

Pest Update (Oct 15, 2014)

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Note: samples containing living tissue may only be accepted from South Dakota. Please do not send samples of dying plants or insects from other states. If you live outside of South Dakota and have a question, instead please send a digital picture of the pest or problem. **Walnut samples may not be sent from any location – please provide a picture!**

Available on the net at:

<http://sdda.sd.gov/conservation-forestry/forest-health/tree-pest-alerts/>

Any treatment recommendations, including those identifying specific pesticides, are for the convenience of the reader. Pesticides mentioned in this publication are generally those that are most commonly available to the public in South Dakota and the inclusion of a product shall not be taken as an endorsement or the exclusion a criticism regarding effectiveness. Please read and follow all label instructions and the label is the final authority for a product's use on a particular pest or plant. Products requiring a commercial pesticide license are occasionally mentioned if there are limited options available. These products will be identified as such but it is the reader's responsibility to determine if they can legally apply any products identified in this publication.

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Timely Topics

Now is the time to prepare your evergreens for winter, a task often left till too late (just like putting up Christmas lights). Winter preparation should

have started in August. Winterburn, winter desiccation injury, usually does not show up until spring but now is the time to treat for it. The problem is much reduced if the trees go into winter without moisture stress so begin watering now if you have not already. Tree owners sometimes wait until just as the soils are freezing but that is much too later to be of much help.



small apple and crabapple trees, two trees among the favorites for tent caterpillars.

Now is a good time to get ahead of next year's pest problems. Tent caterpillars, the insects that create nests at the tips of the branches in the spring, have already laid their eggs for next year. The eggs appear as a molten, shiny cylinder encircling twigs near the tip of branches. If these egg mass are pruned off and destroyed before spring, this will eliminate the problem from the tree (assuming all the masses can be found). This is a task that can be easily accomplished in

E-samples



“It is raining worms from my ash tree”

I have had e-samples from people wondering about insects “raining” down from their ash trees and filling the gutters. The small white legless larvae people are finding beneath their ash trees are the **ash seed weevils** (*Lignyodes bischoffi*). These are insects that spent their larval stage feeding inside of ash seeds during late summer. Usually you cannot find anything distinguishing about infested seeds. The only clue the seed was infested is a small hole where the larvae emerged. The larvae emerge from the seed in the fall while the seed is still hanging on the tree hence the “raining” of insects. Once the larva is on the ground it overwinters either in the soil or the litter layer. Pupation occurs in the spring and the adult weevil emerges in mid-summer with the females laying eggs on the newly-formed seeds. Once the larvae hatch they hollow out the seeds as they feed. There is one generation per year and no control is recommended or needed.



Very fine webbing on the lower trunks of deciduous trees, hackberries typically, is a common concern at this time of year but it need not be. The webbing is the work of Psocids, **bark lice**, insects that construct fine webbing in which colonies of the insect live. They feed on microscopic mold and fungi so do not harm the tree. The individual insects are very small, less

than 3/16 inch long, and are usually white or gray. The insects feed on mold, fungi (even glue for book binding so also known as booklice) but do not harm the tree at all. The webs begin to fall apart around Halloween but may appear again as the insects resume activity in the spring.



I receive this picture of a declining trees and the question was what can be done to save it. Unfortunately, the tree is in severe decline and beyond much hope. The white, flattened “globs” along the trunk are the fruiting bodies of a decay fungus called **schizophyllum shelf fungus**. The fungus often occurs along a wound - a split in this instance - and is not the cause of the problem, but more an indication of a problem.

The split on this maple is probably along the southwest side of the tree, a problem we refer to as “**southwest disease**.” The name comes about when the southwest side of the trunk on thin bark trees, such as maples, is exposed to the winter sun. The heating results in a slight loss of winter hardness of some of the trunk tissue which then becomes injured as the temperatures drop in the evenings. Once the trunk is split this deep about the only treatment is a chainsaw – remove the tree and start over.

No problem in the picture below, but just a beautiful scene of Autumn Blaze maples (*Acer x freemanii* ‘Jeffersred’) was sent in from Wagner – outstanding fall color this year!



Samples received/site visits

Brookings County

What is this shrub with the bright red leaves?

This shrub is known as burning bush (*Euonymus alata*) because of the brilliant red fall color to the leaves. It is one of our best for fall color and the corky twigs also provide winter interest. It is also known as 'rabbit candy' as the bunnies will strip the trunk and branches of the bark during the winter.

Miner County
blue spruce?

What are the white spots on these

I get a lot of samples of this problem. The white bumps on the needles are the pine needle scale. They feed on pine and spruce needles by sucking the sap from them and this injury can result in discolored needles or needles that fall prematurely. The scale can be managed with an application of horticultural oil applied in late May though please keep in mind that the use of an oil will also remove some of the blue coloration from the needles.

Stanley County

Is this apple scab on the fruit?

Yes, while we generally see less damage on the fruit than the leaves, it can happen particularly on highly susceptible cultivars or during years with a wet spring and early summer. The symptoms on the fruit is usually are brown to black lesions, commonly around the blossom end of the fruit but they can develop anywhere, with these lesions often cracking and the flesh developing a corky texture. A good way to combat this disease in the fall is to clean up and discard any fallen fruit. It may be a good idea to rake up all the fallen leaves as well since the disease can overwinter on them but this is often only practical when you have a couple of isolated trees. Spraying for the disease with a common fungicide such as Captan should be initiated next spring when the buds are beginning to swell and then continuing every two or three weeks until about a month after petal fall.

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