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SP290-M Insects: Maple Petiole Borer

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Insects



Maple Petiole Borer

*Frank A. Hale, Professor
originally developed by Jaime Yanes, Jr., former Assistant Professor,
and Harry E. Williams, Professor Emeritus
Entomology and Plant Pathology*

The maple petiole borer, *Caulocampus acericaulis* (MacGillivray), was first introduced into the United States from Europe. This sawfly is wasp-like in appearance and is rarely seen because of its small size. Although several species of maple are subject to attack by this insect, sugar maples are preferred.

Life Cycle

Adult sawflies emerge in early to mid-April. After mating, the female uses her ovipositor (egg-laying structure) to puncture the petioles and lay a single egg near the leaf blades. The larvae are yellowish and smooth with brownish heads. Larvae are weevil-like in appearance because the abdominal legs are very small. Full grown larvae are one-third inch long. After hatching, larvae tunnel and consume the contents of the petioles about one-half inch from the leaf blade.

Early larval activity results in discoloration of the upper portion of the petiole. This area later becomes black and shrunken. The attached leaf shrivels and changes color. After a short period of time, the petioles break and damaged leaves fall to the ground (during late April to May). Larvae continue to feed in the portion of the petiole remaining attached to the twig for seven to ten days. Larvae drop to the ground, burrow down 2 to 3 inches into the soil and overwinter. In the spring, mature larvae pupate and emerge as adults in early to mid-April. There is one generation a year.



*Petiole hollowed out in sugar maple, larva
Charles D. Pless, University of Tennessee, www.forestryimages.org*

Control

Defoliation seldom exceeds a third of the total foliage. Damage of this type causes considerable concern to the homeowner. However, the leaf drop seldom causes injury to the tree and control recommendations are usually not warranted.

Some of the maple petiole borer damage can be prevented in the residential landscape by applying cyfluthrin (Advanced Garden Lawn and Garden Multi-Insect Killer) or imidacloprid plus cyfluthrin (Advanced Rose & Flower Insect Killer) sprays to the foliage in mid-April.

For commercial outdoor use: <http://eppserver.ag.utk.edu/redbook/pdf/ornamentalinsects.pdf>



Leaves severed from petioles in sugar maple
Charles D. Pless, University of Tennessee, www.forestryimages.org

Precautionary Statement

To protect people and the environment, pesticides should be used safely. This is everyone's responsibility, especially the user. Read and follow label directions carefully before you buy, mix, apply, store, or dispose of a pesticide. According to laws regulating pesticides, they must be used only as directed by the label. Persons who do not obey the law will be subject to penalties.

Disclaimer Statement

Pesticides recommended in this publication were registered for the prescribed uses when printed. Pesticides registrations are continuously reviewed. Should registration of a recommended pesticide be canceled, it would no longer be recommended by the University of Tennessee.

Use of trade or brand names in this publication is for clarity and information; it does not imply approval of the product to the exclusion of others which may be of similar, suitable composition, nor does it guarantee or warrant the standard of the product.

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