

look like winged aphids.

Flea beetles

These are members of a large beetle family. They look like small ladybirds (3 to 4 mm long), are brown with white spots on their wings and normally jump away when disturbed. On olives and wild olives the adults eat holes in the leaves while their larvae tunnel in die soil. The damage can be seen as small holes all over the leaves.

Green stinkbugs

The adults are brown to green, shield shaped, approximately 15 mm long and give off a distinctive odour if disturbed. They lay their eggs on the undersides of leaves and the immature bugs suck sap from the soft, new growth of the host plant.

Scale

This pest can be seen as small white spots on the older parts of the tree such as the trunk and branches. Because they appear on the older parts they are often hard to see, especially in older bonsai with rough bark. They are very small insects of which the head, thorax and abdomen cannot be distinguished. They are always covered by a round, sometimes oval, shell which is made of wax or old skin casts. The females are immobile and remain in one spot for their entire lives. The immature insects can crawl and thus spread. The males are winged and thus also mobile. They are sap suckers and can cause die back of branchlets and leaf drop.

Control is made difficult by the armoured shell, on the one hand, but also because they are often well protected by the rough bark. Make particularly sure that the trunk is sprayed thoroughly from all directions. It is also important to control ants since they drive away the natural enemies of scale.

Red spider

Red spider (mite) thrives in warm, dry conditions as in houses or on balconies and are seldom found outdoors where the leaves are sprayed when the trees are watered. When infested, tiny yellow spots

will be noted on the upper surfaces of leaves. On the undersides small rust coloured spots (the spiders) will be seen and sometimes even a fine web.

Spray the undersides of the leaves particularly well with a fine mist under reasonable pressure in order to reach the red spiders and their webs.

Ants

Although ants on their own will not damage wild olives, they protect aphids. Ants attack the natural enemies of aphids. The ants feed on the honeydew secreted by the aphids.

GENERAL HINTS FOR GREATER SUCCESS

To control pests successfully the following should be noted:

- A magnifying glass is useful in identifying the problem.
- Trees should preferably not be sprayed if they are wilted because of dryness. This is particularly important when using systemic agents.
- Spray when there is little chance of rain. Systemic poisons take up to eight hours to be absorbed by the plant. The strong sunlight of midday should also be avoided as this causes some poisons to break down.
- Control ants in the bonsai garden just before the start of Spring in order to prevent the spread of aphids while the trees are budding and they are prone to attacks.
- For the rest of the season spray normally as soon as the insects appear using suitable poisons after the insects have been identified. Spray only after outbreaks and not simply on feeling.

The poisons that can be used for each type of insect are not indicated since there is continuous progress in the development of chemical insecticides. If the insect has been identified, the correct spray can easily be obtained from a dealer. A handy guide to the identification of insects with recommendations for their control, is *Die lekegids tot tuinplae en -siektes in Suid-Afrika* by WM de Villiers and AS