Woody Ornamentals IPM Advisory

Semi-Weekly Landscape Pest Update, Utah State University Extension, **July 12, 2007**

What's In Bloom

Butterfly bush: bloom
Elderberry: end bloom
Mimosa: bloom
Oakleaf hydrangea: bloom
PG hydrangea: bloom
Rose of Sharon: begin bloom
Shrub roses: end bloom
Smokebush: bloom
Smooth hydrangea: bloom
Staghorn sumac: end bloom
Trumpet vine: bloom

Insect Activity

DECIDUOUS TREES

Woolly Beech Aphid

This aphid is so named because it forms a cottony "coat" that protects it from predators. Mixed with the aphid's honeydew, it becomes a sticky mess. Colonies can build in mid-summer on the underside of the leaves. The mighty beech tree, however, is unfazed by the feeding of this aphid. One may not want to deal with the honeydew that is produced, which drips from the trees. It also promotes the growth of the black colored fungus that causes sooty mold.

Control is not recommended, but if necessary, a strong spray of water will work, or insecticidal soap or the systemic insecticide Merit.

Earwig

Earwigs are omnivorous scavengers, sometimes causing damage to ornamental plants. Butterfly bush is one of the most common woody plant they feed on. They also prefer dahlias, hollyhock, hosta, and several annuals and vegetables. They feed at night, so check your plants with a flashlight to confirm a diagnosis. The damage on leaves appears as torn-looking areas, irregular holes, and chewed edges.

Earwig damage on butterfly bush

Earwigs hide in dark, damp places during the day, so setting up "earwig traps" in problem areas is sometimes a good control option. These include rolled-up newspapers or cardboard, a small section of hose, or small cans half-filled with fish oil or vegetable oil plus bacon grease. Check and empty traps daily.

Chemicals are not really necessary, but one op-

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tion is a mix of insecticidal soap and neem oil applied to the plant every few days.

Spider Mites

Spider mite numbers have been building for several weeks now, and will continue throughout these hottest months. Heavy feeding causes stippled leaves and reduced plant vigor. They migrate to woody plants from herbaceous weed plants were they feed in the spring and early summer until the food runs out. Typically, predatory mites are in good supply, and keep harmful mite populations in check. But predatory mites are very sensitive to insecticides, and when they are killed early in the season, spider mites have their way.

Treatment: neem oil, horticultural oil or insecticidal soap (do not use oils or soap on drought-stressed plants or when temperatures are over 90 degrees)

Willow Rosette Gall Midge

The willow plant wins the prize for having the most gall-making insects associated with this species. The rosette gall is caused by a tiny midge. When the adult female lays her eggs on new shoots, she is preventing the expansion of the shoot. The leaves continue on a stunted growth path, forming a rosette. The larvae feed and develop inside the center of the rosette. An adult does not emerge from the rosette gall until the following spring. No control is recommended.

EVERGREEN PLANTS

Cooley Spruce Gall Adelgid

These insects on blue spruce are completing development within their galls. Galls will start to dry and crack open and emerging adults will migrate to this insect's alternate host, Douglas-fir. Remove and throw away as many galls as possible now to decrease the population before adults emerge.

Pine Needle Scale

Crawlers of the second generation are emerging now for the next two weeks in all locations of northern Utah (next three weeks in Cache County). Now is a good time to treat with summer oil, insecticidal soap, permethrin, or carbaryl. These scales are also vulnerable to dormant oil sprays.

European Pine Shoot Moth

Larvae have hatched and are feeding within shoot buds and tips. Remove dead tips as you see them to lower the pest population. The next treatment timing is in early spring, when the larvae are migrating to new buds.

Leaf scorch on burning bush

Disease Activity

Leaf Scorch:

The West's lack of water has wreaked havoc on ornamental plantings, even well-established trees. Damage is showing up as dead and drying leaves, often referred to as leaf scorch.

Leaf scorch usually is seen as necrotic (dead) tissue occurring between the plant veins. The cause, of course, is when the plant transpires more water than it takes up. This may be due to low soil moisture or root restriction. It is often seen on plants growing near hot, reflective surfaces or on exposed, windy sites. It is sometimes confused with a disease such as anthracnose or bacterial scorch. Moisture stress-induced leaf scorch is typically most severe toward the top and outer branches, and the necrosis occurs either between the veins or along the outer edges. In conifers, the needle tips will shrivel and die back.

Plants suffering from a nutrient deficiency such as iron chlorosis are more susceptible to leaf scorch.

Scorch itself will not kill a plant, but it may weaken it to the point where insects or disease pathogens can further injure it. It often leads to early leaf drop. Multiple years of scorch and drought stress are devastating to plants. Fine feeder roots die and the tree looses it's ability to absorb water and fight off pathogens. Over several years, the tree will begin to die back in the upper canopy, and suckering along the trunk and large branches are it's last-ditch effort to survive.

Watering Tips:

Mulch under trees out to the tree canopy with 2 to 3 inches of well-composted organic matter, keeping the mulch away from the bark of the plant.

Water with a slow soaking system such as drip irrigation or soaker hose for long and deep waterings every week or every other week during drought conditions. Water from sprinklers for the lawn is not sufficient.

Water trees planted in the last 3 years every week, and trees planted up to 6 years ago every other week.

If you have limited water, focus on your new plantings and woody plants first, garden beds next, and lawns last.

Early leaf scorch on red oak

Severe leaf scorch on Norway maple

Leaf scorch on amur maple brought on by iron chlorosis

Precautionary Statement: All pesticides have benefits and risks, however following the label will maximize the benefits and reduce risks. Pay attention to the directions for use and follow precautionary statements. Pesticide labels are considered legal documents containing instructions and limitations. Inconsistent use of the product or disregarding the label is a violation of both federal and state laws. The pesticide applicator is legally responsible for proper use.

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