

Pest Update (August 28, 2013)

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Note: samples containing living tissue may only be accepted from South Dakota. Please do not send samples of dying plants or insects from other states. If you live outside of South Dakota and have a question, instead please send a digital picture of the pest or problem. **Walnut samples may not be sent from any location – please provide a picture!**

Available on the net at:

<http://sdda.sd.gov/conservation-forestry/tree-pest-alerts/>

Any treatment recommendations, including those identifying specific pesticides, are for the convenience of the reader. Pesticides mentioned in this publication are generally those that are most commonly available to the public in South Dakota and the inclusion of a product shall not be taken as an endorsement or the exclusion a criticism regarding effectiveness. Please read and follow all label instructions and the label is the final authority for a product's use on a particular pest or plant. Products requiring a commercial pesticide license are occasionally mentioned if there are limited options available. These products will be identified as such but it is the reader's responsibility to determine if they can legally apply any product identified in this publication.

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Timely Topics

It has been hot and dry in much of the state during the past few weeks, a condition that may continue for a while longer. We are already seeing spruce and even deciduous trees such as ash, with browning foliage and even some

trees are beginning to defoliate. These trees need water now. In addition, the best time to water your trees to prepare them for winter, particularly evergreens, is not just before freeze-up, but now. Considering how dry it has become I suspect we are going to see a lot of winter-burn next spring, unless people get the hose out and begin watering. Most trees do best with about 1 inch of precipitation a week at this time of year so that means a fair amount of watering.

E-samples



I have received several pictures and samples of irregular holes in elm leaves. The holes are about 1/8 inch and occur throughout the leaf. There is no sign of any feeding limited to only the lower leaf surface, a common occurrence with elm leaf beetles so this damage may be from feeding by the European flea weevil. This insect was brought to this country about 10 or so years ago and it has been found in the Northern

Plains since the mid-2000s. The insect can defoliate an elm, particularly Siberian elm, though the damage is usually not enough to harm the tree, just make it look bad (as though it is possible to make a Siberian elm look any worse than it usually does!). The adults were out a few weeks ago and they can be identified by their long stout and their flea-like behavior. They are very small and will jump from the foliage if disturbed.



I am still receiving numerous pictures and questions regarding willow scab (*Venturia saliciperda*). This is a very common foliage disease that appears in late summer on willow trees across the state. The disease is closely related to



apple and pear scab and the typical symptoms are discolored and falling leaves as well as tip dieback. This disease has similar symptoms to black canker (*Glomerella miyabeana*), a willow twig disease that can also cause the leaves to wilt and the shoot tips to die back. The two diseases are difficult to separate and as mentioned last week are closely related but the willow scab infected leaves will usually have “tufts” of spores on the underside of the leaf,

generally along the midvein. These two diseases are often found in association with one another and when they occur together the disease is just simply called willow blight. These two disease are common problems when the spring weather is cool and moist, a condition typically of much of the state this year.



The tree identification samples this week are common chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*). The questions are usually the same; what is it and is the fruit edible? The fruit is edible, in fact in 2007 it was voted as the state fruit of North Dakota (note: South Dakota does not have a state fruit). While North Dakota recognizes the value to the fruit, it was also highly valued, and still is, by the native nations. *Capa sapa wi*, “black cherry moon” is the name the Lakota gave to the month of August, the time when the fruit ripens. The Lakota grind the fruit, pit and flesh together, into cakes and dry them in the sun. This can be mixed with dried

meat to form pemmican. The fruit can also be made into jams and jellies. As a final note, the fruit is not always dark bluish black, on some trees it can be reddish-yellow to yellow. The yellow fruited trees are more common in the Northern Hills.



Common chokecherry trees can sometimes be confused with common buckthorn and this is a serious mistake if you are planning on picking the fruit. While common chokecherry fruit is edible, common buckthorn is not and works as a very, very powerful laxative. The way to separate the two is chokecherry leaves are arranged alternately on the twig while common buckthorn (as seen in the picture to the right) are subopposite, where a leaf is

almost opposite another leaf on the twig. The margin or edge to buckthorn leaves are smooth, the chokecherry has teeth on the margin of the leaves. Common buckthorn also has a single thorn at the tip of each branch. The fruit differs in that chokecherry dark purple to black fruit is about 1/3 inch in diameter and contains a single large seed while buckthorn glossy black fruit is about 1/4 inch in diameter and contains two to four small seeds.

Samples received

McCook County

These are some ash samples from Salem. The tree has lost most of its leaves and the rest are scorched. There are also small clusters of greenish galls on the tree.

The defoliation and scorching of the leaves are drought-related. Considering the amount of precipitation your region has been receiving this late summer, some scorching is not surprising. The other problem is the ash flower gall formed by the ash flower gall mite. The mite only feeds on the male flowers of the ash tree and does not otherwise harm the tree.

Turner County
you eat the fruit?

What is this small shrub? Can

It was pretty smashed in the mail but after piecing it together it looks like nightshade. This is an annual herbaceous plant that still forms a thick stems so it is sometimes confused with a shrub. The mature berries are purplish black and should not be eaten. Some folks do collect the ripe fruit of the related garden huckleberry and cook it for pies but generally it is best just to avoid collecting the fruit unless you really know what you are doing.