

# CHECKLIST OF COMMON INSECT RELATED EVENTS - SOUTHWESTERN COUNTY AREAS

**Note:** This is a generalized checklist of when some of the more important insect related events *tend* to occur in the Southwestern Area counties. Year to year variations are considerable and this should only be used as a guideline for introductory Master Gardeners to begin to anticipate and help recognize common insect occurrences. Your experiences will be invaluable to further modify and improve this to your local conditions.

Fact Sheets and Extension Bulletins are available that can supplement information on the referred events.

## January/February

### *Household Insects*

**Fungus gnats:** Adults commonly are observed around windows and around the soil of potted plants where they originate.

**Indian meal moth:** Adult moths emerge from stored foods and can be seen flying around homes.

**Carpet beetles:** Some adults may emerge and be found in homes.

**Boxelder bugs, conifer seed bugs, cluster flies:** Overwintered adults become active in and around homes.

**Firewood insects:** Bark beetles and wood borers emerge from stored wood in homes

**Swallow Bugs:** Overwintered swallow bugs start to become active in anticipation of returning migrant birds - and bite humans.

**Clover mites:** Migrations of mites into buildings may begin by late February, during warm winter days.

## Early March

### *Household Insects*

**Boxelder bugs, conifer seed bugs, cluster flies:** Overwintered adults become active in and around homes.

**Clover mites:** Migrations of mites into buildings may become noticeable; movement of outdoor host plants, such as grasses, may begin to produce injuries.

**Firewood insects:** Bark beetles and wood borers emerge from stored wood in homes.

**Swallow bugs:** Overwintered swallow bugs become very active and peak period of human bites can occur at this time.

### *Trees/Shrubs*

**Bullpine sawfly:** Overwintered larvae may be observed feeding on older needles of ponderosa pine.

**Oystershell scale:** Scrape scales with eggs off limbs of aspen, ash and other host plants.

**Dormant oils:** Many insects that winter on plants can be controlled with dormant season applications of horticultural oils.

**Ips/Engraver Beetles:** First flights of some species may occur by this time during warm seasons.

## Late March

### *Household/Miscellaneous*

**Millipedes:** Nuisance movements into homes occurs following wet weather.

**Ants:** Field ants forage in homes for sweet materials.

**Boxelder bugs, conifer seed bugs, cluster flies:** Overwintered adults become increasingly active in

and around homes during warm periods.

#### ***Trees/Shrubs***

**Ips beetles:** First flights of some species can be expected by this time. Preventive insecticide applications should be made before flights.

**Dormant oils:** Many insects that winter on plants can be controlled with dormant season applications of horticultural oils.

**Tiger moth:** Tents and actively feeding larvae may be observed in pinyon and juniper.

#### ***Lawns***

**Clover mites:** Mites are actively feeding on lawns near buildings and shrubs during warm days.

**Nightcrawlers:** Tunneling activities during spring can create lumpy lawns.

**Vole injury:** Tunneling injuries in lawns and girdling of shrubs may be evident as snow melts.

## **Early April**

#### ***Household/Miscellaneous Insects***

**Swallow bugs:** Overwintered swallow bugs become active in anticipate of returning migrant birds and bite humans.

**Carpet beetles:** Early spring is often the period when adult stages are most frequently encountered in homes.

**Tick season:** Tick season usually has started and typically persists until high temperatures occur in early summer.

**Ants:** Foraging by field ants for sweet materials intensifies in homes.

#### ***Trees/Shrub Insects***

**Ips beetles:** Major Ips beetle flights are likely to have started by this time and may threaten at risk spruce and pines.

**Cooley spruce gall:** Controls are best applied before the insects make the egg sack in late April or early May.

**Southwestern pine tip moth:** Adults begin to emerge from pupae at the base of trees.

**White pine weevil:** Overwintered adults may become active and move to terminals of spruce to feed

**Borers:** Remove and destroy damaged tree limbs and canes infested with borer larvae before insects emerge.

## **Late April**

#### ***Household Insects***

**Ants:** Foraging ants in homes are common until temperatures allow them to seek food outdoors.

#### ***Tree/Shrub Insects***

**Aphids on fruit trees:** Spray oils on dormant trees to kill overwintered aphid eggs.

**Cooley spruce gall:** Insects continue development and usually begin to produce egg sack in late April.

**Lilac/ash borer:** Flights of adult moths may begin.

**Spider mites on pines:** *Oligonychus subnudus* populations may increase rapidly on ponderosa and other susceptible pines

