Ash plant bug

Tropidosteptes amoenus
Order Hemiptera, Family Miridae; plant bugs or leaf bugs
Native pest

Host plants: Ash (*Fraxinus*) species and cultivars of green, white, blue, moraine, and Modesto ash

Description: Adult plant bugs are yellow in color, or brown to black, and they have yellow or pink dorsal markings. They are 5–6 mm in length. Nymphs are wingless, sometimes lighter in color, and 1.5–5 mm in length.

Life history: The first nymphal generation hatches in May and feeds for about one month on shoots, leaf stems and the under surface of leaves. There are two generations a year.

Overwintering: Eggs.

Damage symptoms: Damage ranges from yellowish white stippling on leaves, which may coalesce to form broad areas that turn brown, to drying and premature dropping of leaves, to deformation or dwarfing of young leaves. The underside of damaged leaves may be marked with black specks of excrement called frass.

Monitoring: Look for nymphs feeding after leaves develop in mid-May, and again in late July. Look for adults in early summer, and then again in late summer.

Chemical control: Horticultural soap, horticultural oil, and pyrethroids are effective on all stages except eggs. Other chemicals may be sprayed when the bugs first appear on leaves, shortly after leaf expansion in May. Imidacloprid applied at leaf expansion provides season-long control.

Biological control: No reports of natural enemies

Plant mortality risk: Medium

Biorational pesticides: azadirachtin, horticultural oil, insecticidal soap, pyrethrins

Conventional pesticides: acephate, bifenthrin, carbaryl, chlorpyrifos (nursery only), cyfluthrin, deltamethrin, fluvalinate, imidacloprid, lambda-cyhalothrin, malathion, permethrin

Foliar damage caused by ash plant bug. The leaves have turned black and are wilting (flagging). (6)
Photo: James Solomon, USDA Forest Service, The Bugwood Network, University of Georgia.

Stippling damage to leaf caused by ash plant bug. (7)
Photo: James Solomon, USDA Forest Service, The Bugwood Network, University of Georgia.

Ash plant bug adult, nymphs, and stippling damage. (8)
Photo: James Solomon, USDA Forest Service, The Bugwood Network, University of Georgia.

Ash plant bug (continued)

Stippling damage on leaf caused by ash plant bug nymph. (9)
Photo: Whitney Cranshaw

Ash plant bug adult. (W87)
Photo: Whitney Cranshaw

Ash plant bug adult. (11)
Photo: James Solomon, USDA Forest Service, The Bugwood Network, University of Georgia.