week in Schuylkill and York Counties, growers have been making insecticide applications to true firs for control of Cryptomeria scale crawlers. The crawlers are tiny, lemon yellow, flat and oval-shaped. They are first stage nymphs which have moved out from under the protective covering of the mother scale to spread out along the underside of the needles and are most susceptible to control sprays. The mother scales resemble a fried egg because of their white, oval-shaped covering with a

yellow center. The crawler emergence may be drawn out over a period of approximately 3 weeks



*Cryptomeria scale adults and crawlers [S. Pickel, PDA]*

(although sometimes longer). After a short time, the moving crawlers will find a place on the underside of a needle to settle, or permanently stay in place. The settled crawlers insert a tubular mouth part to feed on the

plant fluids in the needles and begin to build up protective, white coverings. The feeding scales cause a yellow, speckled damage to the needles.

Although the preferred hosts are true firs, *Cryptomeria scale* can also be found on spruce, Douglas-fir and hemlocks. Growers who have seen damage and found evidence of the scales should consider taking control action. Two applications of an insecticide should be made (7-10 apart) so that the product will penetrate the lower, interior branches, where the scale infestation is concentrated. There is a second generation of this scale which occurs in early August (approximately 1,750-2,130 GDD), so growers who do not gain control at this time can have a second opportunity this season. For more information on *Cryptomeria scale*, visit:

<http://extension.psu.edu/ipm/program/christmas-tree/pest-fact-sheets/needle-discoloration-and-injury/cryptomeria-scale.pdf/view>

### **FLETCHER SCALE**

The time for treating Fletcher scale crawlers has come in Schuylkill County. This brown, dome-shaped, soft scale pest of arborvitae, yew and juniper can cause black sooty mold to develop on foliage and can also cause yellowing and defoliation. The growing degree day range for crawler emergence is 1029-1388 GDD. Growers who have had a problem with this scale should make an insecticide application when tiny, tan-colored crawlers are seen moving on the foliage.

For more information on Fletcher scale, visit: <http://ento.psu.edu/extension/factsheets/pdf/fletcherScale.pdf>



*Fletcher scale crawlers [J.A. Davidson, Univ. MD, College Pk, Bugwood.org]*

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCE**

More information on Christmas tree pests and production is available at the PSU Department of Entomology's Christmas tree site: <http://ento.psu.edu/extension/christmas-trees>.

The next scouting report will be available Friday, June 30, 2017.