

# Pest Update (July 30, 2014)

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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/forest-health/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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## Plant development (Phenology) for the growing season



**Plant development.** The smokebushes are in full bloom in Brookings. This is an unusual plant as the small flowers form large clusters on stalks covered with pink hairs. The hairs are what give the plant a “smokey” appearance. Smokebush can also have attractive autumn foliage color and some cultivars such as ‘Royal

Purple' have purplish red foliage from spring to autumn. The plant can be found growing throughout the state and I have found nice specimens in Murdo, Mobridge and Madison to name a few locations.

## E-samples



An interesting picture of a sample (they will be mailing it in). While the “fuzz” may be downy mildew – a common problem on viburnums at this time of year – it most likely is not a fungus but a mite. **Eriophyid mites** will cause fuzzy patches on viburnums and silver maples in our area and these patches are often confused with a disease. There is no effective control for this problem, and it doesn't really harm the host, but it is just another oddity of the pest world. It is

also important to note that both the disease downy mildew and the mites can be found on the same plant.



**Tamarisk**, also known as saltcedar (*Tamarix* sp) is in bloom now so I start receiving pictures with the caption “What is this plant?” The pink flowers cluster at the branch tips in late July and are very attractive. The foliage is composed of small scale-like leaves that look closer to a juniper or cedar than a deciduous shrub and this also adds to the confusion. While it is a very tough plant,

hardy and adapted to alkaline and saline soils, it has also become invasive and now tamarisk is choking out the native vegetation along many of our western rivers. Tamarisk should no longer be planted in South Dakota. It is also a tough plant to kill. Grazing and fire can increase, rather than decrease, their numbers. Herbicide, those containing imazapyr and triclopyr, as active ingredients are effective but as with all herbicides read and follow label directions exactly.



**Tar spot** is showing up across the eastern part of the state and this along with chlorosis is making for a lot of unsightly Freeman, red and silver maple trees. The disease begins as greenish-yellow spot in late June and then develops into these black tar-like structures within a month. The remaining leaf tissue is usually chlorotic. The treatment for the disease is two-fold. First, if practical, remove and destroy the fallen leaves this autumn to reduce the overwintering fungus. Next year

treat the tree with a Bordeaux mixture as the leaves expand and repeat the application about two weeks later. We see this disease about every three to four years and usually in years with a humid, wet spring and early summer, precisely the conditions experienced this year.

### **Samples received/site visits**

Clay County

**This hackberry tree is beginning to get yellow leaves and it is the only one among many that is showing this symptom.**

The leaves in this sample have all the symptoms consistent with a viral mosaic disease; yellowing of the leaf tissue with the edges of the yellow blotches often bordered by the veins. I do see this around the state frequently by mid-summer and generally the trees do not exhibit any other symptoms and appear to grow just fine.

Hanson County  
**leaves?**

**What are these bugs on the oak**



This is the oak lacebug (*Corythucha arcuata*), a small sucking insect that can be found on oak leaves at this time of year. The feeding by the insects results in discoloration and stippling damage on the leaves as well as a dusty or “dirty” appearance from the numerous dot-size insects and their excrement. No control is necessary as the tree will tolerate this level of infestation. I do not see this pest very often but will get a sample or two a year and generally from your region of the state.

Roberts County

**What is the problem with this cotoneaster shrub? There is a row of plants with the same symptoms. Is this spray damage?**

No, not a sprayer’s fault. The reason for the browning, shriveling leaves and dying branches is the bacterial disease fireblight. Cotoneasters are very susceptible to the disease and at this time of year I usually receive samples of plants that have died back almost to the ground. Since the disease is due to a bacterium, not a fungus, fungicides provide little or no control for the disease. The best recommendation is to prune the plants back to within three inches of the ground, this October, being sure to spray Lysol disinfectant on the pruners or hand saw between cut to keep from spreading the disease. The pruning usually

is enough to control the disease and the plants come back nicely the following year.

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