

INSECTS AND WEEDS IN FOCUS

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TEXAS GULF COAST COTTON CONFERENCE

The Texas Gulf Coast Cotton Conference - Improving Yield, Quality, Marketing, is scheduled for November 7-8, 2001, at the Holiday Inn-Airport in Corpus Christi. We have arranged for speakers in the cotton industry from throughout the United States. The conference sponsored by Texas Cooperative Extension in cooperation with the South Texas Cotton and Grain Association and Cotton & Grain Producers of the Lower Rio Grande Valley, Inc. has been organized by area cotton producers, ginners, consultants, agribusiness interests, National Cotton Council representatives and Cotton Incorporated officials.

We are excited about the conference, the first of its kind in this area since 1988. The first day (Nov 7) will be a single session dealing with status of the industry, fiber quality and varieties, market place insights by William Dunavant, marketing strategies, regulatory issues, aflatoxin control in seed, and quarantine issues. On the second day (Nov. 8) there will be two concurrent sessions, one dealing with changing production practices and status of boll weevil eradication and the other session dealing with water use in cotton and irrigation requirements.

I believe the future of cotton production in Texas depends upon the collective efforts of all industry segments. We need to work to improve yields, reduce production costs, promote our fiber quality, improve harvest efficiency and ginning, and promote more efficient transportation. To do this, we need to work collectively. The conference is part of the collective effort to achieve these goals.

Program speakers will include people from Texas Cooperative Extension, Texas Agricultural Experiment Station, the textile industry, Cotton Incorporated, Texas Food & Fibers Commission, seed companies, agrichemical companies, cotton marketing enterprises, cotton producers, USDA scientists, Texas Department of Agriculture Representatives,

Oklahoma State University Weed Scientist, Texas Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation officials, Louisiana Agricultural Experiment Station entomologist, Texas Tech University plant physiologist and others. Continuing Education Credit from TDA and CCA will be provided.

The entire agenda will be forthcoming. If you have any questions or desire more specific information, let us know.

BOLL WEEVIL TRAPS & STALK DESTRUCTION

Texas Cooperative Extension operated pheromone traps captured less than half the number of boll weevils in July and August than for the same months last season. It was true for both inside and outside the eradication zone. The trend is positive and I expect trap catches have already peaked for this season.

It is amazing how fast stalk destruction is occurring following harvest this season; overall it may be better than last season which was the best I had ever witnessed. Continue to encourage each other in this effort. RDP

Table 1. Boll weevils per pheromone trap per month, TAEX operated traps.

Month	Wharton County ^a		Nueces & San Pat. Co.		
	2000	2001	6 yr avg ^b	2000	2001
Jan	4.5	0.25	5.3	9.93	0.00
Feb	4.2	0.09	5.5	1.60	0.00
Mar	29.7	5.88	7.7	1.72	0.11
Apr	103.8	36.32	7.4	1.27	0.11
May	47.4	14.04	2.8	0.83	0.17
Jun	4.8	3.60	4.9	0.67	0.00
Jul	119.1	46.0	188.9	0.78	0.35
Aug	285.7	107.0	645.7	14.04	0.85 ^c

^a Traps outside the boll weevil eradication zone operated by Dan Fromme, IPM Agent.

^b 6 yr. avg. is 1977-1982 by Segers et al.

^c Trap catch for the 1st three weeks only.

TEXAS BOLL WEEVIL ERADICATION TRAPPING

The trend outlined in Table 1 was also reflected by Boll Weevil Eradication Foundation trapping (Fig. 1). The pheromone trapping results shown in figures 1-3 are best viewed on electronic copies of this newsletter since they are in color. It appears that the season peak has occurred earlier and is greatly reduced from even the low numbers of last season. The two main areas of concern are along the border between the eradication zone and outside the zone (Figures 2 and 3). Catches in traps spaced at 1 mile intervals starting within the zone and continuing outside the zone show movement into the eradication zone for several miles. RDP

