

Problem: Woolly Elm Aphid (*Eriosoma americana*)



Hosts: Elm

Description: Leaves are twisted and malformed with leaf clusters forming rosettes. Unfurling these leaves reveals aphids that are covered with white waxy threads.

Life History: The Woolly Elm Aphid overwinters as an egg placed in a bark crevice. These eggs are produced by females the previous fall. It is interesting to note that these females produce a single egg and die soon after the egg is laid because they lack functional mouth parts. Eggs hatch in the spring producing a wingless female that feeds by sucking sap from the bottom of a young elm leaf.

At maturity, these females produce nearly 200 young, which are, again, all females. Leaves form rosettes as populations rise. A winged generation (all females) appears by the end of June and actively seeks out the Amelanchier shrub which is commonly known as the shadbush or serviceberry. A new generation of females migrates to the underground parts of the shrub. Several generations are produced underground. In the fall, a final winged generation of females migrates back to the elm and starts the cycle over again.

Recommendations: Damage is usually minimal and control is difficult due to protection provided to the aphids by the rosette of leaves. Control measures are rarely warranted.

References:

1. [Aphids in the Home Yard and Garden](#), University of Minnesota Extension
2. *Insects That Feed on Trees and Shrubs*, Cornell University Press, pg 262.

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