Today on Gardening in a Minute: chinch bugs.

Chinch bugs are a major pest of St. Augustinegrass, and cause a lot of damage.

Chinch bug-damaged areas appear as yellow to brown patches, and injury typically occurs first in grass that’s water-stressed or in full sun. Chinch bugs are active when it’s warm, but may cause damage year-round.

Not all brown grass indicates a chinch bug infestation. If you suspect you have chinch bugs, inspect the border between the brown and green grass for the tiny, black-and-white adults.

If you do have chinch bugs, you’ll need to devise a plan to get rid of them. Treat with an appropriate pesticide in the spring, or try non-chemical options like reducing thatch or minimizing fertilizer use. You can always consult a pest control professional for help!

For more information about chinch bugs and many other gardening topics, contact your county Extension office or visit Gardening in a Minute dot com.

Gardening in a Minute is a production of the University of Florida’s Center for Landscape Conservation and Ecology, IFAS Extension, and WUFT-FM.