

BOX HEDGES BEING DESTROYED BY PEST

Everyone who owns a box tree should look out for the boxwood leaf miner. If they do not it is likely to get such a hold on the box trees and hedges as to destroy their beauty almost entirely at the end of a few years.

The pest, which has an extensive range and is now spreading rapidly in the vicinity of Washington, is a small orange fly that emerges about the first of May. It alights on the underside of the box leaf and deposits its eggs in the inside of the leaf where the larvae hatch out and live, boring from within, so to speak, throughout the year until the following spring. The gradual destruction of the leaves not only detracts from the appearance of the shrub but saps its vitality so that it falls an easy prey to several other pests and parasites.

William Middleton of the U. S. Bureau of Entomology says if all the hedges and box trees that are infected, as well as those near them, were sprayed according to Department of Agriculture directions the pest could probably be stamped out in about three years. A mixture of nicotine sulphate with molasses and water is advocated, to be applied the last week in April, just before the miner emerges from the pupal state within the leaf. The sticky molasses as flypaper to entangle the insect's wings as it comes out and the nicotine acts as poison. The spraying should be repeated about five times at intervals of four or five days. The first of May is the normal time of emergence, but it may vary with weather conditions as the season is advanced or retarded.

Leaves that are attacked by this insect can be recognized by yellow or brown discolorations and by a mine or area of loose leaf skin on the underside of the leaf within which small yellow maggots or orange pupae are present.

BEGINNING OF SPRING

No matter what the weather was in the last few weeks, spring did not begin until March 21 at 4.02 Eastern Standard Time when the sun crossed the equator on its trip northward and entered the zodiacal sign of Aries, the ram. Then spring officially commenced.

Actually, the sun does not move among the stars, but they form the background against which we earth-dwellers see it, and so as the earth revolves around the sun in its orbit, the sun itself apparently moves among the constellations. To the ancients, who were astrologers more than astronomers, and used the study of the heavens to attempt to predict the future, the star groups among which the sun thus seemed to move had an influence on the people of the earth when it was in them.

Though now astrology is thoroughly discredited as a science, some of the ancient terms still survive, and so the sun is said to enter the sign of Aries when spring commences, as happened early in the morning of March 21. It was then in the same position as it was in the early times when it entered the constellation of Aries, but as a matter of fact it is in the constellation of Pisces, the fishes,