

Dog Day Cicada

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FIG. 1

Type Pest: piercing/sucking insect (*Tibicen* spp.)

Type Metamorphous: complete (egg, larva, pupa, adult stages)

Other Common Names: Annual cicada, Annual locusts, August dry birds

Period of Primary Occurrence: July through August

- Emerge in small numbers relative to periodical cicadas and are active in the "dog days" of summer

Plants Affected

- Arizona ash is the common host in Galveston County
- Adult cicadas do not feed on tree leaves but may suck juices from tender twigs
- Nymphs feed on the sap from tree roots

Identifying Characteristics of Insect Pest

- Dog day cicadas are not one of the periodical cicadas that reside in the soil and emerge every 13 or 17 years
- Adults vary in size and color according to species. All have prominent bulging eyes and semi-transparent wings held roof-like over their large bodies
- The larger species are about 1⁵/₈" long and 1/2" wide with brown or green, black and white body markings (Fig. 1-4)
- Adult stage of dog day cicada species common in the Galveston-Houston area is black and green in color with a whitish bloom and clear wings
- Nymphs resemble wingless adults, are brown and have strong front legs well developed for tunneling in the soil
- They are elusive/timid compared to periodical cicadas
- Females do not sing
- The "singing" noise is made by cicada males as they rest on tree trunks and call for females



FIG. 2



FIG. 3



FIG. 4

- This makes the males more vulnerable to the cicada killer wasp that lays her eggs on the parasitized body of the cicada in her burrow in the ground
- Male cicadas' songs are produced by a pair of vibrating structures known as timbals, which are paired drum-like structures on the sides of the basal abdominal segments
- Female cicadas lay their eggs in new growth twigs in trees. These twigs eventually die and fall to the ground where the young burrow into the soil. Once in the soil they will remain there feeding on sap from tree roots until they emerge to reproduce and die
- The amount of time spent in the soil depends on the type of cicada. Dog day cicadas typically have a 2 – 5 year life cycle, while the periodical cicadas spend either 13 or 17 years underground
- After emerging from the ground, the exoskeletons of the last nymphal instar can be found attached to vertical surfaces such as tree trunks and fence posts
- Adult cicadas emerge from this last nymphal stage through a crack along the back, leaving the light brown cast skin behind
- Adults can live for 5 – 6 weeks



FIG. 5



FIG. 6



FIG. 7



FIG. 8

Description / Symptoms

- Nymphs feed on the sap from tree roots
- Adult cicadas do not feed on leaves, but may suck juices from tender twigs

Best Management Practices (BMP)

- Not considered a plant pest as they cause little damage due to low populations in the Galveston-Houston area
- No control recommendations warranted

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Always remember to read and heed six of the most important words on the label: "KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN"

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