Pest Update (August 5, 2015)

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John Ball, Forest Health Specialist SD Department of Agriculture,
Extension Forester SD Cooperative Extension

Email: john.ball@sdstate.edu
Phone: office 605-688-4737, cell 605-695-2503
Samples sent to: John Ball
Plant Science Department
rm 230, Agricultural Hall, Box 2207A
South Dakota State University
Brookings, SD 57007-0996

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!**

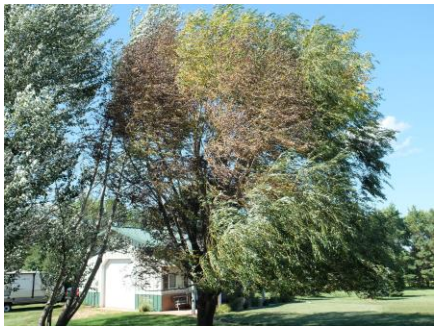
Available on the net at:
http://sdda.sd.gov/conservation-forestry/forest-health/tree-pest-alerts/

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.

Plant development

The early season apples and crabapple fruit is beginning to ripen so the end of summer is not too far away. At this time of year most of the calls and questions relate to something wrong with the leaves, spots (usually a fungus) or distortions (usually herbicide drift), or yellowing, sticky leaves due to aphids and their honeydew. Most this these problems are not even problems and the tree will be just fine. This is not the time to treat most fungal problems and most of the aphids are nearly finished with their feeding so my advice is put away the spray and grab a fishing pole and enjoy a lazy August day.

Timely topics

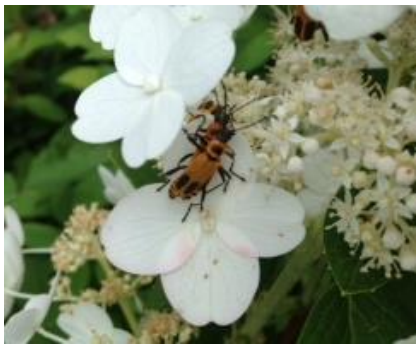


Willow blight, a term to describe two diseases of willow black canker (*Glomerella miyabeana*) and scab (*Venturia saliciperda*), is appearing in trees throughout the eastern side of the state. This disease complex is one of the most common problems with willows and weakened trees, such as those affected by the dry fall and winter then spring freeze, are most affected. The disease starts with the blackening of the margins of new leaves in the spring. The symptoms progress with the terminal shoots on the branches also blackening and curling. The symptoms appear very close to those seen with fireblight but this is not the same disease nor is not due to a bacterium but a fungus. The disease also results in cankers along the shoots and these can result in the loss of branches and eventually entire limbs. The most common recommendation is to water the tree during dry periods to reduce stress and, if possible and practical, prune out and destroy infected shoots and branches to reduce the spread of spores in the spring.

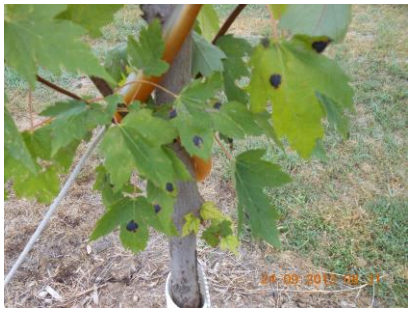
Ants and trees. I had a question whether ants could injury seedlings in windbreak plantings. Field ants (*Formica*) can be a problem in Christmas tree and windbreak plantings. These ants are medium to large size ants about 1/5 inch long and their color varies though most are black. Many are mound building and their mounds can become more than a foot or two in diameter. Field ants do not come in the home and they are not a problem for people (but they can pinch!). They feed on other insects but they do not like trees shading their home

so they will inject formic acid into the roots to kill the plants. Killing the queen is the only way to eliminate a colony and that is not an easy task. The best approach is push a metal rod down at least 2 feet in the soil near the mound or activity. Make about 5 or 6 holes and pour the insecticide treatment down the holes. The most common insecticides listed for this contain bifenthrin, carbaryl, or permethrin as an active ingredient.

