

Greenhouse Pest Message July 8, 2022
Leanne Pundt, UConn Extension

Potato leafhoppers continue on their favorite herbaceous ornamental hosts such as *Alcea*, *Astilbe*, *Baptisa*, *Dahlia*, *Gaura*, *Hibiscus*, *Lupinus* and *Nepeta*. They inject a toxin as they feed, so that leaves develop a v-shaped, brown edge burn at the tip on the infected leaves, known as “hopper burn”. This may be mistaken for leaf scorch due to water stress (common on astilbe) or high soluble salts.



Figure 1: V shaped hopper burn just starting on astilbe (on left) and more advanced on lupine (on right). Photos by L. Pundt

The very active leafhoppers dart around and fly up from foliage when disturbed so yellow sticky cards are helpful. Using yellow sticky cards also makes it easier to determine which species of leafhopper is present. Potato leafhopper adults are approximately 1/8-inch long, light green with characteristic white spots just behind their head that are visible under high magnification.



Figure 2: Wedge-shaped leafhopper adult on Baptisia leaf and on sticky card. Photos by L. Pundt

There are limited natural enemies commercially available for the management of the fast-moving leafhoppers.

Control of leafhoppers with contact insecticides is difficult because they are very mobile, and new leafhoppers enter treated areas after sprays have dried. Systemic insecticides such as Altus (flupyradifurone) may be applied to ornamental plants to prevent feeding damage when leafhoppers first appear. For more options see the latest edition of *New England Greenhouse Floriculture Guide* available online at: <https://greenhouseguide.cahnr.uconn.edu/>

Red headed Flea Beetle feeding damage may be seen on **Coreopsis, Hydrangea, Ilex** and **Weigela**. Adults cause the most injury, especially to young tender foliage. They are a small (3.5-5 mm long), shiny black beetle with a slightly reddish head. Their well-developed hind legs that allow them to hop from plant to plant. Damage to leaves include holes or skeletonization, sometimes leaving the lower surface intact.



Figure 3: Redheaded flea beetle adult (on left) and adults and their damage (on right). Photos by L. Pundt

For more:

Red Headed Flea Beetle CAES https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/CAES/DOCUMENTS/Publications/Fact_Sheets/Entomology/RedheadedFleaBeetlepdf.pdf?la=en

Red Headed Flea Beetle <https://bookstore.ksre.ksu.edu/pubs/MF3225.pdf>

Do you know what is causing this damage?



No, it's not a leaf spot disease, but damage from four-lined plant bugs. They are not typically found in greenhouses, (but were in both of these cases), but more commonly found on mints in your garden. Adults tend to move to the underside of the leaves when you are looking for them.



Online registration is open for the **Greenhouse Biological Control Conference on August 16th** at the Jones Auditorium in New Haven, CT. See: <https://greenhouse.uconn.edu/biocontrol-2/>

Featured speakers include:

- Ron Valentin, Director of Technical Business, Anatis BioProtection
- Suzanne Wainwright Evans, Buglady Consulting
- Elwood Roberts, Plant Products
- Michael Brownbridge, Bioworks

**Registration includes boxed lunch and five pesticide credits.
Preregistration is required, no walk ins. Registration will end on Friday,
August 12th.**

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