



## What's In Bloom

(Salt Lake City area)

Butterfly bush: bloom  
Goldenrain tree: bloom  
Mimosa: end bloom  
**Rose-of-Sharon: begin bloom**  
Shrub roses: end bloom

Smokebush: end bloom  
Smooth hydrangea: bloom  
Sourwood: bloom  
Sumac: end bloom  
Sweet Autumn clematis: begin bloom  
Trumpet vine: end bloom  
Vitex: full bloom

## Insect/Disease Information

### DECIDUOUS TREES

#### Honeylocust Spider Mite

Hosts: Honeylocust



Honeylocust spider mites can sometimes be a problem, especially on drought-stressed trees. They feed on the undersides of leaves and cause them to turn yellow-bronze in color and eventually drop. Their populations build rapidly in hot

weather, and they are starting to be noticeable now. This pest will not kill trees, but repeated infestations can cause growth to slow.

This spider mite overwinters as orange-colored adult females in cracks and crevices on the bark of the tree. They become active in spring and lay eggs in June. When the weather heats up in July, the time between generations (eggs to adult) changes from 11 days to just 4!

Check for mites at the base of honeylocust leaflets with a hand lens, or shake leaves over a cloth tray. The mites will appear as tiny, slow-moving specks.

#### **Treatment:**

Drought-stressed trees are more susceptible, so water trees deeply during dry spells. Mites are easily controlled with miticide sprays for commercial use, or horticultural oil or soap for residential use. Dormant oil is an excellent choice to kill the overwintering adults.

#### **Locust Borer**

Hosts: Black Locust

The locust borer is a beetle that attacks black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*) and its cultivars. 'Purple Robe' locust is the most common black locust planted in Utah. Honeylocust (*Gleditsia triacanthos*) is not attacked.

Adults of the locust borer will be active in the first week of August in the Salt Lake City area, around the time that goldenrods start blooming. The adults feed on nectar while the larvae cause the damage in the tree.

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An individual female can lay up to 200 eggs in bark crevices and around wounds on the trunk and larger branches. When larvae hatch, they immediately bore into the cambium and then “rest” for the winter. In spring, larvae start feeding and boring into the sapwood and heartwood, producing a tunnel 3-4 inches long. They start pupating to adults at this time of year.



Trees infested by locust borer will ooze at feeding sites. Limbs may be killed, or the weakened wood can split during storms. Trees produce excessive sprouts, and with repeated attacks, may be killed. Drought-stressed trees or trees weakened by root compaction or root loss are most susceptible, as are trees less than 8 inches in diameter.

**Treatment:**

Maintain a healthy tree with optimal watering and fertilization. For at-risk trees, spray the bark and major limbs with an insecticide starting in mid-August and repeat once or twice through early October, using either carbaryl or permethrin.

**Rose Leafhopper**

**Hosts:** Rose, Crabapple, Oak, Maple, Poplar, others

Rose leafhopper is a voracious feeder of a wide variety of hosts. It has three generations and will be entering the adult stage of the second generation soon. Nymphs (young leafhoppers) are flightless, and can be found on the undersides of leaves, causing white stippling on the leaf surface that resembles spider mite feeding.

Rose leafhopper overwinters as eggs on rose stems. The first generation is completed by mid-June, with nymphs of the second generation hatching in early July. Individuals of the later



generations may leave roses for alternate hosts, or may stay on roses until frost.

Small to moderate populations do not cause harm to plants, but where leaves are starting to appear white or are being scorched, consider a treatment now before nymphs become adults.

**Treatment:**

The nymph stage is the easiest to treat. Hard sprays of water can dislodge the flightless nymphs. Insecticide options include imidacloprid (Merit, Bayer), acetamiprid (Assail, Ortho Max), insecticidal soap, or horticultural oil.

**Poplar-and-Willow Borer**

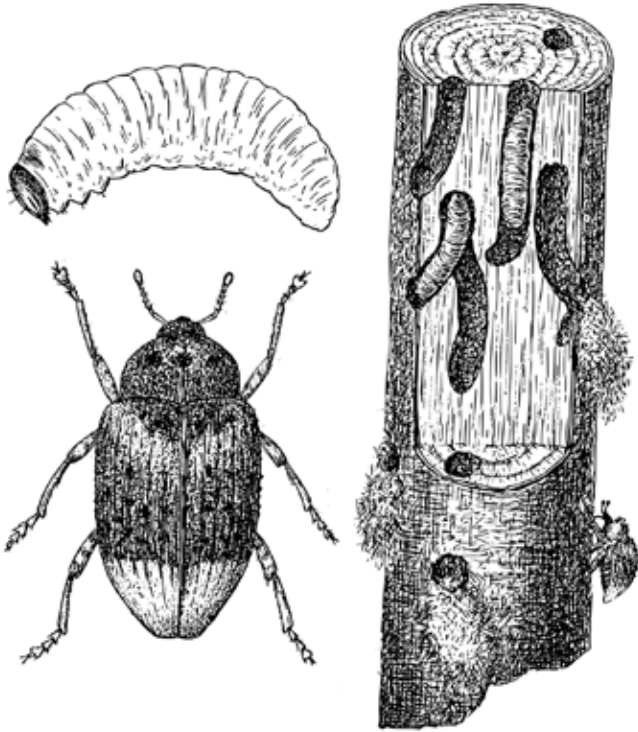
**Hosts:** Poplars (including Cottonwood), Willow

The poplar-and-willow borer is a minor pest in Utah, where, over the years, a few specimens have been identified by the plant pest diagnostic lab. It is a wood-boring weevil that primarily attacks willow. Other hosts are cottonwood, balsam poplar, and hybrid poplars.

