

Honeylocust Tree Insects

As of June 15, 2009, numerous honeylocust trees have sparse foliage and look a little bare. A closer look reveals many tiny green insects crawling all over the trees. The majority of these insects are honeylocust plant bugs or honeylocust leafhoppers.

Shown in the picture is a honeylocust plant bug. Both honeylocust plant bugs and honeylocust leafhoppers feed on leaves by sucking the fluid out of the succulent new growth. This leads to wilting, curling, and even shedding of the new leaves. Foliage on individual honeylocust trees may be sparse or completely gone due to this feeding. Both insects have a short lifecycle and disappear by the end of June, and the honeylocust trees will put on a new set of leaves. By mid July, honeylocust trees will have recovered and will appear normal.



Though both honeylocust plant bugs and leafhoppers are present every year, this year's populations are much larger than in a typical year. Honeylocust trees make up 12.1% of the parkway tree population so a larger than normal insect population on their foliage is noticeable. As in previous years, honeylocust trees are expected to recover this year and re-foliate (shown in the picture to the right). To aid recovery, the most beneficial thing to do is to water the trees when the new growth starts in late June. With the summer heat, new leaves can dry out quickly. Watering once or twice a week will benefit even the mature trees. For questions or concerns about honeylocust trees and insects, please contact the Forestry Division at 434-5475.

