

Bug-Wise

No. 2
July 6, 2015



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Bug's Eye View, A Weekly E-Newsletter: This year we have initiated a new electronic newsletter called Bug's Eye View. This is a weekly newsletter that consist of a photo of an insect, spider, or other arthropod-related subject and 200 to 500 words of information about that subject.

The objective is to provide timely information about insects that may be currently encountered in Mississippi lawns, gardens or homes. Many issues will focus on pest species, but other issues will focus on arthropods that are of interest simply as miniature wildlife. Brief information on management and control is provided for pest species.

So far this year 14 issues of Bug's Eye View have been published. See back for an example of a past issue.

To subscribe to Bug's Eye View:

- go to www.MSUcares.com
- click on "Newsletters" (in the black bar at top of page)
- click on "Bug's Eye View (lower right-hand corner)
- click on "View archived issues or subscribe" (at the bottom of the page)
- click on "Join our mailing list"
- provide your email address and name, and click "Subscribe to list"

What Does this Mean for Bug-Wise?: We plan to continue publishing the Bug-Wise Newsletter at a rate of about four issues per year. This printed newsletter provides a format for providing more detailed information than can be included in Bug's Eye View. If you know someone who would like to have their name added to the mailing list for the Bug-Wise Newsletter, they can do so by e-mailing their request to: smcmullin@entomology.msstate.edu. If there are topics or issues you would like to see addressed in one of these newsletters, you can email your request to this same address.

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Squash Bug, nymph

Anasa tristis

Order: Hemiptera

Family: Coreidae

Squash bugs are one of the most important pests of squash and pumpkins, and they often damage melons as well. Adults are brown or dark grey in color, while the nymphs are ash grey. Heavy infestations can cause whole plants to suddenly wilt and die. The plant looked fine yesterday, but not today. Both adults and nymphs

concentrate at the base of plants. As they feed on the sap with their piercing/sucking mouthparts squash bugs inject their saliva into the plant. This saliva is toxic and heavy squash bug feeding can cause “squash bug wilt.” Lighter infestations that are not heavy enough to kill plants can still result in poor growth and reduced yields. Squash bugs also vector an important bacterial disease known as curcurbit yellow vine decline.



Control: Control squash bugs in home vegetable gardens with sprays containing permethrin (1 day PHI) or bifenthrin (3 day PHI). The longer preharvest interval of bifenthrin means it is suitable for pumpkins and winter squash, but not for zucchini and yellow squash. Direct sprays to the base of the plant where adults and older nymphs are concentrated, as well as to the leaves, where egg masses and newly hatched nymphs occur. These sprays will also control squash vine borers. There are no good organic treatments for squash bugs, but regular hand-picking of adults, nymphs, and egg masses can be helpful if one only has a few plants.

See pages 7-8, and pages 12-14 of Extension Publication 2347, Insect Pests of the Home Vegetable Garden <http://msucare.com/pubs/publications/p2347.pdf> for more information on squash bugs.