


SPITTLEBUGS

Adult two-lined spittlebugs are black insects with red eyes and legs and two orange stripes across their wings. They are approximately 1/4 inch long. The spittlebug derives its name from the white, frothy "spittle" the nymphs (young spittlebugs) produce. The nymphs are yellow or white in color with a brown head, and their eyes are always red. During the nymph stage, the nymph excretes spittle and air resulting in a long-lasting bubbly mixture that covers their body. This covering serves two purposes: prevents drying out and conceals the nymphs from predators. Both adults and nymphs suck juices from plants with their piercing-sucking mouthparts.

Depending upon temperature and rain, most eggs hatch from late March to late April. The first generation of adults is abundant in June. The adult population peaks again from early August to early September. Adults are most active in the early morning hours since they retreat to the soil surface in the heat of the day.



SIZE 
Up to 1/4 inch

Spittlebugs are present throughout the entire state, but they are more prevalent in north and northwest Florida. They attack all turfgrass species, but centipede grass appears to be their favorite host. Adults also feed on ornamental plants, especially hollies. Infested grass tips wilt and turn yellow. Spittlebugs require high humidity conditions for optimum development. Thatch (thick layer of dead and living grass) contributes to these conditions. A cultural control for spittlebugs is to follow recommended practices regarding mowing, fertilization, and irrigation to reduce thatch buildup.

Information from EDIS document ENY-334