DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

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SPDN
Southern Plant Diagnostic Network

Department of Plant Pathology

PLANT HEALTH CLINIC NEWS

Issue 25-August 18, 2015

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.

Begonia

The fungus *Thielaviopsis basicola* has a wide host range, attacking Japanese holly, Blue holly, Inkberry, petunia, pansy, viola, fuchsia, begonia, cyclamen, gloxinia, oxalis, sweet pea, phlox, verbena, annual vinca, geranium, poinsettia, eggplant, cotton, peanut, cowpea, tobacco, tomato, and soybean among others. Aboveground symptoms include yellowing, stunting, and wilting. When roots are closely examined under magnification, small brownish black lesions may be observed on feeder roots. Black root rot is closely associated with stressful growing conditions. Adverse temperatures, excessive amounts of nitrogen, too high or low a pH, and drought stress are some of the factors associated with Black root rot. Sanitation is extremely important. Growers should never reuse liners or pots without steam sterilization. Plant debris and weeds should not be allowed to accumulate. Plugs should be planted immediately to reduce stress. Plants with symptoms should be pulled up and destroyed.

Begonia Black Root Rot-
Thielaviopsis basicola

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Black Root Rot chlamydospores
-Thielaviopsis basicola

Ricky Corder University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

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Turf

Leafhoppers are small wedge-shaped insects that can jump (hence the common name “leafhopper”), and the adults can also fly short distances. Depending on species, they may be green or brown or speckled with whitish green, yellow, pink, or brown. The most common pest of turf is the Twolined Spittlebug, *Prosapia bicincta.* They get the common name spittlebug from the frothy mass they produce to protect the nymph. Adults are wedge-shaped brown to black with red eyes and legs. They usually have two red or orange stripes across their backs. All grasses are susceptible to feeding injury, with centipede being especially vulnerable. Small numbers of these insects do not call for control measures. However large populations can cause yellowing, bleaching, and stunting of the turf. Leafhoppers cause injury by piercing the plant tissue with their mouthparts and feeding on the sugary sap. Turf may die in the presence of extended high populations. Lawn insecticides labeled for leafhoppers may be used.

Leafhopper damage

Photos courtesy of Mitch Stanel, Lawn Doctor of West Little Rock

Leafhopper damage

Photos courtesy of Mitch Stanel, Lawn Doctor of West Little Rock

Twolined Spittlebug-*Prosapia bicincta*

Clemson University - USDA Cooperative Extension Slide Series, Bugwood.org

Spittlebug mass-*Prosapia bicincta*

Charles T. Bryson, USDA Agricultural Research Service, Bugwood.org

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Oak

This is the time of year that the Plant Health Clinic receives samples of oak infested with Wooly Oak aphid, family Aphididae. Aphids feed on sap from the phloem of plants. They can cause a general decline when present in high numbers. Symptoms are yellowing, speckling, and leaf curling. In addition, they secrete large amounts of sticky sugary honeydew which becomes a nuisance when it falls on cars, sidewalks, and house siding. Oaks heavily infested are often trees already under some kind of stress caused by drought or disease or herbicides. The best protection is to keep your trees healthy with adequate water, fertilizer, and borer control. Even established oaks have suffered through several years of drought and would benefit from some irrigation. On young trees, aphids may be controlled with insecticidal soaps, or malathion. Spraying mature oaks is not practical for most homeowners.

Oak Wooly aphid- familyAphididae

Grant Beckwith University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Oak Wooly aphid- familyAphididae

Sherrie Smith University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Oak Wooly aphid- familyAphididae

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Request for help from Dr. Robbins:

Root knot nematode populations are needed for our Arkansas species study. I am a nematologist in the department of Plant Pathology in Fayetteville. My student and I are trying to amass populations of as many species of Root knot nematode (Meloidogyne sp.) as possible for species identification using molecular techniques. At present no root knot species in Arkansas have been identified using molecular technology. We are interested in receiving populations from home gardens, shrubs, flowers, trees and grasses. For samples we need about a pint of soil and feeder roots in a sealed plastic bag that is plainly identified by plant host, location (City County, physical address, collector and date of collection). Please send samples to us at the follow address:

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2601 N. Young Ave
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Phone 479-575-2555
Fax 479-575-3348
Email: rrobbin@uark.edu