

A.R.T. News

CHINCH BUGS

Chinch bugs cause damage to lawns and turf. Adult chinch bugs are about one-fifth of an inch long and black with white wings folded over their backs. Females lay as many as 500 eggs over a 2 to 3 week period. The young chinch bugs (nymphs) develop into adults in four to six weeks.

Chinch bugs cause damage by inserting their slender beaks into grass and sucking plant juices. As the chinch bug sucks the plant juices it releases a toxin that causes yellowish to brownish patches in the turf. Injury appears as these patches spread of brown dead grass. This pest is a sunshine loving insect and seldom attacks grass in dense shady areas.

To inspect for chinch bugs, scout the grass on sunny days by slowly sliding your foot through the sod and watching for the bugs to crawl across your shoe. You can also determine infestations by using a large coffee can with both ends removed. Press one end of the can about 2 or 3 inches into the soil, fill with soapy water, and watch for about 5 minutes. If chinch bugs are present they will float to the surface it is very important to check areas where yellowish spots and the green grass meet in several locations.

Use chemicals such as Talstar or Acephate to eliminate chinch bugs. Areas with heavy infestation should be retreated in two weeks.