#### ***Lawns***

**Turfgrass mites:** Clover mites continue to feed on lawns and enter homes in nuisance migrations.

**Nightcrawlers:** Tunneling activities and associated lawn lumps continue.

**Midges:** Non-biting midges emerge from ponds and mating swarms may be observed over lawns.

#### ***Garden***

**Spinach leafminer:** Egg laying and tunneling begins in older spinach foliage.

## Early May

### *Household/Miscellaneous Insects*

**Tick season:** The next two months are the peak season for tick activity and spread of Colorado tick fever.

### *Lawns*

**Spider mites:** Clover mite populations should be peaking and may begin natural decline.

**Sod webworms, cutworms:** Damage to lawns by webworms and cutworms begin at this time.

### *Trees/Shrub Insects*

**Hackberry psyllid:** Adults return to trees and lay eggs on the emerging leaves.

**Western spruce budworm:** Overwintered larvae begin to tunnel buds and flowers. Check for early stages of infestations.

**Southwestern pine tip moth:** Egg-laying occurs when new needles emerge on pines.

**Honeylocust plant bug:** Nymphs have hatched and begin to damage new growth.

**Peach tree borer:** Larvae causing peak injury to bases of trees at this time

**Tent caterpillars:** Larvae may be seen making tents on aspen and various fruit and shade trees. Forest tent caterpillars are also active on aspen and ash.

**Slugs:** Slugs may cause peak damage to seedlings during cooler weather.

**Cooley spruce gall:** Eggs hatch and young nymphs move to feed on new growth.  
Galls are initiated.

## Late May

### *Tree/Shrub Insects*

**Pine needle scale:** Egg hatch may begin during warm seasons.

**Oystershell scale:** Crawler emergence typically occurs in late May. Check infested plants.

**Bronzed cane borer/rose stem girdler:** Adults emerge from caneberries, currant, rose.

**Fruittree leafrollers:** Leafrolling may begin to be observed on many trees/shrubs.

**Hackberry psyllid:** Current season galls begin to be visible as small eruptions on leaves.

**Oak defoliators:** Loopers, Sonoran tent caterpillars, and leafrollers may begin to defoliate oak stands.

**Cooley spruce gall:** Current season galls are readily visible upon close inspection. Small nymphs are present in chambers of the gall.

**Rabbitbrush beetle:** Peak feeding injury by larvae.

**Leafcurling aphids:** Aphids curl the new growth of many plants at this time.

**Codling moth:** Sprays after petal fall can help control the first generation. Monitor flights with pheromone traps.

**Cicadas:** Adult emergence of common species (e.g., Putnam's cicada) usually occurs at this time.

### *Garden Insects*

**Slugs:** A peak period of activity and injury.

**Seedcorn maggot:** Early planted beans, corn, and melons are susceptible to seedcorn maggot damage.

**Strawberry injuries:** Millipedes and slugs tunnel the ripening berries.

**Asparagus beetle:** Adults chew on spears and lay eggs

**Flea beetles:** Adults are present on cabbage, radish and related plants.

## Early June

### *Household Insects*

**Snailcase bagworm:** Full grown larvae begin to migrate and attach to sides of buildings, fences and other surfaces.

#### *Tree/Shrub Insects*

**Pine needle scale:** Crawler emergence should have begun, about the time of lilac peak bloom. Check infested plants.

**Oystershell scale:** Continue to monitor emergence of crawlers. Peak crawler period often occurs in early June.

**Tent caterpillars:** Infestations persist at higher elevations but should be peaking and decline at this time.

**White pine weevil:** Wilting of spruce terminals begins to be visible

**Eriophyid mites:** Gall making occurs on many plants. Highest populations of leaf vagrants present.

**Spruce spider mite:** Populations begin to increase on spruce, juniper

**Honeylocust plant bugs:** Peak injury by nymphs. Damage will end soon.

**Fruittree leafrollers:** Peak populations of larvae are generally present.

**Cicadas:** Adult emergence persists

**Bronzed cane borer/rose stem girdler:** Peak period of egg laying in caneberrys, currant, rose.

**Honeylocust borer, bronzed birch borer:** Adults often emerge by mid-June. Beetles feed on leaves and then lay eggs on bark.

