



Arkansas Plant Health Clinic Newsletter

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Freeze damage

Arkansas saw record cold temperatures last week for this time of year. We are seeing a lot of damage to wheat, peach, blackberries, grapes, muscadines, crape myrtles, boxwood, hollies, hydrangea, and some trees such as oaks. Most trees and shrubs merely had their new foliage burned off and will re-foliate in a few weeks with no permanent damage. If you haven't already fertilized this year, give them a feeding of tree and shrub food now and again in the fall to give them a boost and help speed recovery. Be sure to water if we hit a dry spell. The burned foliage will dry up and can be brushed off, or you can wait for the new foliage to push it off. The trees and shrubs will not need pruned unless the actual twigs or branches have been killed. You will know they are dead if they don't put on replacement foliage and get dry and brittle. The exceptions are the waxy leafed evergreens such as Burford hollies which will tend to hang onto their burned foliage for a long time. Their appearance will be greatly improved by pruning the damage off. Herbaceous perennials such as hosta should have the ruined leaves removed to make way for new growth from the crown. There isn't anything we can do about the ruined fruit except take good care of the plants and hope for better luck next year.

Japanese Maples

Japanese maples are somewhat prone to twig injury when exposed to desiccating winter winds. They need monitored every spring for twig dieback and winter damage. Canker causing fungi from several genera often attack trees that are stressed or injured. A hard freeze this late in the spring has caused both leaf and twig death at some locations. Healthy twigs are a reddish color. Where twigs have become blacked, brown, gray colored, or brittle, they need pruned off and destroyed. It is possible that a protective fungicide applied early in the spring at bud swell may be of some help in preventing the establishment of cankers. Based on some preliminary greenhouse studies, Heritage may be a good choice for commercial growers. Homeowners may try Daconil. Japanese maples need a rich woodsy moist soil with good drainage and protection from prevailing winter winds. They benefit, especially the lace leaf varieties, from being planted in a protected site with some afternoon shade. They should be given a feeding of shrub and tree food once in the spring and again in the fall.

Japanese Maple Canker- *Colletotrichum* spp.



Photo by Sherrie Smith, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension



Japanese Maple Canker- *Colletotrichum* spp.



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Yews

Yews are native to most of the northern hemisphere. They are found as scattered understory trees in conifer or northern broadleaf forests. They are very popular in landscapes because of their attractive dark green foliage, shade tolerance, and acceptance of shearing. Yews need fertile soil and sufficient moisture, but **absolutely** can't tolerate soggy soils. Waterlogged soils cause yellowing of the leaves and eventual death. They tolerate shade very well and do best in southern states when planted with afternoon shade. Yews are generally healthy plants with few problems when planted in the right location. When stressed, yews can develop twig blight caused by several fungi. *Shpaerulina taxicola*, *Pestalotia funerea* and *Phylostictina hysterella* all cause twig blight on yews. Needles start to yellow, turn brown and die. Small black fruiting bodies of the fungi can often be seen on stems and needles. Control consists of pruning dead

and diseased twigs and destroying them and applying an ornamental fungicide. Improving growing conditions through adequate water, good drainage, and proper site selection will make yews resistant to needle problems.

Yew Twig Blight- *Shpaerulina* *taxicola*



Photo by Sherrie Smith, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Red tip Photinia

Photinias are ubiquitous in the southern landscape. They make fine large specimen shrubs of 12-15 feet and are often planted as screening hedges. The new red foliage in the spring is quite attractive. They are tolerant of a large range of soil types and have some drought tolerance. Because of their size, a common mistake is planting them in too small a space which requires constant pruning to keep them in bounds. Plants can be pruned quite severely in the winter between February and April, and lightly pruned any time of the year. They do best in full sun. Unfortunately,



many cultivars are extremely susceptible to Entomosporium leaf blight caused by *Entomosporium mespili*. New infections first appear as tiny red specks on either surface of the leaf. The bright red spots may coalesce into large maroon blotches. Older spots may have gray centers with dark purple halos. Infection can spread to twigs causing cankered areas on branches. Severe infections may result in heavy leaf drop and weakening or death of the plant. Cultural controls consist of avoiding overhead irrigation, improving air circulation, and cleaning up fallen leaf/stem debris. Chemical control using Daconil or another ornamental fungicide such as a rose spray is effective, but sprays must be applied early and continued throughout the season.



Pecan

It's time to start spraying pecan trees for Scab. Pecan scab caused by *Fusicladium effusum* is considered the most serious disease of pecans in the southwestern United States. Scab occurs on leaves, shucks, and green stems. Leaves can be infected at bud break in the spring and are susceptible until they are fully expanded. Nuts are susceptible at all stages of growth. The severity of the disease is dependent on weather and genetic susceptibility. Leaf lesions are usually small (1-5mm), olive to black colored spots with a velvety to rough appearance. Lesions may grow together and form large, darkened areas on the leaf. Lesions occur on any surface of the leaf but are more common on the lower surface. Vein and petiole lesions are elongated and parallel to the long axis. Shuck infection is responsible for most of the damage. Lesions on shucks are 2-8mm in diameter and roughly circular. Severe infection can cause termination of fruit development and early drop. The best control is to plant resistant cultivars. Cape Fear, Curtis, Elliot, Gloria Grande, Stuart, and Sumner have some resistance to Scab. Fungicide applications starting at bud break give good protection. Abound, Enable, Propimax, Topsin M, and Headline are some of the fungicides labeled for pecans. Applications should begin at bud burst and continue throughout the season. See individual label for complete instructions, restrictions, and repeat sprays.



Pecan Scab- *Fusicladium effusum*



Photo by Sherrie Smith, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

This bulletin from the Cooperative Extension Plant Health Clinic (Plant Disease Clinic) is an electronic update about diseases and other problems observed in our lab each month. Input from everybody interested in plants is welcome and appreciated.

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