

**Oystershell Scale (*Lepidosaphes ulmi*) on
Green Ash (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*)**

I found a green ash tree (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*) outside the law building that was covered with Oystershell Scale, (*Lepidosaphes ulmi*).



Oystershell Scale insects on Green Ash twig



Oystershell Scale insects

The Green Ash normally has an upright oval growth habit growing up to 50ft tall.

The Green Ash that I found was only about 20ft tall. The tree also had some twig and

branch dieback. The overall health of the plant was fair, it was on the shorter side and did have some dieback but it looked like it could last for a while longer.

The dwarfed growth and dieback of branches and twigs was probably a result of the high infestation of Oystershell Scale (*Lepidosaphes ulmi*) insect on the branches of the tree. Scale insects feeding on plant sap slowly reduce plant vigor, so I think this sample may have been shorter due to the infestation of Scale insects. As with this tree, heavily infested plants grow poorly and may suffer dieback of twigs and branches. An infested host is occasionally so weakened that it dies.

The scale insects resemble a small oyster shell and are usually in clusters all over the bark of branches on trees such as dogwood, elm, hickory, ash, poplar, apple etc.

The Oystershell Scale insect has two stages, a crawler stage, which settles after a few days. Then the insect develops a scale which is like an outer shell, which is usually what you will see on an infested host. The scales are white in color at first but become brown with maturity.

There are a couple controls for Oystershell Scale. There are natural enemies like parasitic wasps and predators such as ladybugs. Scale insects are generally controlled by these enemies, but sometimes more treatment may be needed. Dormant oil treatments can be used and are applied in late winter through early spring before bud break. Horticultural oil, which is a different type of oil product, can be applied in the summer. Make sure to check the labels because some species may be sensitive to this treatment. There are other insecticides such as insecticidal soaps which can be used against the crawler stage, but are ineffective on the adult stage which have a waxy covering that protects them. There are also a few pesticides that can be used against the crawler stage

of osyterscale in mid-May. Examples are: Isotox, Orthene and Orthorix, and for commercial use: Guthion, Sniper and Dursban. To prevent damage from scale insects, you must maintain healthy, vigorously growing trees, monitor insect populations, and use correct control methods in a timely manner.

Works Cited

Day, Eric. "Oystershell Scale." Virginia Cooperative Extension. August 1996. Virginia State University. 14 Nov 2007
<<http://www.ext.vt.edu/departments/entomology/factsheets/oystersc.html>>.

Scale Insects Fact Sheet. June 1999. University of Rhode Island Horticulture Program. 14 Nov 2007 <<http://www.uri.edu/ce/factsheets/sheets/scales.html>>.