UofA UNIVERSITY OF ARKANSAS DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
Cooperative Extension Service

Sherrie Smith
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SPDN Southern Plant Diagnostic Network

Department of Plant Pathology

PLANT HEALTH CLINIC NEWS

March 17, 2008

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 welcomed and appreciated.

Jelly fungus

Jelly fungi are a type of mushroom found as saprophytes on dead hardwood sticks and branches. They are most commonly seen in spring and fall, but may be seen in winter during warm periods. Their name comes from the gelatinous, gooey texture of their fruiting bodies. Other common names are Black Jelly Roll and Witches' Butter. The jelly-like mass eventually dries to a black crust. These fungi do not cause disease. The example sent to the clinic was located on pecan branches and was identified by Dr. Thomas J. Volk, University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, as *Exidia glandulosa*.

Carla Vaught, University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Haruta Ovidiu, University of Oradea, Bugwood.org

Peaches and Nectarines

Leucostoma canker is a serious disease of peach, nectarines, and sweet cherries. It is also known as Perennial canker, Cytospora canker, or Valsa canker. Symptoms on small twigs begin as sunken, discolored spots, usually around leaf scars or winter killed buds. The lesions often have alternating zone lines. With age, the lesions darken and begin to exude amber gum. Cankers on main branches and crotches are typically elliptical with large amounts of oozing gum. Cracks open in the infected bark, showing blackened tissue beneath the bark. During the growing season, the lesion may develop a surrounding callus as the tree tries to wall off the infection. However, the fungus invades the tissue again when the tree is dormant and cannot actively resist infection. Management of Leucostoma is based on cultural practices to prevent canker formation. Good site selection is critical. Deep, well-drained soil and good air circulation help limit disease. Training of young trees during the first season to prevent narrow crotch angles helps prevent predisposing conditions for the disease. Good borer control is very important, as the insects allow entry points for the fungus. Cankers on large limbs and trunks should be removed in midsummer and burned. All diseased bark surrounding the canker and 3–5 cm of healthy tissue around the canker should be removed. Tools must be dipped in alcohol or a 10%

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bleach solution between cuts. Removing cankers should only be attempted when dry weather is expected for three days in a row.

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Magnolia

Lichenized algal leaf spot is caused by parasitic algae that cause twig cankers and leaf spots. Southern Magnolia (*Magnolia grandiflora*) is susceptible to infection when hot humid weather provides optimum conditions for the growth and spread of this pathogen. Lesions begin as round, green, somewhat velvety colonies on leaf surfaces or twigs. On leaves, the spots eventually turn reddish-brown with age. Algal leaf spot that has been colonized by fungi take on a grayish appearance and are called Lichenized algal leaf spot. The disease is most severe on Magnolias that are weak and in poor health. Trees that are grown in full sun and subjected to high temperatures and excessive leaf wetness are the most severely affected by the disease. Cultural practices to minimize disease include a proper water and fertilization schedule. A soil sample should be taken to rule out nutritional and pH issues. Irrigation methods involve spraying water on the leaves should be avoided. All fallen leaves and twigs should be raked up and destroyed. Pruning overhanging branches from surrounding plants will improve air circulation. Lastly, applications of copper fungicides (Kocide) every 2 weeks during wet weather have proven helpful.

Melvin Daniel University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

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Edward L. Barnard, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Bugwood.org

Dracaena

Dracaena is highly sensitive to Fluoride toxicity. Symptoms are chlorotic mottling, elliptical necrotic lesions surrounded by a chlorotic halo, and tip burn. Fluoride toxicity should be suspected where these symptoms persist and the water supply contains fluoride. In such a scenario, the best option is to use bottled water when watering sensitive plants. New leaves will not have the symptoms, as the fluoride is eventually flushed from the potting soil. Other susceptible house plants are: Peacock plant, Parlor palm, Spider plant, Ti plant, Corn plant, Prayer plant, Dragon tracks, and Spineless yucca.

Wheat

Stripe rust has been verified in Chicot county. In fields where is already established, use either Tilt 3.6 EC, Propimax, Bumper, or Stratego 250LC. Contact Jason Kelly or Scott Monfort, or consult the Wheat newsletter for more details.

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Note: It is now time to spray pears and apples for fire blight. Use an antibiotic such as Agri-strep or Agri-mycin, or a copper fungicide. IT IS ALSO TIME TO START SPRAYING ROSES FOR BLACK SPOT IF THEY HAVE LEAFED OUT. Use a rose spray or Daconil. Do it now before trouble starts.