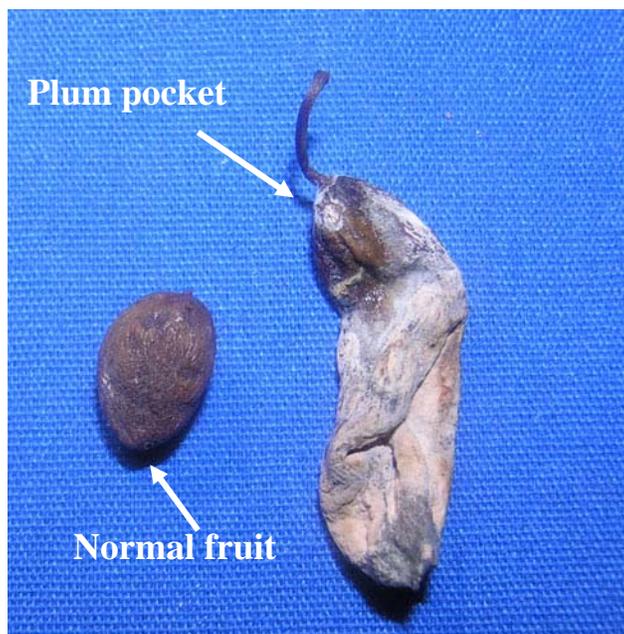




This bulletin from the Cooperative Extension Plant Health Clinic (Plant Disease Clinic) is an electronic update about diseases and other problems observed in our lab each month. Input from everybody interested in plants is welcome and appreciated.

Plums

Plum pockets, caused by *Taphrina communis* and several other *Taphrina* species, primarily affect the fruits of plum. Early symptoms on fruit are white spots or blisters that rapidly enlarge. Fruit is malformed and enlarged as much as 10 times the normal size with hollow or spongy centers, sometimes without pits. Deformed fruits often become colonized with various saprophytic fungi. Other common names are Bladder plums and Mock plums. Infection on leaves and shoots results in twisting and curling, but leaf symptoms do not always occur. Plum pocket symptoms become noticeable 6 to 8 weeks after bud break. The use of resistant cultivars has mostly eliminated this disease as an economically important one. The control for susceptible cultivars is a single application of fungicide after leaf drop in the fall. Chlorothalonil or copper are effective.



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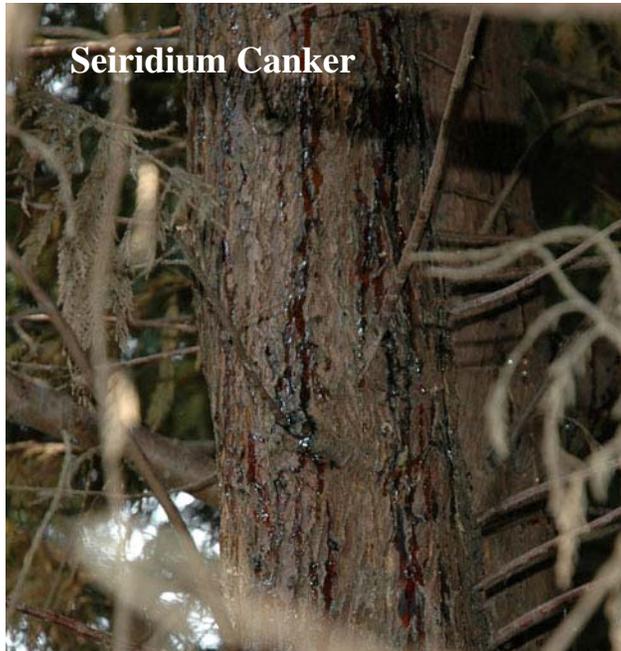


Plum pockets

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Leyland Cypress

Leyland cypress samples are showing up at the lab with the inevitable *Seiridium* canker. This is the most devastating disease of Leyland's in the mid south. The first noticeable symptom of the disease is yellowing of the foliage on a few twigs. Death of shoots is due to the formation of cankers on the twigs, branches, and main trunk. Lens shaped cankers are gray colored but often obscured by resinous sap weeping from the lesion. Small black fruiting bodies appear on the bark. The spores are spread by rain, tools, and insects. Once the trunk is girdled by cankers, death comes quickly as the cankers interfere with water flow. No chemicals are labeled for *Seiridium* canker. The best defense is sanitation. Prune out branch and twig cankers. Pruning tools should be dipped in alcohol or a 10% bleach solution between cuts. If the main trunk has cankers, remove the entire tree. Dead trees and clippings need removed from the property. Drought makes the disease worse so water during dry periods. Studies have shown that the disease progresses 3 times faster during drought episodes. Thoroughly soak the soil every 5-7 days during drought. Avoid sprinkler watering. Leyland hedges fare worse with *Seiridium* because of poor air circulation. A lone specimen tree is not as prone to the disease. Junipers, arborvitae, and laurels are among others also susceptible to *Seiridium* canker.



Seiridium Canker

Photo by Anne Allen

Peach

Bacterial spot of peach, caused by *Xanthomonas campestris* pv. *pruni*, is a persistent problem in susceptible cultivars of peach and nectarine, and plum. The disease occurs on leaves, twigs, and fruit. Leaf symptoms start as angular, grayish, water-soaked lesions, about 1-3mm in diameter. These spots are often located along the midrib, leaf tip, or both. As the spots age and enlarge, they become purple and necrotic. Often the center drops out, leaving a shot-hole effect. Many lesions on a leaf cause premature leaf drop. Lesions on twigs are called "black tip". Spring cankers start on leaf scars on twigs of the previous year's growth. Summer cankers appear on the new green twigs of the current year. Spring cankers appear as slightly raised blister-like areas that can extend a couple of mm down the twig. Summer cankers are visible by late spring or early summer. Black tip is easily seen during the winter months when the tree is leafless. Dieback is more severe on plum than peach and nectarine. Bacterial spot is difficult to control. Resistant cultivars should be used if at all possible. Autumn applications, near leaf drop, of fixed copper can reduce leaf scar infections.



Lens shaped Seiridium canker

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Bacterial spot

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Powdery Mildew: ornamentals

Powdery mildew is one of the easier diseases to identify. It occurs on a wide range of plant species including grasses, field crops, vegetables, and ornamentals. Symptoms are white or gray patches or spots of white powdery mycelium. As the spots age, black fruiting bodies called Cleistothecia appear. Young succulent growth is generally more susceptible than older growth. Tender young flower buds and leaves may be distorted, turn yellow and fall prematurely. Powdery mildew does not need water on the leaf to infect, but does require warm temperatures and high humidity. Often, plants grown in dry shade are particularly vulnerable when humidity is high. Lilacs and dogwood are two examples of plants prone to powdery mildew in shaded areas. Of course, lilacs should never be planted in an area with less than half a day of shade anyway. It's best to choose resistant cultivars when possible. For instance, many varieties of tall garden phlox and zinnia are extremely susceptible. As a consequence, some newer cultivars have been developed with excellent resistance. Additionally, good air circulation and the avoidance of overhead irrigation help reduce the incidence. Watering at ground level lessens the overall humidity compared to overhead watering. There are several ornamental fungicides labeled for control of powdery mildew. The rose sprays and fungicides containing chlorothalonil work well to suppress the disease. It's best to start spraying susceptible plants well before they become infected.



Powdery mildew on boxwood

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Corn and Rice by Bob Scott

Non-RR corn and rice are very susceptible to early season glyphosate drift. Symptoms include: Chlorosis (yellowing), stunting and necrotic (burnt) leaf tips. Take care spraying glyphosate around young rice and corn.



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