

PEST: Crape Myrtle Bark Scale (*Eriococcus lagerstroemia*)

BASIC PROFILE: The CMBS is a scale insect from Asia that attacks crape myrtle trees. Scales can be found on various parts of the tree as oval, white, crusted clusters of insects with a powdery waxy appearance. They may congregate in branch crotches and at pruning sites. Adult scales are white or gray in color. Females are slightly larger than males and may release a pink liquid when crushed due to their pink-colored eggs. Black sooty mold on trunk bark and branches is a telltale sign of CMBS. Leaves and limbs may become sticky from honeydew excretion. Although not reported to outright kill crape myrtle trees, the CMBS may stress the tree and make it less healthy.

LDAF ACTIVITY: CMBS was first confirmed in northern Texas in 2010 and only recently has been found in Louisiana. No federal or state quarantines are in place. The most likely means of spread is on nursery stock and tree trimmings. LDAF will monitor for this pest during routine inspections at nursery grower and retail locations. If active infestations are found, nursery stock must be treated and declared free of the scales before it can be sold. Washing tree trunks and branches with mild soapy water or use of properly labeled systemic chemical treatments may be effective control measures.

