



Monthly News & Updates

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July, 2019



PMKCA President Joe Clarkson

President's Message

Two-Lined Spittlebug

Another unwanted invasive species has been found in Kona. The two-lined spittlebug, (*Prosapia bicincta*), has a reproductive cycle that includes a nymph stage. The nymphs protect themselves by sucking liquids from the basal stems of various grasses, producing a foamy "spittle" mass in which they hide. In the process of protecting themselves by extracting plant liquids, these spittle bug

In February of this year the Big Island Invasive Species Committee (BIISC) issued another alert about the spittlebug. The alert describes a worsening situation: The Two-Lined Spittle Bug (TLSB) was discovered in Kona late 2016, when a rancher in upper-elevation Hualalai first reported widespread die-off of pastures. Initial surveys found nearly 2000 acres were already affected. By 2018, further surveys revealed that the insect had impacted 125,000 acres of rangeland from Makalei to Keokea. The BIISC alert can be found here:

<https://www.biisc.org/2linespittlebug/>

The BIISC alert asks for public help in identifying areas of infestation: If you see or suspect TLSB, reach out immediately to Mark Thorne, Range & Livestock Management specialist for the University of Hawaii extension service (CTAHR), thornem@hawaii.edu or 808-887-6183, and/or Carolyn Wong, USDA NRCS Grazing Land Management specialist, at Carolyn.wong@hi.usda.gov or 808-885-6602 (ext 105).

Next PMKCA Meetings

PMKCA will have two meetings in July

nymphs can kill the grass. Large populations of the bug can kill off entire pastures and allow weeds and brush to take over. The bug was first reported in March 2017 as an Alert from UH-CTAHR. The full report may be found here: <https://www.biisc.org/wp-content/uploads/Spittle-Bug-Alert-March-2017-ver-5.-Final.pdf>

Quoting from the report's description of the initial survey:

The areas surveyed were primarily Kikuyu/pangola grass pastures between the 2,000 and 4,000 ft. elevations of mauka Kona. The extent of the damage was alarming. Approximately 2,000 acres on the ranch had been severely affected to the point that the Kikuyu (*Pennisetum clandestinum*) and pangola (*Digitariaeriantha*) grasses that formally dominated these pastures was completely dead over very large expanses with only sporadic and isolated areas where recovery was occurring.

The 2017 report goes on to note that the affected grasses are common pasture grasses in Waimea and Hamakua and that if the spittlebug infests those pastures it will have severe economic repercussions.

and everyone is welcome to attend either meeting. The board will meet on July 11th at 7 pm at the Hawaiian Vanilla Company. The main item on the agenda is preparation for the general membership meeting later this month, but anyone can bring their questions and concerns to the meeting or by contacting any member of the board prior to the meeting. Board member contact information is at PMKCA.org. The general membership meeting will be at Kalopa State Park main pavilion on Saturday, July 27th starting at 11 am. The agenda for the meeting is mostly to enjoy a potluck lunch, meet our neighbors and hear reports from our elected officials about the most important issues facing our community, county and state. We will also finish up with our traditional bingo game in which items donated by members are prizes. Everyone is encouraged to donate a prize of zero or very little cost to be given to bingo winners. Please ensure that any prizes containing plant materials, such as potted plants, live bouquets or produce, do not harbor little fire ants.

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