



# Forest Threats

*Wattle Bagworm / Kotochalia junodi*

Tree Protection Co-operative Programme

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## Insect pests

### Wattle Bagworm / *Kotochalia junodi*

*Kotochalia junodi*

#### SYMPTOMS

The larvae defoliate *Acacia* trees and lead to stunted tree growth. Conical “bags” made of plant material and silk hang from the tree branches. Reduced or inhibited water flow may occur where the bags are attached too tightly with silk due to ring-barking. The bags range from 2 mm to 63 mm.

#### BIOLOGY

The adult male flies during the daylight and mates with the females by inserting its abdomen through the neck of the bag. The eggs are usually laid in August/September and they hatch in September. The tiny caterpillars are dispersed by the wind on fine silken threads. The caterpillars feed on their host by protruding their head and thoracic legs from the anterior opening of the bag. They feed and grow for approximately seven months before they turn into pupae. The pupal stage lasts about four months.

#### MANAGEMENT

Aircraft applied insecticide treatments. Several insecticides have been registered. The insecticides have a rapid knock-down effect on the caterpillars. Ten days after application the plantations should be monitored to ensure the control of the bagworm population. Caterpillars can be picked from trees by hand in the case of low-level infestation and local impact.

