

PLANT DISEASE AND INSECT ADVISORY



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Bagworm Watch

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Bagworms commonly infest juniper and other evergreen shrubs. They often go unnoticed until the caterpillars become large and are causing visible damage. The most efficient way to control a bagworm infestation is to be proactive and inspect susceptible plants early. While it is getting late, you may still have some time to control them before they cause extensive damage.

Bagworms overwinter as eggs and begin to hatch in mid-May. The newly hatched caterpillars immediately construct a silken bag and attach bits of their food source to the outside of the bag. This bag serves as a protection from predators, weather, and unfortunately from insecticide applications.

Suspected plants should be closely inspected, because bagworms can be easily missed in the dense foliage of the inner part of the tree. If an infestation is heavy, thorough coverage with an insecticide over the interior of the shrub will be necessary to achieve control.

There are several insecticides registered for bagworm control. Products containing *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bactospeine, Biotrol, DiPel) are excellent choices, but it may be too late to obtain effective control at this time. Other products, such as malathion, Sevin, Orthene and Bayer Advanced Multi-insect Killer are very effective but will kill more beneficial insects than Bt products.

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