



Arkansas Plant Health Clinic Newsletter

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Azalea

Each year Arkansas gardeners are startled upon finding bizarre growths on azalea leaves in their gardens. These are leaf galls caused by the fungus *Exobasidium vaccinii*. The disease is especially prevalent during cool wet springs. The galls only occur on tender new growth. The plants are safe from infection once new foliage has hardened. Symptoms are thickened, fleshy, distorted areas on new leaves. The galls are pinkish to white, eventually turning brown. Azalea leaf gall does not seriously impact plant health but is an unsightly nuisance. The best control is picking the galls off as soon as they appear and removing them from the garden. Leaving them on the shrub allows inoculum levels to increase and infect new leaves the following spring. Fungicides may be applied at the first sign of new growth in the spring and continued until for several weeks until new growth has hardened and become non-susceptible. Daconil or Rose sprays are sufficient.

Azalea Leaf Gall- *Exobasidium vaccinii*



Photo by Sherrie Smith, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Azalea Leaf Gall- *Exobasidium vaccinii*



Photo by Sherrie Smith, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension



Redbud

Redbud is a beautiful spring-flowering tree native to the eastern United States. The heart shaped leaves and lovely rosy, pink flowers make it a favorite throughout its range. It prefers moist well drained soils and some afternoon shade. Redbuds are a short-lived tree, starting to decline after about 20 years, usually due to cankers and insect problems. Even young healthy Redbuds can be attacked by Eriophyid mites. Eriophyids belong to the genera of mites called gall mites. They are tiny, microscopic mites, yellowish to pinkish white to purple in color. Unlike other mites, they have only two pairs of legs and are worm-like. They attack a wide range of plants, including many trees and shrubs. There are several generations per year. Adults overwinter in cracks in bark. Gall development is initiated as adults feed on developing buds in spring. The female becomes enclosed in the abnormal growth, and lays eggs within. Eggs hatch and mites reach adulthood, leave the galls, and are carried by the wind to new hosts, or remain on the plant to make additional galls. The galls don't usually cause severe damage to the host plant. Controls consist of removing affected leaves and branches and destroying them if practical. Insecticides applied in the spring at bud swell can help control the amount of damage. That said, be aware that some herbicides can cause nearly identical symptoms.

Redbud Eriophyid Galls- Eriophyidae



Photo by Sherrie Smith, University of Arkansas
Cooperative Extension

Apples and Pears

The tree had blossomed early, and the frosts burned the buds, resulting in a superficial Russet Ring around the mature fruit's skin. This does not usually affect fruit quality except in severely burned flowers. There is another condition known as Russet Ring caused by a graft transmitted virus or virus-like organism. It causes similar looking blotches and scarring. Fruit, however, does not ripen properly, remain small and hard, and taste bad.



Apple Russet Ring-Abiotic



Photo by Robert Rhodes, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Grapes

Black rot is the most economically important disease of grapes. It is caused by the fungus *Guignardia bidwellii* and is endemic in grape growing regions. All new growth is susceptible throughout the growing season. Leaf laminates, petioles, shoots, tendrils, peduncles, and fruit can be infected. Symptoms on leaves are circular tan spots that eventually become reddish brown with a narrow dark brown border. Black pimple-like fruiting bodies of the fungus appear in the lesions. The fruiting bodies also appear in black lesions on the young shoots. Infection on the berries starts as a small white dot. In only a few hours, the tiny dot is surrounded by a reddish-brown ring. Within a few days the berry starts to dry, shrivel, and wrinkle to become a hard, blue-black mummy. The symptoms on muscadine fruit are different. Small, black, superficial, scabby lesions form on infected berries. The lesions may coalesce to cover most of the berry. Infected berries may crack at the edges of the scabs. Black rot can

be effectively controlled by using Captain, starting when shoots are 4-6 inches high, and continuing at 14-day intervals until August.

Grape Black Rot- *Guignardia bidwellii*



Photo by Sherrie Smith, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Grape Black Rot- *Guignardia bidwellii*



Photo by Sherrie Smith, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension



Herbicide Damage on corn by Bob Scott

Although a labeled treatment, atrazine can injure sweet corn at high rates applied POST. Hot weather or using too much crop oil concentrate may also result in injury.

Corn Atrazine-Abiotic



Photo by Bob Scott, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Corn Atrazine-Abiotic



Photo by Bob Scott, 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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