

TREE DOCTOR TIPS

Bagworms

(Thyridopteryx ephemeraeformis)

DESCRIPTION:

Bagworms are destructive pests of shrubs and woody ornamentals that are native to North America. Their spindle-shaped protective bags made from silk, debris and foliage provide camouflage, so they go unnoticed until there is significant plant damage.

HOSTS:

Bagworms attack more than 120 species of both deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs, but the most common species include:

- Arborvitae
- Birch
- Cedar
- Elm
- Honey locust
- Juniper
- Maple
- Oak
- Poplar
- Spruce
- Willow
- Linden

BIOLOGY AND SYMPTOMS:

Bagworm caterpillars eat the foliage of woody plants. Trees with heavy bagworm infestations may become defoliated entirely. Infested evergreens may not experience re-growth and attacked branches often die.

MANAGEMENT:

Cultural, biological or chemical management practices work together to rid the affected trees and shrubs. Foliar applications of Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) or any other recommended insecticide should be made when young larvae are first observed. Thorough foliar coverage is critical.

Heavy infestations may require a second application. Cultural management includes homeowners hand-picking bagworms off the affected trees and shrubs. All bags must be removed and destroyed. One bag left on the tree or shrub could lead to re-infestation. If you think your plants may be infested with bagworms, call your local arborist for a consultation.



A



B

FIGURE A. BAGWORM BAG ON BRANCH

FIGURE B. BAGWORMS ON EVERGREEN

*The scientists at **The Davey Institute** laboratory and research facility support our arborists and technicians in diagnosing and prescribing based on the latest arboricultural science. For specific treatment and application details, your arborist may consult *The Davey Institute PHC Handbook*.*

