

## Red and Black Bugs Bugging You?

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Have you seen red and black insects crawling all over your grass and up the sides of your house? Do you have a Goldenrain tree or Chinaberry tree in your yard or close by? Then most likely the insect you are seeing is the harmless *Jadera haematoloma*. This is a seed-eating insect.

These bugs are providing a service to you. They are eating the seeds of the tree so that you do not have thousands of baby trees sprouting up under the adult tree.

In central Florida, April and May are usually the peak months for Jadera bugs. The adults are 9.5 - 13.5 mm long (with wings) and 3-4 mm wide. Their color is mostly black except for reddish eyes, shoulders and border area of the abdomen. The nymphs (young) are mostly reddish in color, with the mid-section, antennae, beak and legs brown to black.

### CONTROL:

Usually, no control is necessary. A small concentration on a plant can often be destroyed by hand collecting.

If the bugs are a nuisance in lawns or playgrounds, removing the tree seeds by raking shortly after the seedpods or lanterns have fallen to the ground is recommended, but should be done when the trees first drop the seedpods, before the seeds detach. Attempting to rake them when the bugs become noticeable in March or April, after the seeds have detached from the seedpods, is too late.

The Goldenrain tree or Chinaberry tree can be removed - the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council has listed the Goldenrain tree as a Category II invasive species, and the Chinaberry tree as a Category I invasive species. The preference of *Jadera haematoloma* for seeds of these trees may help to prevent unwanted germination of the seeds and the invasive spread of these trees. If you remove the invasive tree, please replace it with a preferred tree (preferably a native tree). Call and ask for our publication on "Favorite Trees."

Eliminate hiding places such as piles of rocks, boards, leaves, and general debris close to the house. Repair and close places where bugs can enter the house, such as cracks around doors and windows and in the foundation. Brushing or knocking concentrations of the bugs on vegetation or walls into a small pail with water at the bottom is another method of control. A little liquid detergent added to the water will help to kill them more quickly.

If they are in the house, either sweep or vacuum them up and dispose of them. Pyrethrins or insecticidal soap can also be used.

For more information about landscape care, insects and more call the University of Florida/IFAS Manatee County Extension Service (941-722-4524) and ask to speak to a Master Gardener. We have lots of **free** information to help you have a healthy landscape.

References:

[http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/trees/jadera\\_bugs.htm](http://creatures.ifas.ufl.edu/trees/jadera_bugs.htm)

<http://sarasota.extension.ufl.edu/IPM/Jadera.htm>