

AGENT UPDATE
Kudzu Bug, *Megacopta cribraria*

Phillip Roberts
University of Georgia, Extension Entomologist
May 19, 2011



KUDZU BUGS ON THE MOVE: Kudzu bugs were recently observed infesting soybeans at the Southeast Georgia Research and Education Center near Midville; Dr. Jared Whitaker took the picture below on May 31, 2011 of soybeans which were planted in early May. Kudzu bug infestations appear to be similar to those we observed in infested areas during 2010, but the migration to soybeans is occurring a few weeks earlier. Migrations from spring host plants such as kudzu may be slightly delayed in more northern counties. Based on 2010 observations we would expect mass migrations of kudzu bugs from spring host plants for several weeks. Initial infestations tend to be greater on the outer edges of fields.

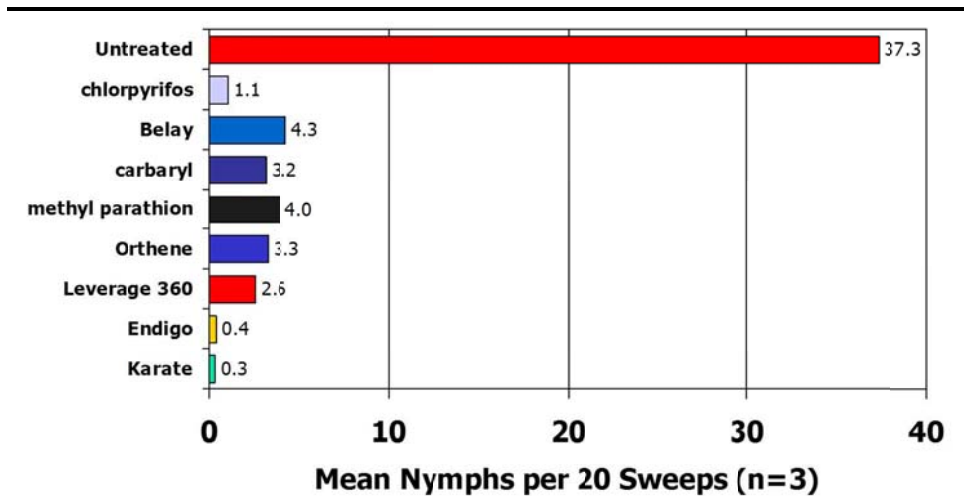
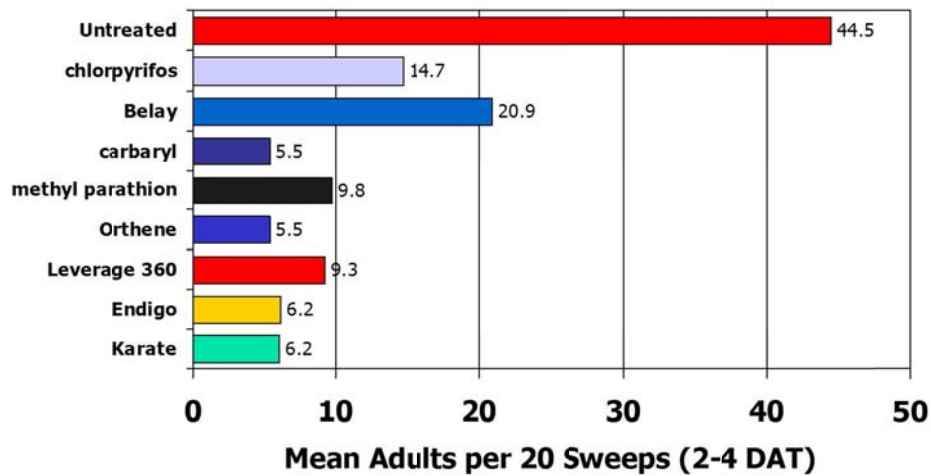


SEREC, Burke County GA, May 31, 2011

ARE KUDZU BUGS AN ECONOMIC PEST OF SOYBEANS? YES! During 2010 we measured yield losses ranging from 11-23% in untreated plots compared with aggressively protected plots. In only one trial was the yield difference significantly different in treated and untreated plots, but there is a definite trend. In a cage trial, we observed fewer pods per plant and fewer seeds per pod when high infestations of bugs were present.

WHEN TO TREAT: We are suggesting a threshold of **3-5 kudzu bugs per plant** as an action threshold. Kudzu bug infestations tend to be higher on field margins. When scouting fields be sure to walk the entire field and get an estimate of the overall infestation. Some innovative growers during 2010 made infield border applications targeting high populations on the edges. When large migrations are occurring, reinfestations may occur following treatment. During 2010 we evaluated several classes of insecticides for kudzu bug efficacy. They are not a difficult insect to kill, however reinfestations can occur fairly soon after application.

