

Problem: Ash Plant Bug (*Tropidosteptes spp.*)



Photo by James Solomon

Hosts: Ash

Description: Adults are small (1/8 to 1/4 inch), elongate/oval insects that feed by sucking juice from plant tissues. Color varies among the three species including black and white, red and black, and light or dark brown. All species overwinter as eggs on twigs. Eggs hatch in conjunction with breaking buds. Nymphs feed on newly expanding leaves resulting in distortion, discoloration and stunting. Later instars and adults feed on flowers and seeds as well as leaves. Symptoms on older leaves include stippling with small, black spots due to insect excrement.

Recommendations: Damage is mostly cosmetic and so controls are unneeded with healthy plants except to protect the aesthetics of the tree. Plants weakened by stress or newly transplanted trees may need control measures. Acephate (Acephate, Orthene, Bonide Systemic Insect Control) is quite effective for this pest. Other effective controls include insecticidal soaps, permethrin (numerous trade names), bifenthrin (Talstar, Hi-Yield Bug Blaster Bifenthrin), cyfluthrin (Tempo, Bayer Vegetable & Garden Insect Spray), and Malathion.

References:

1. [Ash Plant Bugs](#), Colorado State University, Plant Talk Colorado 1434
2. [Ash Plant Bug](#), Iowa State University, Plant and Insect Diagnostic Clinic

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