

# SCALE INSECTS

There are about 8,000 species of scale insect, but the two main groups are soft and armored. They feed on many different types of plants, mostly trees and shrubs, by sucking sap through their straw-like mouthparts. They can be found on stems, twigs, trunks, leaves, or fruit.

## IDENTIFICATION

**Size:** 1/16 to 3/8 inch long | **Shape:** Round or oval | **Color:** White, tan, brown, yellow, orange, red, or gray

All scales live beneath a waxy covering that they grow themselves. Depending on the species, this "scale" can be flat, dome-shaped, oyster shell-shaped, or fluffy. Soft scale coverings cannot be separated from the insect, but armored scale insects live beneath their protective covering.



## SIGNS OF SCALE INFESTATION



## MANAGEMENT

- Introduce natural predators like lady beetles and parasitic wasps.
- Manually remove scales or prune stems with heavy scale presence.
- Before introducing new plants, thoroughly inspect them for scales and quarantine for about 40 days.

Figure 1. Farrell, M. (Photographer). (July 19, 2021). Scales, magnolia multiple [Photograph]. Reproduced with permission from the University of Minnesota.  
Figure 2. Schulz, K. (Photographer). (January 9, 2019). Armored scale insects [Online image]. Retrieved August 17, 2021 from <https://www.flickr.com/photos/treegrow/46980983712/in/photostream/>. Copyright 2019 by Katja Schulz. Reprinted with permission as per <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/2.0/>.  
Figure 3. Farrell, M. (Photographer). (July 19, 2021). Scales, magnolia zoomed out [Photograph]. Reproduced with permission from the University of Minnesota.  
Figure 4. Farrell, M. (Photographer). (August 2, 2021). Honeydew [Photograph]. Reproduced with permission from the University of Minnesota.  
Figure 5. Farrell, M. (Photographer). (August 2, 2021). Scales damage, sooty mold, honeydew, wasps [Photograph]. Reproduced with permission from the University of Minnesota.  
Figure 6. Dead shoot and leaf [Online image]. (n.d.). Retrieved August 16, 2021 from <https://www.maxpixel.net/Decay-Change-Recycle-Bying-Dead-Leaf-Green-Autumn-4738318>. Reprinted with permission as per <https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/>.