

Pyriform Scale

(Protopulvinaria pyriformis)

What is Pyriform scale?

Pyriform scale (*Protopulvinaria pyriformis*) is an exotic plant pest. This insect pest has a wide host range (more than 100 species across 34 plant families) and is a threat to Australia's avocado, citrus, mango, banana, passionfruit, forestry and nursery/garden industries.

What does Pyriform scale look like?

Scale insects have a protective coating that gives them a raised scab-like appearance on leaves. Pyriform scales feed on the underside of the leaves and secrete a clear, sugary liquid known as honeydew.

First stage nymphs are translucent green in colour (Figure 2). In later stages, body colour changes from translucent green to light green. Adults are light brown with characteristic white fringing and can grow to 3mm long (Figure 1).



Figure 1 - Adult pyriform scales (3 mm) on the underside of a leaf of paperplant (*Fatsia japonica*)
Photo courtesy of Chazz Hesselein, Alabama Cooperative Extension System, Bugwood.org



Figure 2 - Translucent pyriform scale nymphs (or less than 3 mm) on a citrus leaf
Photo courtesy of United States National Collection of Scale Insects Photographs Archive, USDA Agricultural Research Service, Bugwood.org

Direct damage is caused by pyriform scale feeding on plant sap and impacting the plants' nutrient uptake. Heavy infestations of pyriform scale on plants can result in reduced vigour, leaf drop and reduction in size and quality of fruit. Female pyriform scale can reproduce asexually, laying up to 300 eggs without having to mate. Pyriform scale nymphs emerge from eggs laid under the female's body. Nymphs are able to crawl slowly on the leaf and settle to feed a day

or two after emergence. Nymphs go through three growth stages before reaching adulthood. All growth stages of pyriform scale are capable of movement, though movement is minimal once feeding begins

Where has Pyriform scale been found?

Pyriform scale was first discovered in the Perth metropolitan area in May 2015. Later detections have been made on a variety of host plants in a number of surrounding suburban areas in Perth.

Long distance spread of pyriform scale occurs as people move infested host species, particularly nursery stock and ornamental plants. Short distance spread of pyriform scale can occur when insects are blown by wind to nearby plants.

The entry into South Australia of host plants (including nursery stock – excluding bare-rooted without leaves and cut flowers) must be certified as having met Condition 25 of the South Australian [Plant Quarantine Standard \(PQS\)](#).

What do I do if I think I have found Pyriform scale?

Early identification of this pest is vital for effective management and Biosecurity SA should be notified immediately of all plants suspected of being infected with Pyriform scale.

Call the Emergency Plant Pest Hotline on **1800 084 881** to report suspected cases of Pyriform scale.

Alternatively, you can take electronic photos of the suspect pest and email to PIRSA.planthealth@sa.gov.au together with a contact phone number.

To avoid spreading the disease:

- Do not touch, move or collect samples of the suspect plant material
- Do not go to another site with any host materials after handling suspect material.



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