



# Forest Threats

*Blue gum psyllid/ Ctenarytaina eucalypti*

Tree Protection Co-operative Programme

Created 17 June 2026

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## Insect pests

### Blue gum psyllid/ *Ctenarytaina eucalypti*

*Ctenarytaina eucalypti* Maskell

#### SYMPTOMS

*Ctenarytaina eucalypti* primarily infests and feeds on young *Eucalyptus* plants and fresh shoot material. Although occasionally observed on new growth of mature trees in the field, it is more commonly found infesting seedlings in nurseries or seedlings and saplings in recently established compartments. Feeding activity can cause leaf discoloration and die-back. During severe infestations, premature leaf drop, leaf curling, malformation, and stunting may occur due to damage to primordial leaves. Besides direct feeding damage, plants may also experience indirect effects from sooty mold growth, which develops as a result of honeydew production by the psyllids. Heavy sooty mold accumulation can reduce the photosynthetic capacity of young plants, exacerbating leaf discoloration, premature leaf drop, and stunting. Typically, damage caused by the psyllid is superficial, and trees can recover depending on their vigor and stress levels.

(Based on Hodkinson 1999; das Graças do Carmo et al. 2025)

#### BIOLOGY

*Eucalyptus* psyllids exhibit multiple generations annually. *Ctenarytaina eucalypti* typically produces two to three overlapping generations per year, with up to four generations recorded depending on climatic conditions and host availability. The average life cycle spans approximately 149 days from egg to mature adult. A single female can lay up to 160 eggs during a 16-day oviposition period, depositing them in clusters of about ten on leaf axils and lamina. Nymphs progress through five instars before reaching adulthood. Generations often overlap, with all stages feeding simultaneously on young leaves and shoot material.

(Based on Pinzón et al. 2002 and Makunde thesis 2022)