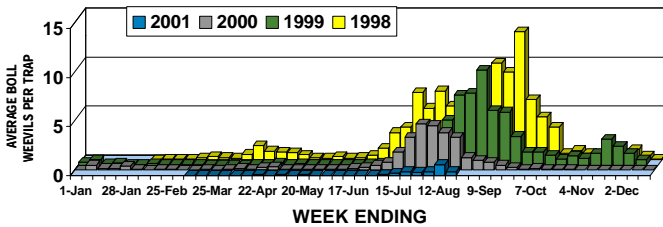


Fig. 1. Boll weevil pheromone trap catches within the South Texas/Wintergarden Eradication Zone, 1998-2001. Texas boll Weevil Eradication Foundation traps.

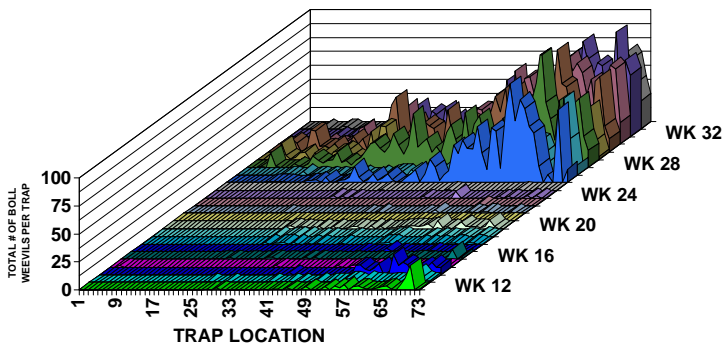


Fig. 2. Boll weevil pheromone trap catches from Kingsville to Raymondville along Highway 77 (north to south) for 2001.

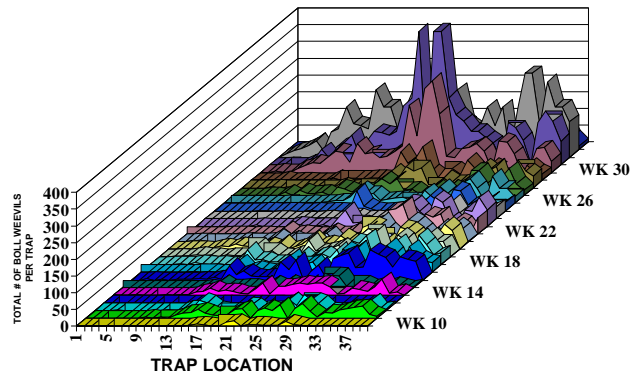


Fig. 3. Boll weevil pheromone trap catches from Victoria County (trap 1) to Matagorda County along FM 616 for 2001.

TEXAS BOLL WEEVIL QUARANTINE

When the South Texas/Wintergarden BWE Zone is declared boll weevil “suppressed”, certain quarantine steps will be taken to aid in reducing weevil movement into the zone. In order to inform producers, a brochure was prepared by the Texas Department of Agriculture. Quarantine success will depend upon producer involvement, i.e. insistence that equipment be cleaned before it comes into or through the zone.

If you would like a copy of the brochure mailed to you please call our office (361) 265-9203. RDP

COTTON STALK DEADLINE LISTING

It is best to remove cotton stalks well in advance of the dates required by law. Stalk destruction dates for surrounding counties are shown below:

- September 1 - All counties south of Webb, Duval, Jim Wells, area south and east of Highway 59 in Live Oak and Bee Counties, San Patricio and Aransas County.
- October 1 - La Salle, McMullen, north and west of highway 59 in Live Oak and Bee counties, Goliad, Victoria, Refugio, Calhoun, Jackson, Matagorda and Wharton (west of the Colorado River) counties.
- October 10 - Val Verde, Kinney, Maverick, Dimmit, Zavala, Uvalde, Medina, Frio, Bexas Atascosa, Wilson, Karnes and DeWitt Counties
- October 15 - Brazoria, Fort Bend, east of the Colorado River in Wharton County and Austin Counties.
- October 20 - Gonzales, Lavaca, Fayette, Colorado, Washington, Harris, Galveston, Chambers, Liberty, Jefferson and Orange Counties.

