

Control Bag Worm



What to Look For

The bagworm is native to the United States and is quite active in Eastern Nebraska. Bagworms feed on many species of trees and shrubs. They are a serious problem on evergreen trees. The characteristic brown bags (often mistaken as a cone) are often seen attached to twigs. The bags may be up to 2" long.

Damage

Bagworms are most common on evergreen trees and shrubs. Juniper, pine, spruce, and arborvitae may be killed if bagworms completely defoliate them. Less serious attacks will retard growth. The bagworm will feed on shade and ornamental trees of any kind, but damage to these varieties is not usually as serious because those plants set new leaves in the spring from all buds along a branch. In the case of a conifer, the new growth is initiated only from the terminal bud and does not re-develop on inner bud points from previous seasons. The damage on evergreens can be quite distracting for a number of years until enough new growth helps balance the visual appearance on the plant.

Description

Newly hatched larvae are very small and begin to spin bags shortly after hatching. The first evidence of an infestation is small bags about ¼ inch long, standing almost on end. As larvae grow, leaf and needle fragments are added to the bag. The adult female bagworm is wingless and never leaves the bag. Adult male bagworms pupate into small gray moths with clear wings. Bagworms spend winter in the egg stage inside female bags fastened to twigs. Eggs hatch in late May to early June, and young begin to feed immediately. Bagworms can feed on a plant until late August to early September.

Cultural Control

Picking off bags in the winter and early spring before the eggs hatch can control infestations. Bags should be destroyed. If the bags containing larvae are discarded on the ground, the larvae will return to the host plant.

Chemical Control

Controls are very effective if applied early in the season. Apply chemical sprays June 15th, June 30th, July 15th, and July 30th. Limited control can still be achieved as late as early September. Effective chemicals available are: Bonide Liquid Systemic Insecticide, Bonide Eight, Ferti-lome's Broad Spectrum Insecticide, High Yield 38 Plus, Hi-Yield Bug Blaster, and malathion.

Biological Control

A biological agent is available for bagworm control. It works best on small bagworms in June. The scientific name is *Bacillus thuringiensis*. It is available as liquid Ferti-lome Thuricide.

Read and print off more info sheets at lanohanurseries.com/resources

