

Chinch Bugs in Texas

By: Melinda Sperl

In the pounding Texas heat, watch your lawn for the signs of Chinch bugs by looking for an irregular shaped brown patch in the grass. Stressed lawns act like a beacon to insects. Often this can be areas where the irrigation system doesn't quite reach, like the edge of the driveway or sidewalk; or when lawn crews travel from one yard to another, unintentionally spreading insects over each yard mowed.

These insects can spread fast so quick action is needed. Chinch bugs are very small and identifying them with the naked eye is hard. Using a soup can open on both ends and driving it into the ground half way and then filling it with water will cause any insects present to come to the surface. Do this on a green area of the lawn as the insects have already fed on the brown areas and left.

Unfortunately, there are few methods of prevention except to keep your lawn as healthy as possible. Keeping a healthy balance in your yard, not overwatering and over fertilizing and mowing at the correct height, especially in the heat of summer, will keep your grass healthy and not a beacon to insects.

There are many products available on the market to control chinch bugs. You can use organic products such as diatomaceous earth, or synthetic products containing Bifenthren. Whichever product you use, make sure you read the label carefully and use the product correctly for proper control. Repeat treatments are often required.

Happy Gardening!

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