**Juniper spittlebug:** Spittle masses become obvious as nymphs become fully grown.

**Western spruce budworm:** During outbreaks in forested areas this is often optimal time to treat

#### *Garden Insects*

**Flea beetles:** Several species attack garden plants. Seedlings may need protection.

## **Late June**

#### *Household Insects*

**Strawberry root weevil:** Adults begin to move into homes.

**Snailcase bagworm:** Full grown larvae continue to migrate and attach to sides of buildings, fences and other surfaces.

#### *Tree/Shrub Insects*

**Cottony maple scale:** Females swell and produce conspicuous egg sacks.

**Spruce spider mite:** Typical period of peak populations.

**Douglas-fir tussock moth:** Egg hatch often is peaking during this period. Monitor infested trees.

**Rose leafhoppers:** Peak injury to foliage of rose.

**Western spruce budworm:** Treatment timing during outbreaks.

**Pine needle scale:** Crawler emergence usually is continuing and declining during this period.

**Large aspen tortix:** Defoliation of aspen may become visible at this time.

**Poplar borer:** Adults often begin to emerge from aspen in late June.

**Peach tree borer:** Adult emergence typically begins. Monitor flights with pheromone traps.

**Cooley spruce gall adelgid:** First emergence from spruce galls and migration.

**Honeylocust spider mite:** Populations begin to build towards their midsummer peak.

**Mountain pine beetle:** Optimal treatment time for most areas.

#### *Garden Insects*

**Potato/tomato psyllid:** Flights of migrating psyllids arrive in state and start to colonize garden plants.

**Asparagus beetles:** Damage by larvae to foliage may be very obvious.

**Flea beetles:** Populations usually have peaked during this period.

**Twospotted spider mite:** Populations start to increase on a wide variety of garden plants.

## Early July

### *Household Insects*

**Strawberry root weevils:** Migrations into homes accelerates.

**Duff millipedes:** Migrations into homes may begin.

**Earwigs:** Migrations into homes begin.

### *Tree/Shrub Insects*

**Peach tree borer:** Egg laying typically begins. Preventive sprays should be made at this time to kill newly hatching larvae.

**Ips beetles:** Flights occur throughout the growing season. Reapplication of preventive insecticide trunk sprays may be needed to maintain coverage.

**Black vine weevil:** Adult leaf notching injuries are obvious on euonymus and rhododendron.

**Leafcurling aphids:** Most species have departed from overwintering host trees and shrubs.

**Douglas-fir tussock moth:** Typical peak period of injury. Monitor infested trees.

**Cooley spruce gall adelgids:** Peak period of emergence from galls and migration to Douglas-fir alternate host.

**Mountain pine beetle:** Adult emergence usually begins.

**Leafcutter bees:** Characteristic cut leaf injury begins to appear on rose, lilac and other susceptible hosts.

**Poplar leafminers:** Activity of these tentiform-type leafminers become visible in lower canopy of poplars at this time.

