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## ***Spruce: Spruce bud scale***

*Use Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for successful plant problem management.*

### ***Biology***

Spruce bud scales are reddish to brown in color and occur at the base of new shoots. They tend to be very inconspicuous, as they may be partly hidden by the bark. Lower branches are often heavily infested and may be killed, while upper branches are much less affected. Spruce bud scales produce large amounts of honeydew which is often covered with black sooty mold.

### ***Management Options***

#### **Non-Chemical Management**

- ~ Hand removal may help control spruce bud scales on small trees.
- ~ Do not prune branches unless they are dead.

*Select non-chemical management options as your first choice!*

#### **Chemical Management**

***IMPORTANT: Visit Home and Garden Fact Sheets for more information on using pesticides***

Apply in early summer when crawlers are present. Oil applications should be made during the delayed dormant period (usually some time in February). Horticultural oils, soap-based products and some other products may cause discoloration of spruce needles, particularly on Colorado blue spruce. Read labels carefully and test on a small area before application. **DO NOT APPLY Safer Brand Insect Killing Soap Concentrate II to Colorado blue spruce.** Homeowners should not make foliar applications to trees over 10 ft tall. Consult a commercial pesticide applicator for treatment of trees and shrubs over 10 ft. tall.

**Listed below are examples of pesticides that are legal in Washington. Always read and follow all label directions.**

- ~ Bonide Systemic Insect Control
  - active ingredient: acephate
  - EPA reg no: 239-2461-4
- ~ R-T-U Year-Round Spray Oil
  - active ingredient: oil/pet distillate
  - EPA reg no: 6218-78
- ~ Safer Brand Insect Killing Soap Conc II [Organic]
  - active ingredient: potassium laurate
  - EPA reg no: 42697-60
- ~ This list may not include all products registered for this use.

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*Images*



~ Caption: Spruce bud scale  
~ Photo by: A.L. Antonelli