



Honeylocust spider mite

Platytetranychus multidigituli

Order Acari, Family Tetranychidae; spider mites

Native pest

Host plant: Honeylocust

Description: Adult mites that have overwintered are less than 1 mm long and orange. Adults that mature in the summer are pale yellow to green.

Life history: Eggs are deposited in spring and hatch in early to mid June. Populations can develop very quickly, the length of a generation being only four days in mid summer and eleven days in cooler temperatures. There are several generations a year.

Overwintering: Adult females in bark cracks or under bud scales.

Damage symptoms: In lighter infestations, the upper surface of leaves appears to be stippled white or yellow. Heavy infestations can cause all the foliage of a tree to brown and die. If such damage occurs before mid summer, trees are usually able to produce new, green foliage to replace damaged leaves. Damage is primarily aesthetic.

Monitoring: Eggs hatch at honeylocust budbreak, when Wayfaringtree viburnum, common lilac, or Sargent crabapple bloom in late April to early May (Herms). The use of a small hand lens will be helpful in monitoring mites. Look for adult females in winter around bark cracks or under bud scales. Check for mites throughout the growing season at the base of leaflets, on the underside and look for signs of leaf stippling or browning.

Chemical control: Large overwintering populations can be treated with a dormant horticultural oil spray. Summer populations can be controlled by an oil or soap spray, or by use of one of the miticides listed. The use of conventional pesticides has caused problems by destroying natural enemies of the mites.

Biological control: Predators of mites include minute pirate bugs, lacewings, predatory mites, lady beetles, and predatory midges.

Plant mortality risk: Low

Biorational pesticides: abamectin, bifenazate, clofentazine, hexythiazox, horticultural oil, insecticidal soap

Conventional pesticides: bifenthrin, chlorpyrifos (nursery only), deltamethrin, dicofol, fenpropathrin, fenbutatin oxide, lambda-cyhalothrin, pyridaben



Bronzing damage to leaves caused by honeylocust spider mite feeding. (W108)

Photo: Whitney Cranshaw



Honeylocust spider mite overwintered females around buds. (W98)

Photo: Whitney Cranshaw



Honeylocust spider mite adult. The orange color indicates an overwintered adult. (149)

Photo: John Davidson



Honeylocust spider mite (continued)



Honeylocust spider mites, male and smaller female. (W97)
Photo: Whitney Cranshaw