Scale

Above: Cottony maple scale may be found on currants, gooseberry, grapes, as well as maples.

COLLIER ARBOR CARE

Environmentally Friendly…Since 1937

Scale

Plants Affected

All types of fruit and ornamental trees, shrubs.

Symptoms/Damage

Scales are so unusual looking that most people don't recognize them as insects. Most adult scales do not move, they look like brown or white "tortoise shells" on branches or foliage. Some are covered with a white waxy substance. Scales have piercing mouthparts that suck juices out of the plant.

Severe infestations of scale can cause overall decline or even death of the plant. Most scales excrete sticky honey dew that can drip down onto cars and buildings and make a gummy mess. Often this honeydew is attacked by a black sooty mold.

Life Cycle

Some scales have only one generation per year and others can have multiple generations. Typically, scales over winter as an adult scale. Then in late spring eggs are produced hidden under the mother scale. The eggs hatch in late spring and early summer into tiny microscopic crawlers. These crawlers walk over plant surfaces, get blown by wind to new trees or moved by birds.

Management
Cultural

Scales are often kept in check by natural enemies like parasitic wasps. However scale populations can sometimes get out of control and cause plant damage or be a nuisance with sticky honeydew.

Organic Treatment

Well timed sprays of oil during the dormant season and when crawlers are active should provide good control.

Above Left: Azalea Bark Scale sooty mold.

Above Right: Lecanium scale found on woody plants such as azaleas and rhododendrons.

Below Left: Azalea bark scale shown on an azalea also may be found on rhododendrons.

Below Right: Oak Pit Scale.

Collier Arbor Care is a homegrown, second-generation family-owned business. We've been around since 1937.

We are recognized by our customers and by horticulture professionals for knowledge, experience, trusted advice, and the highest standards of workmanship. The continuing education of our staff brings the most up-to-date knowledge and industry techniques to your landscape.