



Turf

Bluegrass Billbug

Pest Fact Sheet **47**

Introduction

The bluegrass billbug (*Sphenophorus parvulus* **Gyllenhal**) was first reported in the United States almost 100 years ago in Nebraska. Since then it has become a pest of turfgrass throughout much of the United States. Although its primary host is Kentucky bluegrass, it also attacks perennial ryegrass and fescue.

Description

The adult bluegrass billbug is a gray, brown or black weevil notable for its long snout. The snout has chewing mouthparts at the tip. The adult, 3/8" long, is often found walking on pavement. The larvae are white and legless with a brown head capsule and feed within the stems and on the fibrous roots.

Life cycle

Spring: Overwintering adults emerge in May and lay eggs in stems during May and June.

Summer: Larvae feed on the stems and roots with the heaviest damage appearing in July and August.

Fall: New adults emerge in September and October and seek overwintering sites. There is one generation per year.



Adult Billbug

Control

If one adult per minute is found in June, apply a chemical treatment. Or apply a larval treatment in July as soon as damage is observed. Billbug injury is a mid-summer problem and not a spring or fall problem as with white grubs. Since billbugs feed mostly at the crown, the turf does not roll up as with root-feeding grubs. Consult your county Extension Educator (see county office telephone listing on reverse side) for specific pesticide recommendations.

Summary

Damaging stage	Larva, adult
Overwintering stage	Adult
Number of generations per year	1
Time of year larval damage done	July and August
Major symptoms	Adults on sidewalks, driveways May-June, and September-October. Spotty dead patches of grass during July and August. Grass breaks off at crown.

UNH Cooperative Extension County Office Telephone Numbers

Belknap (603) 527-5475	Carroll (603) 539-3331	Cheshire (603) 352-4550	Coos (603) 788-4961	Grafton (603) 787-6944
Hillsborough Goffstown (603) 641-6060	Merrimack (603) 796-2151	Rockingham Brentwood, NH 03833 (603) 679-5616	Strafford (603) 749-4445	Sullivan (603) 863-9200

Stop! It is always the pesticide applicator's responsibility, by law, to read and follow all current label directions for the specific pesticide being used. If unsure of registration status of a particular pesticide product, contact the NH Division of Pesticide Control at (603) 271-3550. Store pesticides in their original containers in a locked cabinet or shed away from food. Dispose of unused pesticides or empty containers safely, according to NH regulations. If you suspect pesticide poisoning, call the New Hampshire Poison Control Center at 1-800-562-8236.



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