

# Lifecycle of giant pine scale



## Nov - Jan

Adult female can produce over 300 eggs, which tear through the dead female's body.

## Jan - May

Crawlers hatch from eggs and are initially only 1 mm in length.

## May - Sep

Later stage crawlers can be up to 7 mm in length. Insects moves up and down and between trees, and can move 50 m in one year.

## Sep - Nov

Adult female grows up to 12 mm in length. They produce their own eggs, which are stored within their body.

# Reporting is easy

If you find giant pine scale on a pine, spruce or fir tree outside of Melbourne's south-east, report it to Agriculture Victoria by:

- phoning the **Customer Service Centre** on **136 186**, or
- emailing photos of the suspected pest, together with a contact phone number and the pest's location to [plant.protection@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:plant.protection@ecodev.vic.gov.au)

Avoid collecting samples from infested trees as this can spread the insect further.

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If you would like to receive this publication in an accessible format, such as large print, audio or in another language, please call Agriculture Victoria on 136 186, email [customer.service@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:customer.service@ecodev.vic.gov.au) or go to [www.agriculture.vic.gov.au](http://www.agriculture.vic.gov.au)

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**For more information about Agriculture Victoria go to [www.agriculture.vic.gov.au](http://www.agriculture.vic.gov.au) or call the Customer Service Centre on 136 186.**

AGRICULTURE VICTORIA

Managing giant  
pine scale on  
your trees  
*Marchalina hellenica*

Economic Development,  
Jobs, Transport  
and Resources

# Giant pine scale

*Marchalina hellenica*

Giant pine scale (*Marchalina hellenica*) is a tiny insect that lives by sucking the sap of pine, fir and spruce trees.

Caring for trees infested with giant pine scale is important. Despite their tiny size, giant pine scale live in large numbers and can affect the health and safety of the trees they live on. Heavily infested trees can dry up and die from the insects feeding on the tree's sap, impacting our parks, forests, softwood plantations and residential properties if not properly managed.

## How to spot infested trees

Giant pine scale infested trees can be easily recognised by the white, cotton wool-like wax the insect produces that looks like snow on the tree's trunks and branches. While the insect typically prefers the lower part of the tree (i.e. trunk), it can also be found on branches up and exposed roots.

*Infested branches covered with cotton wool-like wax*

## November 2014

Confirmed in Melbourne's south-eastern suburbs for the first time in 2014, giant pine scale presents a new threat to Victoria's softwood plantation industry, properties and people if not properly managed. If you spot it outside Melbourne's south eastern suburbs, report it.

## Stop the spread!

Giant pine scale spreads by crawling or flying to nearby host trees. People can also unintentionally spread it when moving infested plant material (e.g. branches, mulch and logs), using contaminated gardening equipment and carrying it on clothing, machinery and cars, so it's important to take precautions to avoid spreading the pest to other trees.

### Residents and landholders

If you have giant pine scale on your property, there are a range of things you can do to help minimise its spread.

- Where possible, keep fallen or cut tree branches on your property.
- Cut any infested branches that hang over the house, any structures (e.g. shed, tanks, swings and fences).
- Dispose of unwanted tree branches, needles and pinecones using your green waste or local council transfer station (remember to bag/cover your waste during transport).



- Clean all plant material off gardening equipment using an 80% methylated spirits to 20% water solution and a brush or paper towel.
- If you decide to have the tree removed, hire an arborist who has been trained in handling giant pine scale infested trees.

### Contractors working with infested trees

When working on infested trees, it's important to practice good plant and equipment hygiene to avoid spreading giant pine scale to other properties.

- Take a hygiene kit with you when entering a site containing paper towels, 80% methylated spirits to 20% water solution, a bristle brush, disinfectant wipes, plastic bags and spare clothes.
- Check the site for any pests or diseases that may be present.
- Clean and decontaminate equipment between trees using the methylated spirit solution or disinfectant wipes.
- Clean and decontaminate your machinery, tools and clothing (or change into spare clothing) before leaving the site.
- When transporting infested material for disposal, remember to fully cover your load so insects don't escape during transit and to dispose of material to avoid further spread.

**Together we can help avoid spreading giant pine scale to other parts of Victoria.**

*Close up of giant pine scale crawlers*

