

SOUTHERN CHINCH BUG

Blissus insularis

TURFGRASS PEST IDENTIFICATION

SCOUT | IDENTIFY | TAKE ACTION

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KNOW MORE. GROW FURTHER.

LIFE STAGES



Egg → five nymphal instars → adult. Newly emerged nymphs are yellow, then turn red with a pale band; later stages darken. Illustrated colors are not a fixed instar key.



Adult Southern Chinch Bug
Blissus insularis

NYPHS IN TURF



Chinch bug nymphs (various stages)

Newly emerged nymphs are yellow, then turn red with a pale band; later stages darken.

TURF DAMAGE



Chinch bug damage

Irregular yellow to brown patches, often in hot, sunny areas. Can be mistaken for drought stress.

CLOSE-UP ON LEAF



Nymph (close-up)

New nymphs are yellow, then red; later stages darken.



WHERE TO LOOK

- Sunny, exposed areas
- Thin or stressed turf
- Along sidewalks, driveways, and turf edges
- In the thatch (use a flotation sample if needed)



SIGNS & SYMPTOMS

- Irregular yellow to brown patches
- Grass thins and may die in severe infestations
- Often confused with drought stress
- Damage usually worse in hot, dry conditions



SCOUTING TIPS

- Inspect thatch, plant bases and patch edges.
- Flotation can help find live bugs.
- Hatch and development depend on temperature.
- Warm Florida activity may continue through winter.



MANAGEMENT NOTES

- Maintain healthy, properly irrigated turf
- Reduce plant stress
- Treat when chinch bugs are present and causing damage
- Follow label instructions for recommended products



LIFE CYCLE & CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS

- Egg hatch is temperature-dependent: about 6–13 days in summer; a month or more in winter.
- Five nymphal instars: newly emerged nymphs are yellow, then turn red.
- Warm Florida activity may continue through winter.
- Generations vary with temperature and region.

- Primarily a St. Augustinegrass pest in the Southeast.
- Confirm live insects; drought can look similar.
- Treatment depends on pest stage, product, timing and site conditions.
- Recheck based on scouting, not an automatic repeat schedule.

SCOUTING NOTES

Confirm live adults or nymphs at plant bases and patch edges. Use flotation when needed; drought, disease, nematodes and other insects can look similar.



PRO TIP: Chinch bug damage can look like drought. Always check for insects before irrigating more heavily.

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CUSTOMER EXPECTATIONS

Treatment results depend on correct identification, pest life stage, product, timing, and application conditions. Later hatch or reinfestation may require further monitoring. Base any additional treatment on scouting, site history, local guidance, and the product label—not an automatic repeat schedule.

[1] UF/IFAS — Pest identification and biology

<https://ask.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/IN383>