

Bagworms on Evergreens

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Bagworms occur most often on Eastern Red Cedar, Spruces (Black Hills, Norway, and Colorado Blue), and Pines (Jack, Austrian, Ponderosa, and Scotch). They look like Christmas ornaments, but these are ornaments you don't want! Other people will call them cocoons that appear on the ends of the branches. Some people will mistake them for small cones that are forming on the tree from a distance.

Will they kill my tree? If the infestation is heavy, they can severely defoliate the tree and that could be the demise for the tree. In most cases it won't kill the tree, but you need to be on the look out for these little cocoons on your evergreens.

How do you treat them? Well, there are two methods. The first method, if the tree is young enough and you can reach them, you basically cut the bags off and dispose of them by immersing the bags in kerosene, crushing the bags and then putting them in the trash, or burn them. DO NOT JUST THROUGH THEM ON THE GROUND! The larvae may return to the tree.

The second method is to spray an insecticide on the entire tree. You will look for insecticides with one of the following active ingredients: bacillus thuringiensis (BT), permethrin, or carbaryl. Follow the label as to how to apply the chemical and how often to apply. You should be able to find these insecticides at your local garden stores.

This is a water down to the point of what bagworms are. If you want more information, go to the following link: <https://byf.unl.edu/bagworm>

This year I have seen several trees in and around Norfolk that have them so be on the look out for this pest. What do these cocoons look like? I'm glad you asked!



This is a bagworm on a Colorado Blue Spruce here in Norfolk.



This bagworm is hiding deep in the Colorado Blue Spruce it is occupying. Don't just look on the outside of the tree, also look on the inside.



Again, this one is not on the outer tips of the tree. Take some time to look around your tree. Photos by Pam Bergstrom.