

Warm-season turfgrass insect management: monitor often for pests

R.L. BRANDENBURG / Turf Entomologist,
N. C. State University

The twolined spittlebug problem has been increasing on warm-season turfgrasses over the past 10 years. This may be due to the increasing population in the South, the increased use of centipedegrass, and extensive plantings of hollies in landscape (a host for spittlebug adults).

Despite this general increase in the abundance of spittlebugs we have seen in recent years, we were not prepared for such high numbers in many areas



Twolined spittlebugs, if conditions allow, can damage centipede turf. Turfgrass managers in the south should scout for them.

during 1996. High populations were observed on many species of both cool and warm-season grasses. This phenomenon appeared to be a reflection of a wet, cooler-than-normal summer. Does this mean twolined spittlebugs will be a serious problem in 1998? It's difficult to predict this pest for the summer season. Undoubtedly, higher-than-normal populations of spittlebugs overwintered, but we don't know if this will translate into above-normal populations this summer. Be prepared and scout centipedegrass frequently for this pest.

The southern chinch bug is a pest of St. Augustinegrass particularly in hot, dry weather. De-

spite rainfall that in some areas was more than twice the normal average, we observed damage from chinch bugs. In fact, we saw some of the heaviest infestations we had observed in the past five years. Was this contrary to our accepted understanding of chinch bug outbreaks? Yes, it certainly was, but it also emphasized the need to continually monitor turfgrass despite what conventional wisdom might tell you. Time spent monitoring the turf helps avoid surprises. The same could be said for bermudagrass mites which also prefer hot, dry weather. Wet weather doesn't mean you can forget about them.

White grubs are generally less of a problem in areas of warm-season turf compared to the cool-season zones, particularly the Northeast. However, wet soil during July and August may contribute to more grubs this spring. The adult beetles of white grubs generally lay their eggs in late June through July. These eggs must be laid in moist soil that remains moist throughout the development of the very small first stage grubs. If the soil is dry the eggs don't hatch or the very small, newly-hatched grubs die.

Many areas last year had enough rainfall to keep the soil moist during this critical period for egg and grub survival. As a result we probably had above average survival of white grubs over a wider area (especially non-irrigated areas) and those above average numbers overwintered to damage turf in the spring. This may well be reflected in the number of moles attracted to turf areas to feed on these grubs. It may also result in more beetles, such as Japanese beetles to feed on certain ornamental plantings next season. **LM**

PRODUCTS FOR CONTROL OF WARM-SEASON INSECT PESTS

Southern chinch bug:

bendiocarb (Turcam, Dycarb); ethoprop (Mocap); cyfluthrin (Tempo, Decathlon); permethrin (Astro); diazinon; chlorpyrifos (Dursban); isofenphos (Oftanol); isazofos (Triumph); fonofos (Crusade, Mainstay); lambda-cyhalothrin (Scimitar, Battle); acephate (Orthene); fluvalinate (Mavrik)
Timing: apply as needed during hot, summer months.

Thorough coverage is critical. Irrigate immediately after application of granules. Avoid over-fertilizing.

Leafhopper/twolined spittlebugs:

acephate (Orthene); bendiocarb (Turcam, Dycarb); chlorpyrifos (Dursban); diazinon; carbaryl (Sevin); isazofos (Triumph); fluvalinate (Mavrik).
Timing: begin monitoring and treat damaging populations in early summer.

Cutworms, armyworms:

azadirachtin (Turplex); lambda-cyhalothrin (Scimitar, Battle); acephate (Orthene); carbaryl (Sevin); diazinon; isofenphos (Oftanol); chlorpyrifos (Dursban); fluvalinate (Mavrik); cyfluthrin (Tempo, Decathlon).
Timing: monitoring/treatment may be necessary in early spring-late fall.

Mole crickets:

chlorpyrifos (Dursban bait); propoxur (Baygon bait); carbaryl (Sevin bait); bendiocarb (Turcam, Dycarb); chlorpyrifos (Dursban); isofenphos (Oftanol); fonofos (Crusade, Mainstay); acephate (Orthene); ethoprop (Mocap); fluvalinate (Mavrik, Battle); entomogenous nematodes (Vector MC, others); imidacloprid (Merit).
Timing: soap flushes to monitor egg hatch. Treat nymphs in early summer.

White grub:

bendiocarb (Turcam, Dycarb); diazinon; isofenphos (Oftanol); isazofos (Triumph); fonofos (Crusade); ethoprop (Mocap); imidacloprid (Merit); entomogenous nematodes (Cruiser) trichlorfon (Proxol, Dylox).
Timing: treat small grubs in late summer and fall for best control.

Ground pearls:

No known effective chemical controls. Follow proper turf management practices and irrigation.

Not all trade names are mentioned, and the ones listed are used as examples. No endorsement of product is intended nor does omission of any product imply criticism.

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