Spruce Bud Worm
FACT SHEET

GREEN DROP Tree Care

Symptoms/ Characteristics:

Young larvae use silk webbing to tie new shoots together and form a feeding tunnel or nest.

The larvae are wasteful feeders and sometimes eat only the base of the needles and spin webbing around the remainder, causing the tree to look scorched as the foliage dries. Prolonged infestations may result in branch dieback and even plant death.

The Spruce Budworm, is a severe defoliator of North American conifers.

During its 1-year life cycle, the spruce budworm goes through six larval phases, beginning in August and ending the following July, when the adult moth emerges. From early May to late June the larvae will feed on old needles as well as developing buds and new foliage. Buds are often destroyed before the new shoots even have a chance to expand.

The young larvae are yellow with brown heads and are likely to be seen in May. Mature larvae cause the most damage and are likely to be seen during the first two weeks in June. They are reddish brown with black heads and are also characterized by two rows of white spots running lengthwise down their backs.



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Control/ Prevention:

A tree is normally very tolerant of some defoliation and control efforts are unnecessary when only a few larval budworms are present. However, at times when the populations are high, it may be necessary to control them with the use of biological products or chemical pesticides.

Biological products like DIPEL contain the active ingredient Bacillus thuringiensis var. kurstaki (BTK) to control larva. The product is applied to the leaves of the tree, once feeding begins the caterpillar dies with 2-3 days. The product is rainfast (resistant to water wash off) within 2 hours.





Contact:

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