

Exotic Bamboo Mealybug

Exotic Bamboo mealybug *Palmicutor lumpurensis* can be a serious pest of bamboo.



This new invasive species is found attacking bamboo in various hotspots around the county. The initial infestation was found on *Bambusa*

oldhammi, however, other species of bamboo are susceptible as well. This new pest is not to be confused with noxious bamboo mealybug *Palmicutor lumpurensis* which is well established and it is only considered to cause minor damage.

Description



The adults and immatures of the bamboo mealybug are grayish-pink, covered by a fine white mealy wax, and lack lateral filaments. They superficially resemble the pink hibiscus mealybug *Maconellicoccus hirsutus*, but pink hibiscus

mealybug does not occur on bamboo and has not been found in San Diego County.

Distribution

The bamboo mealybug, native to Malaysia, was introduced into Florida in 2002 and was reported in Texas in 2004. The first time this invasive species was found in California was Vista in north San Diego County during October 2006.



Damage

Unlike the noxious bamboo mealybug, the bamboo mealybug causes considerable damage to the host plant. New shoots are more susceptible to damage and heavy populations can cause abortion of new shoots. Severe infestations could potentially kill stands of bamboo. New infestations are difficult to detect, but with heavy infestations the cottony white masses under the leaf sheaths are easily visible.



What if you see this pest?

Currently, this pest has a California statewide "B" rating which means measures by agricultural officials will be taken to prevent its further spread. While we don't believe this will become a major agricultural pest and there are effective insecticide treatments available, if you see this or any other new suspicious insect, please report it to the County Agriculture, Weights and Measures, entomology lab at 858-614-7738.

