

Pest Profile



Photo credit: Lesley Ingram, Bugwood.org

Common Name: Cottony Cushion Scale

Scientific Name: *Icerya purchasi*

Order and Family: Hemiptera, Margarodidae

Size and Appearance:

	Length (mm)	Appearance
Egg	9.5mm (3/8 inch), egg sac	There are between 600-800 oval red eggs contained in an egg sac that is roughly twice the length of the body; the egg sac is white and made of wax.
Larva/Nymph	3mm, 3 rd instar	Nymphs are orange to brown in color, oval in shape, and are known as crawlers; early instars are without the white waxy covering; 3 rd instars have the white wax covering and hairs; all instars and adults keep their legs and can move around, unlike some scales.
Adult	4.5mm, female; 3mm, male	Females have bright orange-red, yellow, or brown bodies; legs and antennae are black; they have an egg sac attached to their body, covered with white wax; males are tiny and red in color; males have 2 wings that are metallic blue in color; males are quite rare.
Pupa (if applicable)		

Type of feeder (Chewing, sucking, etc.): Nymphs and Adults: Piercing-sucking

Host plant/s: Up to 50 families of woody plants, most notably citrus, maple, nut trees, pittosporum, cocculus, and nandina.

Description of Damage (larvae and adults): Cottony cushion scales are phloem feeders. Both nymphs and adults suck out juices with their piercing sucking mouthparts. They decrease the vigor and vitality of the plants they feed on. They are honeydew producers and sooty mold is often a sign and symptom of scale infestation. They can cause dieback to branches and cause leaves and fruits to fall off the host plants.

References:

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Cranshaw, W. (2004). Chapter Six: Sap Suckers – Cottony Cushion Scale. Garden insects of North America: The Ultimate Guide to Backyard Bugs. (pp. 340). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Grafton-Cardwell, E. E. (2012, February). Cottony Cushion Scale. University of California. Retrieved March 6, 2016, from <http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7410.html>