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College of Agriculture, Human and Natural Sciences

Disaster Education Response Team



Azalea Lace Bug

Sujan Dawadi and Karla M. Adesso

The azalea lace bug was introduced to the United States from Japan in the early 1900s and occurs mostly in eastern states. The bug prefers evergreen azalea as a host, but will also attack deciduous cultivars, mountain laurel and rhododendron.

Identifying Azalea Lace Bug and its Damage

- Spring feeding causes leaf speckling, damage visually similar to that caused by mites. Severely damaged leaves may be shed while others remain on the plant, reducing its aesthetic quality.
- Fecal spots and/or cast skins are present on the underside of leaves where the bugs are most often observed.
- Eggs are oval or flask shaped, white in color, 0.5 mm length and laid mostly along the midrib on underside of leaves in late September or early October.
- The egg stage overwinters. Nymphs emerge in March or April and are similar in appearance to adults, with spines on their abdomens but lacking wings.
- Adult lace bugs have netted lacy wings with black and white patches extending beyond the body outline.



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Managing Azalea Lace Bug On Your Property

- Drought stressed plants and those in sunny areas are most susceptible. Use resistant cultivars and maintain proper growing conditions to maintain plant health.
- Apply horticultural oils, soaps or neem-based products in March/April to kill eggs and newly hatched nymphs.
- Contact pesticides containing *Beauveria bassiana*, pyrethroids, carbamates and organophosphates are labeled for this pest. Contact pesticide products must be applied to the underside of leaves to be effective.



Go to our website www.tnstate.edu/agriculture for additional Disaster Education Resources.





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- Systemic neonicotinoid insecticides are effective when plants are drenched in spring a few weeks prior to egg hatch.
- Conserve predators by utilizing targeted treatments. Scouting plants for the bug prior to pesticide application and spray low residual products when available.
- Contact your local extension agent or county agent for additional information.

Always follow pesticide label instructions.



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