Adults are active now, laying eggs in deep holes that they have chewed into the bark. The larvae then spend two years burrowing within the wood, and cleaning the feeding galleries of frass (excrement) to the outside of the tree as they go.



## Insect/Disease Activity continued from previous page



Trees with infestation show symptoms typical of borers, including sawdust-like frass at the base of the tree, red-brown ooze, and dieback. Sometimes the upper crown will show dieback first, and branches may split or fail due to weakening of the main trunk.

Young trees are very susceptible and the weevils can quickly spread through monoculture plantings, such as windbreaks.

### **Treatment:**

Maintain a vigorously growing tree with optimal watering and fertilization. Before treating any trees with insecticide, contact the Utah Plant Pest Diagnostic Lab to confirm the type of borer present in the tree. Treat bark and major limbs with carbaryl or permethrin starting in mid-August, and repeat once one month later.

### **Poplar Borer**

**Hosts:** Poplars (including Cottonwood and Aspen), Willow

Another pest of poplars that bores into trees is the poplar borer. Unlike the poplar-and-willow borer, the poplar borer also attacks aspen.

This adult is a clearwing moth and their white larvae feed on wood within the tree for two seasons. Adults are flying and laying eggs now through to early October.

Look for sawdust-like frass and brown-red ooze along the trunk and larger branches. Usually trees are not killed by this



reddish, sawdust-like frass and oozing caused by poplar borer

borer, but are weakened and lack vigor. Treatment timing and methods are the same as poplar-and-willow borer.

### **Cottonwood Blotch Leafminer**

**Hosts:** Cottonwood



The cottonwood blotch leafminer (*Phyllonorycter* sp.) is a moth that is more common in southern Utah. The damage from the leafminer feeding is evident now.

In mid to late spring, the adult lays eggs on the undersides of the leaves, and the larvae feed and develop within the leaf, causing a blotched appearance. Under low populations, there will never be more than one mine per leaf, but when moth populations increase, there can be several per leaf and the blotches coalesce, causing the entire leaf to turn brown. From a distance, this makes the tree appear to be dying.

*Cottonwood blotch leafminer* is continued on next page

Development of larvae within the leaves will be completed soon, with emergence of moths in August.

In landscape settings, this insect is mostly a curiosity and does not need treatment. It can be more severe in wild settings.

### Summer Leaf Drop

**Hosts:** All Hardwoods



We have had several inquiries this summer about trees dropping leaves. The cause is due in part to the weather, which was relatively mild in early summer and switched to record hot temperatures over the last few weeks.

This sudden change is stressful for trees. In spring, they produce copious amount of leaves, and some go through an "adjustment" in the weather change by shedding up to 10% of their leaves. The reduced canopy actually helps trees lose less water through transpiration.

Healthy, well-established trees are not affected by the reduced leaf mass. Recently planted trees, however, should be watered approximately every 7 to 10 days during dry weather.

Cottonwoods take the shedding a step further by dropping entire twigs. The reason for this shedding is the same, but in addition to dropping leaves, the tree forms an abscission zone at the base of certain branches. The "clean cut" of these twigs are different from branches that break due to strong winds that would have a shredded appearance on the end. The phenomenon is most common on mature cottonwoods and poplars, though it can also occur on oaks.

The leaf and twig shedding can continue through September.

**Precautionary Statement:** Utah State University Extension and its employees are not responsible for the use, misuse, or damage caused by application or misapplication of products or information mentioned in this document. All pesticides are labeled with ingredients, instructions, and risks. The pesticide applicator is legally responsible for proper use. USU makes no endorsement of the products listed herein.

## CONIFERS

### Pitch Mass Borer

**Hosts:** Austrian, Scotch, Ponderosa Pines; Blue Spruce



The pitch mass borer is a clearwing moth whose larvae feed on resin found within huge globs of drippy pine pitch. Adults of this insect are emerging now, targeting stressed trees, wounded trees, and trees that are already infected.

The female lays eggs on wounds, at branch collars, or on existing pitch masses. The hatching larvae bore through the bark and phloem, causing the area to form sticky masses of pitch. The caterpillars then spend 2 years feeding on the resin.

While this insect does not bore throughout the tree, it does cause the tree to spend energy producing the large amounts of sap, which may lead to reduced vigor and dieback.

#### **Treatment:**

Management should focus on keeping trees healthy. Avoid pruning in July when moths are laying eggs. While insecticide bark sprays may kill adult moths, caterpillars feeding within the pitch masses will not be killed. A good project for tree-climbing kids is to manually remove pitch masses and crush the caterpillars that are inside. This will reduce populations and aid in wound closure by the tree.

#### Landscape IPM Advisory

is published weekly by Utah State University Extension

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