

# Nature Note

## Pine-Sucking Aphids

➤ A WINGLESS, green insect, *Eulachnus agilis*, is causing the needles of next December's Christmas trees to turn yellow and drop off.

The tiny alert aphid, member of the Homoptera insect order, has a green, spindle-shaped body speckled with brown spots and covered with fine hairs. Its eyes are dark, its antennae green, and its legs are greenish.

These insects thrive on pine needles throughout the summer months. They insert their mouthparts into a pine needle and suck the vital plant sap. The needles turn yellow during July and August and drop throughout the fall, leaving only a bare skeleton tree for Christmas.

Only in recent years has this devastating insect become a serious menace to Christmas tree plantations on the East Coast. With the onset of the drought, aphids have increased and caused much damage to Scotch pines, as well as Austrian and White pines. During the 1964-65 season, Christmas tree growers in the western half of Pennsylvania had to burn 39,000 trees devastated by the pest, reported Dr. William H. Kearby, entomologist with the Pennsylvania State University, University Park. Doses of malathion and lindane helped control some of the aphid population, but more research is needed to evaluate the life history of the agile aphid in relation to its environment in order to determine better methods of control.



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## SOCIOLOGY

### Widowers Outnumbered By Widows Four to One

➤ WIDOWS now outnumber widowers more than four to one. According to the Bureau of the Census, one out of every eight U.S. women 14 years or older is a widow.

In the five years following the 1960 census, an increase of 870,000 widows brought the total to 8,815,000, according to the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company's Statistical Bulletin. There are more new widows than their male counterparts each year.

Most of the widows are past middle life. One-fifth of all American women between ages 55-64 are widowed, more than two-fifths between ages 65-74, and seven-tenths past 75. Even between ages 45-54 one woman in every 12 has lost her husband to death.

Almost two of every three widows maintain a household of their own, many of these with children or other relatives. Three-fourths of the widows under 45 with their own households have at least one child in their care,

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and many who are past midlife also have children under age 18 in their homes. In 1960, about 900,000 widows faced this responsibility.

Many widows are in the labor force. Close to two-thirds between ages 35-54 were working in 1960, and although the employed proportion fell off rapidly when the widows passed middle life, one-seventh of them between ages 65-74 were employed.

More widows live in cities and towns than on farms, but this is from preference.

With the favorable prospects of longevity for women, most widows will go on living many years. Three-quarters of the women at age 50 can expect to live 20 years or longer. Of women 65, almost three-fifths can expect to live 15 years.

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