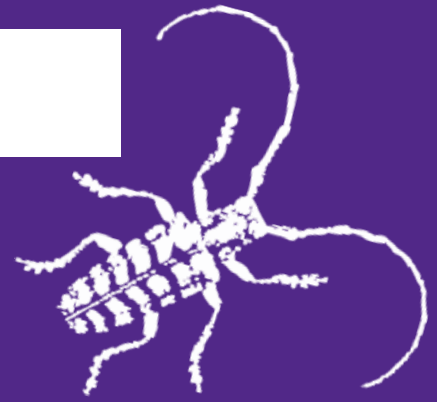


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Mimosa Webworm

Mimosa Webworm

Damage associated with mimosa webworm, *Homadaula anisocentra*, larvae/caterpillars is quite noticeable on honey locust, *Gleditsia triacanthos*, and mimosa, *Albizia julibrissin*, trees throughout Kansas. The larvae/caterpillars are 1/2 of an inch long when full-grown (Figure 1) and move backward rapidly when disturbed. Caterpillars' web leaves together on the ends of branches (Figure 2). Webbing typically starts at the tops of trees and protects caterpillars from natural enemies (parasitoids and predators) and insecticide spray applications. Heavily infested trees are brown or scorched in appearance (Figures 3 through 5) because the caterpillars skeletonize the leaf tissue. Caterpillars eventually leave trees using a silken strand before pupating. Mimosa webworm pupates in bark crevices or pupae are attached to structures (e.g. buildings). There are two generations per year in Kansas.

It is too late to apply an insecticide this time of year when trees are heavily infested with webbing because the caterpillars are protected from insecticide spray applications inside the leaf webbing. However, next year, you can manage mimosa



Figure 1. Mimosa webworm caterpillars feeding on leaves (Raymond Cloyd, KSU)



Figure 2. Mimosa webworm webbing on end of branch (Cloyd, KSU)

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webworm caterpillar populations by applying an insecticide when the caterpillars are initially present and exposed to insecticide spray applications. You can use insecticides that contain the following active ingredients: *Bacillus thuringiensis* subsp. *kurstaki*, spinosad, bifenthrin, cyfluthrin, and permethrin. Read the label of each product to ensure that “webworms” are listed. *Bacillus thuringiensis* subsp. *kurstaki* and spinosad are stomach poisons so mimosa webworm caterpillars are killed after ingesting the spray solution on the leaf surface. High-volume spray applications are required so that the insecticide contacts the caterpillars or there are residues on the leaf surface. Selective pruning, if possible, can quickly remove isolated or localized early infestations of mimosa webworm.



Figure 3. Mimosa webworm caterpillar feeding damage (Cloyd, KSU)



Figure 4. Extensive feeding damage caused by mimosa webworm caterpillars (Cloyd, KSU)



Figure 5. Extensive feeding damage caused by mimosa webworm caterpillars (Cloyd, KSU)

Raymond Cloyd – Horticultural Entomology

HOME

Sincerely,

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