RDP

WEST NILE VIRUS OVERVIEW

Mosquito - borne encephalitis has been present in Texas for many years and now it appears that another type (west Nile Virus) will be found before long. It has been confirmed in a blue jay in Louisiana. It is something people need to be aware of and take precautions against but there is not reason to be alarmed.

The West Nile virus was first isolated in the 1930s in the blood of a woman in the West Nile province of Uganda. Officials do not know how the virus migrated from Central Africa to the United States, where it first caused problems in the New York area in the summer of 1999.

The virus is represented by at least two groups. The African-Middle Eastern group contains isolates from the Congo, Egypt, Israel, Uganda, South Africa, Pakistan, France and eastern Europe, and the other group contains isolates from India and South Africa.

"The strain of West Nile we are dealing with is closely related to the one found in Israel," according to Dr. Jim Olson, TAES, entomologist. "This year we had the first occurrence in the South, in Florida and Georgia and now Louisiana."

Olson said it is a bird-borne virus. It is transmitted from bird to bird and occasionally to mammals, including humans and horses. Humans and horses are usually infected after being bitten by a mosquito that has fed on an infected bird.

Symptoms of the disease caused by this virus begin as flu-like and usually end after about 10 days. Some people may be more seriously affected.

"Most people will be diagnosed as having viral flu," Olson said. "Usually you won't see a severe manifestation."

"A small number of older adults, whose immune systems may be weak, could have inflammation and infection of the membranes around the nerve tissues of the central nervous system. When that happens, the risk of paralysis, respiratory failure, heart failure and even death occur."

The best defense against the virus is to avoid being bitten by mosquitos. Olson recommended mosquito-proofing your home as well as the surrounding area by removing any stagnant water or containers that could hold water and become a breeding place for mosquitos. Also make sure screens are well attached, and there are no other access points for mosquitos to get into the house.

"The Southern House mosquito is one of the most common in the south and is a proven carrier of West Nile," Olson said. "Homeowners should take precautions against these mosquitos because they breed in stagnant water. They should treat their yards with a safe larvicide," such as mosquito dunks or donuts containing the bacterial toxin called BTI. Lethal for mosquitos, these dunks are safe for humans or other animals.

View our newsletter earlier on the internet on the TPMA website (<http://www.tpma.org/>) by selecting "IPM newsletter" on the drop-down menu by going to "Coastal Bend" and "go". Another site is <http://agfacts.tamu.edu/~rparker>. Also pest management information is available at www.txaac.org.

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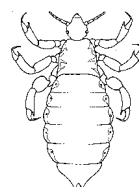
The Texas Department of Health is also taking precautions against West Nile. A monitoring system has been put into place east of Interstate 35, which is the main migratory path for birds into Texas. Officials recommend the public contact the health department when dead crows and jays are seen.

"The public should just take general precautions," Olson said. "Avoid getting bitten (by mosquitos) and take care of your premises. Encourage your neighbors to do the same. This can be a community- wide effort." RDP

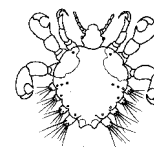
INTERESTING INSECTS

Lice are often divided into orders containing the chewing lice and sucking lice. They are now all included by some entomologists in one order called Phthiraptera (phthir = lice; a =without; ptera = wings) with two or three suborders. Lice are small wingless ectoparasites of birds and mammals. They are often found on very specific parts of the hosts. There are about 5,500 recognized species. Two species attack humans (head/body louse and the crab louse). Sucking lice are irritating pests and some are important vectors of disease. Many chewing lice are pests of domestic animals, particularly poultry. Chewing lice cause considerable irritation, and heavily infested animals appear run-down and emaciated. Control of chewing lice usually involves treatment of infested animals with a dust or dip. Sucking lice feed on the blood of their host. The third suborder contains only two species, parasites of the Indian elephant and wart hog. Lice undergo simple metamorphosis and grow through three nymphal instars in most species. Females lay 50-150 eggs, nearly all of which are attached to hairs or feathers of the host. RDP

Human lice



body/head louse



crab louse