DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System
Sherrie Smith

SPDN
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Arkansas Plant Health Clinic Newsletter

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Begonia

The fungus *Thielaviopsis basicola* has a wide host range, attacking begonia, cotton, cowpea, cyclamen, eggplant, fuchsia, geranium, gloxinia, blue holly, Japanese holly, inkberry, oxalis, pansy, peanut, petunia, phlox, soybean, sweet pea, tobacco, tomato, verbena, annual vinca, and viola, among others. Aboveground symptoms include yellowing, stunting, and wilting. When roots are closely examined under magnification, small brownish black lesions may be observed on feeder roots. This disease caused by *Thielaviopsis basicola* is known as Black Root Rot. Black Root Rot is closely associated with stressful growing conditions. Adverse temperatures, excessive amounts of nitrogen, too high or low a pH, and drought stress are some of the factors associated with Black Root Rot. Sanitation is extremely important. Growers should never reuse liners or pots without steam sterilization. Plant debris and weeds should not be allowed to accumulate. Plugs should be planted immediately to reduce stress. Plants with symptoms should be pulled up and destroyed.

Begonia Black Root Rot- *Thielaviopsis basicola*

Photo by Sherrie Smith, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

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Black Root Rot chlamydospores

-Thielaviopsis basicola

Photo by Ricky Corder, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Turf

Leafhoppers

Leafhoppers are small, wedge-shaped insects that can jump (hence the common name "Leafhopper"), and the adults can also fly short distances. Depending on species, they may be green or brown or speckled with whitish green, yellow, pink, or brown. Leafhoppers cause injury by piercing plant tissue with their mouthparts and feeding on the sugary sap within. Turf may die in the presence of extended high populations. Lawn insecticides labeled for Leafhoppers may be used.

Turf Leafhopper damage-

Cicadellidae

Photo by Mitch Spanel, Lawn Doctor of West Little Rock

Turf Leafhopper damage-

Cicadellidae

Photo by Mitch Spanel, Lawn Doctor of West Little Rock

Two-Lined Spittlebug

The most common pest of turf is the Two-Lined Spittlebug, *Prosapia bicincta*. They get the common name Spittlebug from the frothy mass they produce to protect the nymph. Adults are wedge shaped and brown to black with red eyes and legs. They usually have two red or orange stripes across their backs. All grasses

are susceptible to feeding injury, with centipede grass being especially vulnerable. Small numbers of these insects do not call for control measures. However, large populations can cause yellowing, bleaching, and stunting of the turf.

Turf Two-Lined Spittlebug-
Prosapia bicincta

Photo by Clemson University, USDA Cooperative Extension Slide Series, Bugwood.org

Turf Two-Lined Spittlebug froth-
Prosapia bicincta

Photo by Charles T. Bryson, USDA Agricultural Research Service, Bugwood.org

Oak

This is the time of year that the Plant Health Clinic receives samples of oak infested with Woolly Oak Aphids, family Aphididae. Aphids feed on sap from the phloem of plants. They can cause a general decline when present in high numbers. Symptoms are yellowing, speckling, and leaf curling. In addition, they secrete large amounts of sticky, sugary honeydew which becomes a nuisance when it falls on cars, sidewalks, and house siding. Heavily infested oaks are often trees already under stress caused by drought or disease or herbicides. The best protection is to keep your trees healthy with adequate water, fertilizer, and borer control. Even established oaks have suffered through several years of drought and would benefit from some irrigation. On young trees, Aphids may be controlled with insecticidal soaps or malathion. Spraying mature oaks is not practical for most homeowners.

Oak Woolly Oak Aphid-Aphididae

Photo by Sherrie Smith, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

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Oak Woolly Oak Aphid-Aphididae

Photo by Sherrie Smith, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Oak Woolly Oak Aphid-Aphididae

Photo by Grant Beckwith, 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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