Kudzu Bug Insecticide Efficacy Trial (Oconee County GA, 2010)



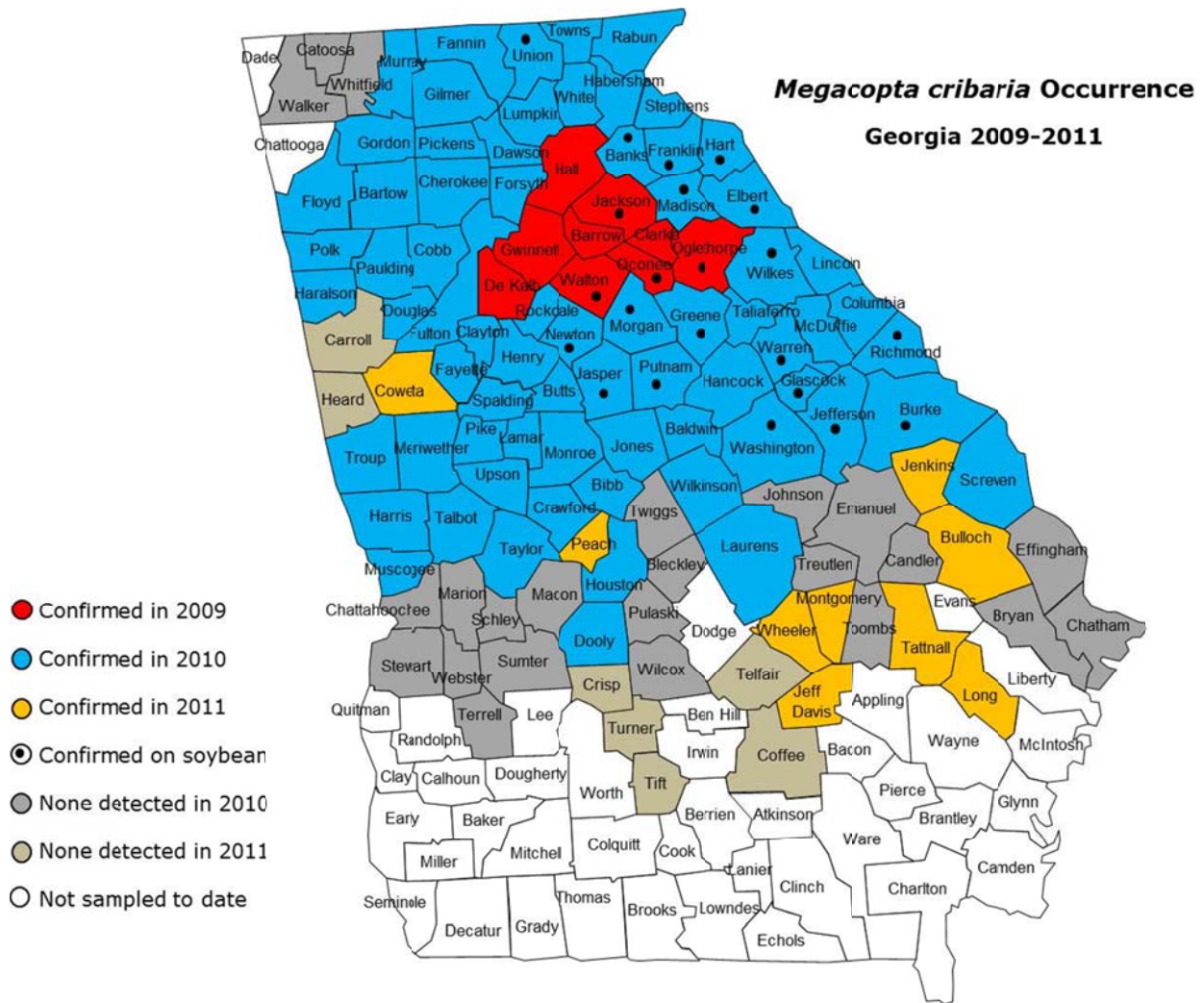


PLEASE REPORT REPRODUCTIVE HOST PLANTS: Kudzu appears to be the most common spring reproductive host of the kudzu bug. Reproductive host plants are defined as those with active nymph/immature infestations. It is important that we understand the biology and ecology of this new pest in Georgia. Identification of reproductive hosts is important information and may allow us to better understand the potential of kudzu bugs to develop to high numbers in our diverse landscapes. Adults are commonly observed on numerous plant species but we have had relatively few reports of immatures or nymphs infesting plants (kudzu, soybean, wisteria). If you happen to observe a reproductive host plant, please let us know.



Kudzu bug adults (left), nymphs and an adult (middle), and hatching egg mass (right).

INFESTED COUNTY MAP (Georgia): Counties infested with “Kudzu Bugs”, *Megacopta cribraria*, continue to increase. Dr. Wayne Gardner has provided the map below which illustrates GA counties infested by kudzu bugs by year. Infested counties have also been reported in SC, NC, and AL (see Southeastern US map below). We plan to continue monitoring the spread of kudzu bugs in the southeastern US. Please let us know if you observe kudzu bugs in your county and it is not represented on the map.



INFESTED COUNTY MAP (Southeast):