E-samples



A reader found this interesting insect (actually a pair) on a hydrangea flower and wonder if it was a longhorned beetle. Well, he was close. It is a beetle, but not a borer. This is a **goldenrod soldier beetle** (*Chauliognathus pennsulvanicus*). The adults feed on flower pollen and nectar and the larvae are predators on many other insect, so one of the many "good bugs". The adult is a commonly seen insect at this time of year.



Tar spot (*Rhytisma*) is showing up even more across the state and this, along with chlorosis, is making for a lot of unsightly Freeman, red and silver maple trees. The disease begins as greenish-yellow spot in late June and then develops into these black tar-like structures within a month. The remaining leaf tissue is usually chlorotic. The treatment for the disease is two-fold. First, a common recommendation is to remove and destroy the fallen leaves this autumn to reduce the overwintering fungus, usually not a practical treatment unless you are able to go through an entire neighborhood. Next year treat the tree with a Bordeaux mixture as the leaves expand and repeat the application about two weeks later. However, if we do not have another wet spring (and summer), the disease is not likely to be as severe.

The wooly oak gall is appearing on bur oaks across the state. The wooly oak gall is a fuzzy white to tan globose to elongated gall that forms on the underside of the leaves. It is caused by the feeding activity of *Callifhytus lanata*, a small cynipid wasp. The galls do not harm the tree and photosynthesis is not disrupted. The galls usually appear on a tree for several years in a row then disappear for another eight or ten year before the cycle begins again. There is no control for this interesting insect or another of the many oak gall species.

Samples received/site visits

Beadle County **Why are the leaves and fruit falling off the walnut? The leaves are very sticky.**

Some of the premature leaf and fruit drop is due to the drought. Walnuts will commonly shed these when faced with dehydration. However in addition to water loss, the tree is being attacked by aphids and the sap removal from the leaves is also resulting in early leaf fall. The aphids are also secreting honeydew, a sticky substance. The aphids are easily controlled with a soil drench of an insecticide containing imidacloprid as an active ingredient. However, this is best applied in the spring for control during the summer. Now is really too late to provide much control.

Brookings County **What is causing this distortion on the honeysuckle?**

This witches' brooming is due to feeding by the honeysuckle aphid (*Hyadaphis tataricae*). This small aphid was introduced into the US in the early 1980s and now has spread to become a national problem on honeysuckle, a previously considered pest-free plant. The sucking from the colonies of these aphids results in distorted growth referred to as witches'brooms. The insect can be controlled with monthly (during the growing season) foliage applications of an insecticide containing acephate as the active ingredient or yearly (each fall) soil drench application of an insecticide containing imidacloprid.

Lake County **What is this problem on the willow?**

This is willow blight, a disease that results in wilting leaves and shoots as well as dieback of the tree. The disease is generally only a problem when we have wet springs so hopefully the tree will recover, with some pruning, this summer as the weather dries. See Timely Topics for more information on this disease complex.

Lawrence County **What is causing the terminal dieback on this Sensation maple? I also see some white substances and lesions on the tree.**

The Sensation boxelder (*Acer negundo* 'Sensation) is one of the prettiest maples we have for western South Dakota. The reddish fall color can be spectacular and the upright growth habit is much different from the crooked form typical of boxelder. Unfortunately this cultivar is as susceptible to 2,4-D damage as any other boxelder and herbicide drift will distort almost every leaf (the petioles will curl downward with 2,4 D). The whitish substance is the normal bloom found on new twigs and the lesions are nodules formed by the boxelder twig borer (*Proteoteras willingana*), treat with an application of carbaryl now to control the

adults. Sensation boxelder is an interesting tree but despite being a boxelder, it is not fully hardy to much of the state and is limited to Zone 5 planting locations.

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