

Pest Update (September 4, 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



The hot weather is expected to break soon but much of the state is still dry. This is resulting in a lot of premature autumn foliage color. I can see many ashes from my office window that already have bright yellow leaves or in some trees the leaves have already dropped and all that remains is the hanging seeds.



Spruces, which were just beginning to recover from the 2012 drought, are now beginning to suffer from this late summer water deficit. There are numerous spruce trees with discolored foliage and drooping shoots. I expect to see some dieback and decline next year if these trees are not watered soon. The best time to water your trees to prepare them for winter, particularly evergreens, is not just before freeze-up, but *now*. 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.

A correction to the August 19 Update. In the August 19 Update I mentioned



that leafcutter bees are actively creating nests and that means lots of leaves look like someone took a cookie cutter to them. The leafcutter beetle cuts the edges of leaves in a very distinctive style, making a mostly smooth semicircle cut along the edges of the leaves. An alert

reader, Bill from Rapid City, noted that I included the wrong picture. The correct leafcutter bee picture is above; the picture in the update was damage from the black vine weevil (to the right). This insect makes ragged notches along the margins of the leaves. The black vine weevil is a major problem in more eastern states where I would see every rhododendron in a landscape with these ragged notches along the edge of the leaves. The foliage damage caused by the adult weevil feeding is not the main concern; it's the root feeding by the larvae that frequently kills the host. The most common hosts in the east for the black vine weevil are yews, rhododendrons and blackberries.



E-samples



The **clearwing ash borer** (one of our native ash borers) has been discussed in numerous articles in the Update over the years. This is a common borer in drought-stressed ashes but it is also a common pest of lilacs. While it certainly does not appear obvious, there is a close relationship between ash and lilac (both in the Olive family)

and this insect will attack both hosts, so much so that another common name for the insect is the ash/lilac borer. I had an email from a person who noticed the lilacs in their belt were declining and noticed boring dust and holes along the lower trunks. One of the pictures that was sent as an attachment showed a pupal skin from the clearwing ash borer that emerged earlier this summer. The management for this insect on lilac is the same as for ash; reduce stress on the plant by watering and provide a protective spray on the trunks in early May. The most common pesticides used to protect against successful attack contain permethrin as an active ingredient.



I am also getting pictures of a bright yellow fungus protruding from tree trunks. The fungus belongs to a group of wood-rotting shelf fungi. The sulphur shelf fungus forms colorful orange and yellow rosettes that arise from overlapping, fan-shaped shelves (as they age they become bleached). This is a delicious fungus, when properly cooked but should not be consumed with alcohol as the combination will make some people very sick (WARNING: do not use this brief description of the fungus to identify edible fungi, always have an experienced mushroom hunter along on any gathering expedition). The fungus also means the tree is suffering

from extensive rot and may fall over.

Samples received

Douglas County
elms? Is it Dutch elm disease?

What is the problem with these

The foliage is yellowing, but the leaves are not crisp nor is there any streaking in the sapwood on the attached shoots. However, there were aphids on the foliage and these are probably the source of the foliage discoloration. We start seeing lots of this type of flagging at this stage of the season.

Faulk County
apples?

What is the problem with these

The foliage shows some symptoms of apple scab. The fruit shows severe russetting and this rough corky network to the skin can be due to anything from environmental conditions as the fruit was forming to diseases. The most likely reason for the russets is the moist, humid weather we had earlier in the growing season. The problem with russets is more common on some varieties, such as 'Haralson', than others. The apple scab can be treated next spring by fungicide applications beginning at bud break while the management of russetting, which does not occur every year, is limited to pruning to improve air circulation and thinning out the fruit to 1 or 2 per cluster about 4 weeks after full bloom.

Spink County
edible?

What is this fruit and is it

This is elderberry (*Sambucus*) and while the fruit can be used in jams and jellies, it must be cooked before eating. The fresh, ripe fruit if eaten off the plant can be poisonous and symptoms can be minor or severe depending on the elderberry species and the individual. Interestingly, the flowers are edible and used in some European dishes.

Turner County
Arnold hawthorns?

What is the problem with these

This is probably one of the severest cases of cedar-hawthorn rust I have seen. Arnold is a cultivar list as being moderately susceptible to this disease but not to this extent. The management of these disease is limited as removing the alternate hosts – eastern redcedar and Rocky mountain juniper – is usually impractical as all the plants within 500 feet of the hawthorns need to be removed and disease transmission can occur with plants even a couple miles apart.