

Gloomy Scale Insect

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Gloomy Scale Insect

Common Name:

Armored scale; Gloomyscale

Scientific Name: Diaspididae; *Melanaspis tenebricosus*

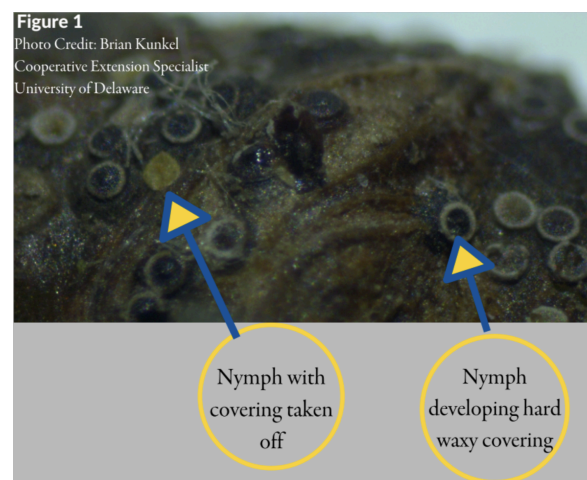


Figure 1: Photo Credit: Brian Kunkel. A close view of the nymph covering taken off and also a nymph developing a hard waxy covering.

Host Plants:

- Red Maple & Silver Maple preferred
- Elm
- Catalpa
- Hackberry
- Mulberry
- Sycamore
- Boxelder

Scouting and Possible Signs

Since they overwinter, you can scout for them at any time of the year.

- Carefully peel back the top coat of the scale to identify if it is still alive. Alive, they will be pink, orange or light brownish.
- Check for crawlers in May- June and take double sided tape on the bark and twigs to see if they are present.

Signs:

- Stunting and dieback of limbs
- Dark and white patches on bark
- Bark will have bumpy texture
- Thinning of leaf canopy
- Eventually can lead to death



Figure 2: Photo Credit: Lorraine Graney, Bartlett Tree Experts, Bugwood.org. Adult males

Life Cycle and Biology

Nymphs are called crawlers and are less than 1mm and are yellowish-brown orange in color. They have tiny legs they use to crawl to a site on a tree, once establish a site, they will then start to produce the

hard waxy covering. The covering will be brown to black with a pale ring around it

(Fig.1,2). The bodies are yellowish to brown in color, oval/sac-like in shape and it is both legless and wingless (Fig.1).

Males are much smaller in size, and as adults, they will have legs and wings (Fig.2). Adult female covers are called tests (Fig. 3), and can be up to 2 mm wide with a central pale ring. The test is not attached to the body and can be peeled back to reveal the soft-bodied scale insect (Fig.3).

Spends winter as a female beneath protective coverings in bark, and in spring, resumes development by feeding via piercing-sucking mouthparts until she lays eggs underneath her tests. Eggs hatch sometime in late June and crawler activity may continue for 4 to 6 weeks. There has been very little research done on the crawler activity of this scale pest.

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Figure 3: Adult females

Management

- Horticultural oils
- Insecticidal soaps
- Insect growth regulators
- (IGRS)
- Systemic insecticide

For specific products under these management options or modes of action, contact your local cooperative extension office