



Treehoppers

Several species
Order Hemiptera, Family Membracidae; treehoppers
Native pests

Host plants: Treehoppers are found on many tree species and are most commonly on young trees and perennial weeds.

Description: Treehoppers are small insects, usually less than one-half inch long. They are called “treehoppers” because upon being approached they jump or hop away with a loud snap. They have a pronotum that is enlarged and developed into horns, knobs and other strange shapes. Males and females of the same species, however, can sometimes have very different pronotal shapes or colors.

Life history: Adult females deposit eggs singly or in masses, either inserted directly into living tissue or on the surface of the plant. Females of some species cover their eggs with a frothy substance that hardens when dry. The eggs of most species remain in the plant through the winter and hatch in spring. Some adult females guard their eggs and remain with their young throughout their development. Nymphs molt five times prior to reaching the adult stage. Treehoppers usually have one or more generations per year.

Overwintering: Eggs on host plants.

Damage symptoms: Primary injury is caused by the females cutting into the bark to lay their eggs. Nymphs and adults also feed on plant tissue and suck cell fluids with their sharp, needle-like mouth parts.

Monitoring: Monitor by hand sweeping young trees and shrubs with a net. Monitor for adults from early July to the end of October, or until the first frost.

Chemical control: Dormant oil sprays can be used to kill overwintering eggs.

Biological control: Few reports of natural enemies

Plant mortality risk: Low

Biorational pesticides: azadirachtin, insecticidal soap, pyrethrins

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



Oviposition damage caused by treehopper adult females. (241)
Photo: John Davidson



Treehopper adult. (242)
Photo: John Davidson



Buffalo treehopper, *Stictocaphala bisonia*. (W105)
Photo: Whitney Cranshaw



Honeylocust treehopper, *Microtalis calva*. (W106)
Photo: Whitney Cranshaw