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Bluegrass billbug and hairy chinch bug update

July 11, 2012 by [onturf](#)

My colleagues (Dr. Michael Brownbridge and his gang) and my summer student and I have had our heads in buckets of water for a couple days straight setting up hairy chinch bug trials. Our observations so far are as follows:

- Much of the turf damage so far is either drought related or from bluegrass billbugs. They do the bulk of their damage before hairy chinch bugs and this is consistent with what we are finding in the field.
- We are finding loads of hairy chinch bug nymphs. Most of them are 2nd or 3rd instar. Hairy chinch bug damage is usually caused by the feeding of the 4th and 5th instar nymphs so the peak damage is probably a couple of weeks away. There are several real challenges. One is that it is difficult to detect hairy chinch bug damage when we are in a drought situation. Drought and hairy chinch bug damage look the same until we get rains in Aug. or Sept. and the turf that had chinch bug feeding will not come back but the drought stress turf will. The other challenge is what to do if you do detect that you have a heavy infestation of hairy chinch bugs. Dr. Michael Brownbridge and I have had success in our research trials over the past two years with *Steinernema carpocapse* nematodes giving roughly 50% control of hairy chinch bugs. The turf needs to be watered before nematode applications and kept wet for a few days after the nematode applications.



<http://onturf.files.wordpress.com/2012/07/chinch-trial.jpg>

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