



Arkansas Plant Health Clinic Newsletter

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Rhododendron

A common leaf spot disease of rhododendron is Cercospora Leaf Spot, caused by the fungus *Cercospora handelii*. Dark brown, angular leaf spots occur on the upper leaf surface. Lesions on hybrid cultivars may have silvery centers because of the separation of the leaf epidermis. The most damage occurs in crowded plantings with poor air circulation. Lower foliage is usually affected worse. Good sanitation, proper spacing, and avoidance of overhead irrigation are useful for control of Cercospora Leaf Spot. Homeowners may use Spectracide Immunox; or Ferti-Lome Liquid Systemic Fungicide; or Ortho Max Garden Disease Control; or Ferti-Lome Liquid Fungicide; or Garden Tech Daconil Fungicide Conc.; or Green Light Fung-Away Fungicide; or Bonide Fung-onil Multipurpose Fungicide; or Green Light Systemic Fungicide; or Ferti-Lome Halt Systemic; or Ortho Rose Pride Rose & Shrub Disease Control; or Bio Advanced Garden-Disease Control for Roses, Flowers, and Shrubs.

Rhododendron leaf spot- *Cercospora handelii*



Photo by Sherrie Smith, University of Arkansas
Cooperative Extension



Camellia

Tea Scale, *Fiorinia theae*, is a major pest of camellias as well as bottlebrush, citrus, dogwood, holly, kumquat, mango, olive, and tea, among others. These insects have piercing mouth parts that enable them to feed on the sugary contents of plant cells. This causes a yellow stippling of the upper leaf surface. Heavy infestations may cause premature leaf dropping, decline in the health of the plant, and occasionally even death. Tea Scale primarily infests the underside of the leaves, making spraying for them more difficult. Adding to the difficulty is that Tea Scale has multiple generations in the Mid-South. Sprays of fine horticultural oils are effective against Tea Scale if good coverage is achieved. Systemic insecticides such as Bio Advanced Insect Control for Trees and Shrubs may also be used.

Camellia Tea Scale-*Fiorinia theae*



Photo by Sherrie Smith, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Camellia Tea Scale-*Fiorinia theae*



Photo by Russell Parker, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension



Camellia Tea Scale-*Fiorinia theae*



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copper sprays are effective. It is too late for chemical control this spring, but if only a few leaves are infected, they may be handpicked and destroyed to reduce inoculum levels.

Peach Leaf Curl-*Taphrina deformans*



Photo by Michael Sullivan, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Peach/Nectarine

Spores from the fungus *Taphrina deformans* overwinters on twigs and bud scales. Infection occurs at bud break early in the spring during cool, wet weather. Blister-like swellings, curling, thickening, puckering, and discoloration of the leaves are the first symptoms of Peach Leaf Curl. Affected areas may turn pink, red, or yellow. In severe cases, defoliation occurs along with substantial yield loss. Peach Leaf Curl is easily controlled with one well-timed fungicide application in the fall after 90% of the leaves have dropped, or very early in the spring before the buds begin to swell. Chlorothalonil or



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Iris

The bearded Irises are blooming and filling the air with their delightful fragrance. Irises are dependable, hardy plants that get by with a minimum of care. They are less prone to disease when planted in full sun in well-drained, rich loam soil. A pH of 6.0-7.0 is preferred. However, during periods of prolonged warm, wet weather, they may be susceptible to Iris Leaf Spot, caused by *Mycosphaerella macrospora* (formerly *Didymellina macrospora*). Symptoms begin on the leaves as tiny, green to yellow, water-soaked spots, which become oval brown lesions with water-soaked yellow margins. After bloom, the spots enlarge to form large, irregular, dead areas. Old lesions become gray with reddish brown to dark brown borders. Tip dieback and leaf curl are common. Severely affected leaves may die completely. If this happens frequently, it weakens the plant and reduces bloom quality. Daylily, freesia, gladiolus, and narcissus are also susceptible. Good cultural practices can help greatly in reducing this disease. All iris debris should be cleaned up in the fall, or before new leaves appear in the spring. During the growing season, diseased portions of the leaf should be removed from the plant and disposed of away from the planting. Overly crowded clumps should be divided and replanted in the fall. Sprinkler irrigation should be avoided, and plants should be watered at ground level. Fungicide sprays may be applied when the new fan leaves are four to six inches (10-15 cm) long and repeated four or five times at 7-to-10-day intervals. Products containing chlorothalonil, or myclobutanil, or thiophanate-methyl, or

mancozeb, or trifloxystrobin are effective. A spreader sticker should be added to enable the fungicide to stick to the waxy iris leaves.

Iris Leaf Spot- *Mycosphaerella macrospora* (syn. *Didymellina macrospora*)



Photo by Sherrie Smith, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

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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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