Live Oak and Woolly Oak Aphids
January 5

**Question:** We planted a live oak in October. Recently we have begun to notice a white, "cottony" substance starting to appear on the lower leaves of the tree. Can you give us a clue as to what this is and what might be done about it?
- Ron and Angela, Lehigh Acres

**Answer:** The white flocculent material covering the leaf is produced by the woolly oak aphid, *Stegophylla* sp. The material is usually on the underside of leaves. The woolly oak aphid is pear-shaped, usually 0.13 inches or less in length. The insect does not appear to affect the health of the tree, but they can become aesthetically displeasing for they can even cover large trees with this material. If you treat to control their population, use an insecticide oil or soap. A couple of applications will be necessary. Other insecticide can be used to control the woolly oak aphid populations. On small trees, use a strong spray of water from the garden hose to rid the tree of most of these insects.

Stephen Brown is a horticulture agent with the Lee County Extension Service. Submit questions by calling the horticulture desk at 461-7504 between 9 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. or by e-mailing brownsh@leegov.com. Visit his web page at [http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/Hort/GardenHome.shtml](http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/Hort/GardenHome.shtml) "Garden Doctor" video clips [http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/Hort/Video.shtml](http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/Hort/Video.shtml) and flowering trees information at [http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/Hort/GardenPubsA_Z.shtml](http://lee.ifas.ufl.edu/Hort/GardenPubsA_Z.shtml)