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Arkansas Plant Health Clinic Newsletter

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Dogwood

Dogwood Anthracnose

Dogwood Anthracnose, caused by the fungus *Discula destructiva*, is favored by cool, wet spring and fall weather, but can occur throughout the growing season. The Plant Health Clinic has received its first 2010 sample positive for Dogwood Anthracnose. Symptoms begin in the lower crown and progress up the tree. Leaf lesions start as tan spots with purple rims but can rapidly enlarge to large leaf blotches. Leaves that are completely blighted don't fall off during autumn. The fruiting bodies (conidiomata) of the fungus may be observed with a hand lens on the underside of infected leaves. Infections progress through petioles into shoots and the dead petioles may form a crook that resembles fire blight. Cankers develop, usually at leaf scar sites, girdling and killing the shoot, while cankers occurring on the trunk can eventually kill the tree. Water sprouts often form on the trunk and branches where twig and branch cankers are located. These water sprouts are extremely vulnerable to infection. In certain situations, it only takes 2 or 3 years for a badly infected tree to be killed. Fortunately, good management practices can control

Dogwood anthracnose in the landscape, but these practices must be consistently followed to protect trees for the long term, since native dogwoods and neighboring trees that are not managed may serve as infection reservoirs. Carefully prune out all diseased, dying and dead twigs and limbs. Avoid overhead irrigation if possible. If overhead irrigation must be used, water in the early morning so that the tree can dry out before night. It is very important that dogwoods be watered well during our hot summers to prevent drought stress, which may further encourage the disease. Remember that dogwoods are understory trees and prefer afternoon shade. Spray all plants with a systemic foliar fungicide labeled to control Dogwood Anthracnose. (examples include fungicides containing propiconazole (Banner Maxx) or tebuconazole (Bayer Advanced Disease Control Products)) at bud break in the spring. Good coverage of the entire tree with the spray is very important. About two weeks after the systemic spray, apply a protectant fungicide labeled to control dogwood anthracnose containing chlorothalonil (like Daconil products), thiophanate-methyl (Cleary's 3336 for example) or a product containing both like Spectro 90 WDG. Again, complete coverage of the entire tree is essential. Most dogwoods are small enough to allow the use of trombone tree sprayers for homeowner use. An example is the Trombone® Model 61224 sprayer by Hudson Sprayer Company.

Resistant varieties of dogwood are available and should be considered for new plantings or to replace diseased trees. If you want a cultivar



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of *Cornus florida*, the flowering dogwood, then Appalachian Spring is an anthracnose resistant choice. Resistant cultivars of the kousa dogwood (species *Cornus kousa*) include Big Apple, China Girl, Elizabeth Lustgarten, Gay Head, Greensleeves, Julian Milky Way, Steeple, and Temple Jewel. The *Cornus florida* x *kousa* hybrid flowering dogwood cultivars with anthracnose resistance include Aurora, Celestial, Constellation, Ruth Ellen, Star Dust, and Stellar Pink.

Dogwood Anthracnose-*Discula destructiva*

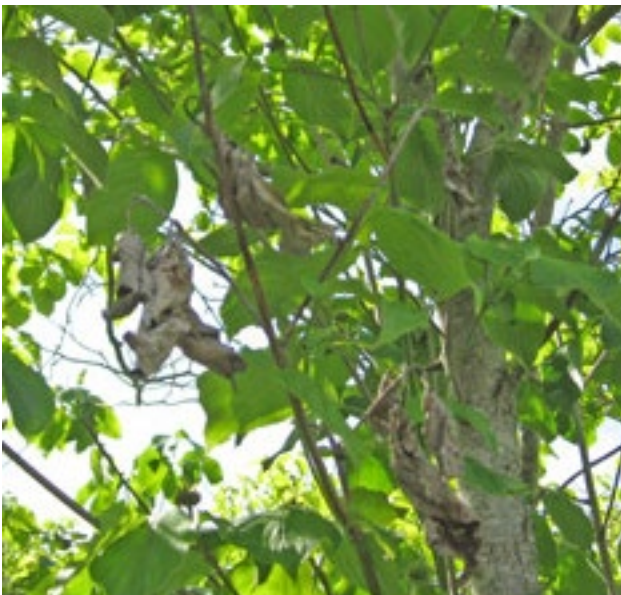


Photo by Rick Cartwright, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Dogwood Anthracnose-*Discula destructiva*



Photo by Sherrie Smith, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Dogwood Anthracnose-*Discula destructiva*



Photo by Joseph O'Brien, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org

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Dogwood Anthracnose-*Discula destructiva*



Photo by Jim Robbins, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Dogwood Anthracnose *conidiomata-Discula destructiva*

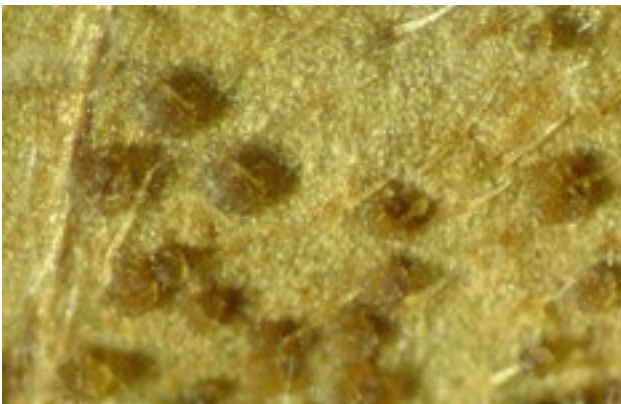


Photo by Sherrie Smith, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Dogwood Spot Anthracnose

Dogwood **Spot** Anthracnose is a different fungal disease of dogwood than Dogwood anthracnose. It is more a cosmetic problem than anything, as it does not kill branches or trees. Spot Anthracnose, caused by *Elsinoe corni*, attacks dogwood blooms and leaves in the spring. White cultivars appear more susceptible than pink ones. The fungus causes uniform, tiny circular lesions with purple borders and almost white centers. The center of the spots falls out later in the season giving a shot hole effect. In wet seasons the lesions become so numerous that leaves or bracts may become puckered and distorted. With severe infection, buds may fail to open. Spot Anthracnose may be controlled with Daconil or Mancozeb. Spraying should begin when buds begin to open and be repeated when the bracts have fallen, four weeks after bracts have fallen, and again in late summer after the flower buds for next season have formed.

Dogwood Spot Anthracnose-*Elsinoe corni*



Photo by Division of Plant Industry Archive, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Bugwood.org.



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Dogwood Spot Anthracnose- *Elsinoe corni*



Photo by Division of Plant Industry Archive, Florida
Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services,
Bugwood.org.

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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