**Western cherry fruit fly:** Adults begin to lay eggs in sweet cherry fruit.

### *Garden Insects*

**Tomato hornworm:** First activity by hornworms.

**Tomato psyllid:** Check peppers and tomatoes for evidence of injury

## Late July

### *Tree/Shrub Insects*

**Codling moth:** Second, and most damaging generation begins to lay eggs. Monitor flights with pheromone traps.

**Cooley spruce gall:** Abandoned galls become dry and very conspicuous.

**Pearslug:** Larvae damage plum, cotoneaster.

**Mountain pine beetle:** Typical peak period of new "hits" from invading adults

### *Garden Insects*

**Flea beetles:** Second generation adults emerge and feed.

**Tomato hornworms:** Peak damage by larvae occurs over the next month.

**Potato/tomato psyllid:** Symptoms may begin to appear on potatoes and tomatoes.

**Western cherry fruit fly:** Adults continue to lay eggs in sweet cherry fruit.

## Early August

### *Household Insects*

**Earwigs:** Nuisance problems peak.

**Duff millipedes:** Frequent peak of household invasions.

### *Tree/Shrub Insects*

**Honeylocust spider mite:** Populations increase rapidly and cause leaf bronzing.

**Peach tree borer:** Second treatment may be of benefit if heavy flights persist. Monitor with pheromone traps.

**Ips beetles:** Reapplications of preventive insecticides may be needed on pines in high risk sites

#### *Garden Insects*

**Whiteflies:** High populations may be present if infested transplants were used in the garden.

**Cane borers in raspberries:** Wilting symptoms are most evident at this time of year due to cane boring insects.

#### *Miscellaneous*

**Yellowjackets:** Nest size and nuisance problems greatly increase over the next month.

## **Late August**

#### *Household Insects*

**Cluster flies:** Flies begin to move to buildings seeking overwintering shelter. Seal buildings to avoid later problems.

**Yellowjackets:** Nest size and nuisance problems accelerate.

#### *Tree/Shrub Insects*

**Honeylocust spider mite:** Populations normally begin to decline.

**Pine butterfly:** Adult butterflies may be observed to swarm around ponderosa pine following outbreaks.

#### *Garden Insects*

**Potato/tomato psyllid:** High populations often occur on tomato in late summer.

**Twospotted spider mite:** Expect highest populations and greatest injury at this time.

## **Early September**

#### *Household/Miscellaneous*

**Yellowjackets, hornets:** Nest size and nuisance problems peak. Large paper nests in trees and shrubs attracting attention.

**Cluster flies, boxelder bugs, conifer seed bugs:** Migrations into homes for overwintering increase.

**Spiders, crickets:** Movements into homes accelerate greatly with cool weather.

**Large spiders:** Cat-face and garden spiders become fully grown and attract attention.

#### *Tree/Shrub Insects*

**Large caterpillars:** Several species of large caterpillars (cecropia moth, polyphemus moth, sphinx moth larvae) wander about landscapes when fully grown and attract attention.

**Peach tree borer:** Rescue treatments should be applied before soil temperatures become too cool.

**Pearslug:** Damage by the second generation occurs during early September.

#### *Garden Insects*

**Slugs:** Garden injuries increase with the return of cool, wet weather.

**Bumble flower beetles:** Beetles feed on flowers and visit bacterial ooze.

## **Late September**

#### *Household/Miscellaneous Insects*

**Millipedes:** Movements into homes occurs following wet periods

**Spiders, crickets:** Movements into homes accelerate greatly with cool weather.

**Yellowjackets:** Nuisance problems with yellowjackets scavenging on sweets persist, decline.

### *Tree/Shrub Insects*

**Aphids on trees:** High populations of aphids may develop on several species (willow, oak, aspen) prior to frost.

**Cooley spruce gall:** Winged stages return to spruce and leave overwintering stage on tree.

**Yellowjackets, bees:** Wasps and bees may be seen visiting trees and shrubs where honeydew producing insects (e.g., aphids, soft scales) are present.

## **October**

### *Household/Miscellaneous*

**Green lacewings, willow leafminers:** Adults of these insects sometimes enter mountain homes during Fall.

**Fruit flies:** Flies develop in overripe fruit and become abundant in homes.

**Wasps and hornets:** Nests are abandoned at the end of the season.

**Boxelder bugs, conifer seed bugs:** Invasions of homes accelerates with cool weather. Massing bugs occur on building sides during warm, sunny days.

**Spiders, crickets:** Movements into homes accelerate greatly with cool weather.

### *Tree/Shrub Insects*

**Aphids on trees:** overwintering eggs are laid as long as weather permits.

**Ponderosa pine needleminer:** Larvae tunnel needles.

### *Lawns*

**Cranberry girdler:** Damage to lawns by this sod webworm occurs in the fall.

**Clover mites:** Egg hatch follows cold weather and mites begin to develop on grasses and weeds around foundations.

## November/December

### *Household Insects*

**Indian meal moth:** Adults are most commonly observed flying about homes during early winter.

**Fungus gnats:** Adults begin to be observed around windows and around the soil of potted plants where they originate.

**Boxelder bugs, conifer seed bugs:** Overwintering adults continue to be active in and around homes during warm days.

**Fruit flies:** Flies from overripe fruit continue to be present in homes.