DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE
RESEARCH & EXTENSION
University of Arkansas System

Sherrie Smith

SPDN
Southern Plant Diagnostic Network

Department of Plant Pathology

PLANT HEALTH CLINIC NEWS

Issue 6-April 10, 2014

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.

Tomato

This is the time of year the Clinic receives vegetable seedlings, and young plants with sunburn. These are plants that were started inside and then put out in wind and sun without being hardened first. The plants need to be exposed to full sun gradually when they have been grown in reduced light areas. We also receive houseplants with this problem. Many people bring tender perennials inside for the winter and put them back outside as the weather warms. Symptoms are grayish white areas of the leaves where chloroplasts have been fried.

Pepper sunburn

Sherrie Smith University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Pepper sunburn

Gerald Holmes, Valent USA Corporation, Bugwood

Houseplant sunburn

Carla Vaught University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Apricot

Peach, apricot, and nectarines are showing freeze injury to buds. Orchards that suffered late frost damage at bloom have serious losses. Buds have turned brown and fallen from the tree.

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Apricot with freeze damage to buds

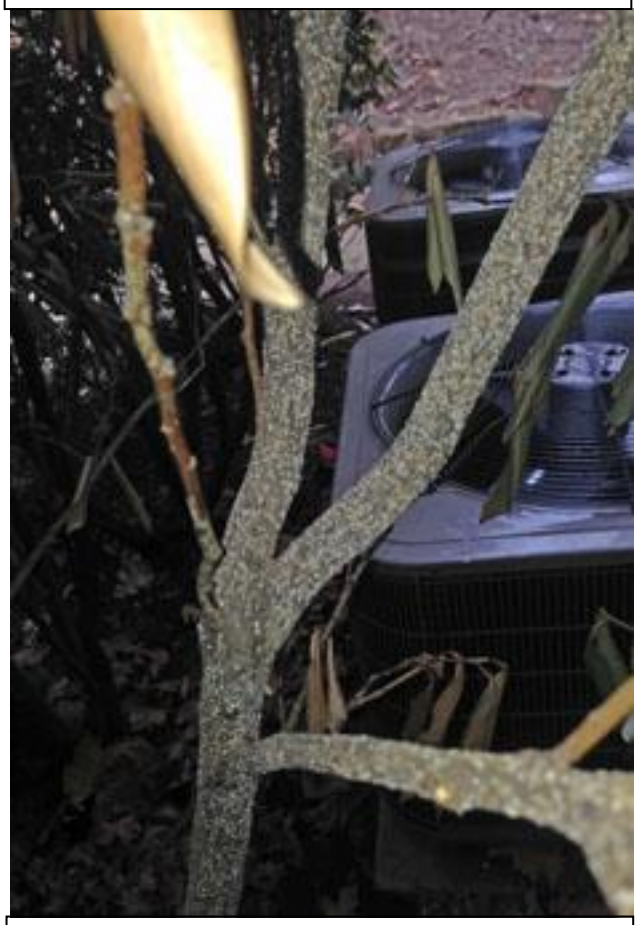
Mitch Crow University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension

Russian Laurel

Russian laurel grow well in full sun to part shade. They prefer a slightly acidic moist soil, but cannot tolerate soggy soils. On heavy wet soils, they are prone to root rots and decline. Plants that have health issues often also have insect problems. The laurel pictured to the right is planted in an unfavorable location, and has a heavy incrustation of scale insects. Planting next to air conditioner units presents several problems. The fan action is detrimental to foliage. We often see dead areas in the shrub corresponding to fan circulation. Additionally, air conditioner units put out water from condensation that can cause nearby soil to be too wet for laurels. If plants are still small enough to be moved to a new location readily, that should be done during dormancy. Scale insects may be treated with Merit, Or Bayer insect Control for Trees and Shrubs, or fine horticultural oil, or insecticidal soaps.

Laurel species that are under environmental stresses may develop several bacterial diseases, especially when planted in shade and watered with overhead irrigation. *Xanthomonas campestris* pv. *pruni* and *Pseudomonas syringae* have both been associated with bacterial leaf spot in prunus. *Xanthomonas campestris* pv. *pruni* causes gray angular lesions that turn red. Eventually, the centers fall out leading to the common name “Shothole”. Pseudomonas can cause leaf spots and stem cankers. Bacterial diseases are difficult to control at the best of times. Laurel can be sensitive to copper compounds, so they should only be used during the dormant season. Mancozeb has been found helpful in controlling Shothole disease on laurels, and is effective against fungal diseases as well. Laurels should be planted in an area with good drainage where they receive at least 6 hours of full sun.

Russian laurel with scale insects



Photo, Courtesy of Scott Hardin

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Russian laurel Bacterial shothole- *Xanthomonas campestris* pv. *pruni*

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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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