



College of Agriculture, Human and Natural Sciences

Disaster Education Response Team



Azalea Lace Bug

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The azalea lace bug was introduced to the United States from Japan in the early 1900s and occurs mostly in eastern states. The bug prefers evergreen azalea as a host, but will also attack deciduous cultivars, mountain laurel and rhododendron.

Identifying Azalea Lace Bug and its Damage

- Spring feeding causes leaf speckling, damage visually similar to that caused by mites. Severely damaged leaves may be shed while others remain on the plant, reducing its aesthetic quality.
- Fecal spots and/or cast skins are present on the underside of leaves where the bugs are most often observed.
- Eggs are oval or flask shaped, white in color, 0.5 mm length and laid mostly along the midrib on underside of leaves in late September or early October.
- The egg stage overwinters. Nymphs emerge in March or April and are similar in appearance to adults, with spines on their abdomens but lacking wings.
- Adult lace bugs have netted lacy wings with black and white patches extending beyond the body outline.



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Managing Azalea Lace Bug On Your Property

- Drought stressed plants and those in sunny areas are most susceptible. Use resistant cultivars and maintain proper growing conditions to maintain plant health.
- Apply horticultural oils, soaps or neem-based products in March/April to kill eggs and newly hatched nymphs.
- Contact pesticides containing *Beauveria bassiana*, pyrethroids, carbamates and organophosphates are labeled for this pest. Contact pesticide products must be applied to the underside of leaves to be effective.



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- Systemic neonicotinoid insecticides are effective when plants are drenched in spring a few weeks prior to egg hatch.
- Conserve predators by utilizing targeted treatments. Scouting plants for the bug prior to pesticide application and spray low residual products when available.
- Contact your local extension agent or county agent for additional information.

Always follow pesticide label instructions.



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