

# Pest Update (Oct 29, 2014)

Vol. 12, no. 27

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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 products identified in this publication.

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## Timely Topics

### Oh Deer!

I always receive calls at this time of year asking what trees and shrubs are “deer proof” so time to address this question again.



There is no such plant, of course. If preferred food sources are not available, deer will sometimes eat almost anything, or at least nibble on it. For example, spruce is not considered a preferred food source for deer but a number of years ago during a winter with heavy snowfall that restricted their movement, deer stripped spruce out of shelterbelts in eastern South Dakota.

I am also willing to bet if you show this list to anyone in Rapid City, where there is very heavy deer pressure in town, there are at least several plants listed below that

probably someone has had eaten out of their yard by deer, the deer pressure is that great. With that said, here is the list of *rarely* eaten plants:

- Alnus glutinosa* – European alder
- Berberis thunbergii* – Japanese barberry
- Buxus micophylla* – Korean boxwood
- Caragana arborescens* - Siberian peashrub
- Catalpa speciosa* – northern catalpa
- Cotinus coggygria* - smoketree
- Forsythia ovata* - forsythia
- Ginkgo biloba* - ginkgo
- Gledistia triacanthos* - honeylocust
- Ostrya virginiana* – ironwood or also known as hophornbeam
- Philadelphus coronaries* – sweet mockorange
- Picea* – spruce
- Platanus occidentalis* – sycamore
- Potentilla fruticosa* – potentilla
- Sambucus canadensis* - elderberry
- Spiraea prunifolia* – Bridalwreath spirea
- Viburnum* – viburnums

Again, this is not a perfect list. Deer can, and will, rub on almost any plant and some of these plants such as forsythia; lilacs and viburnums are considered “deer proof” but are favorite foods of rabbits! In addition, some of these plants,

such as sycamore have limited hardiness and are not widely grown in South Dakota.

If you really want to have deer browse your landscape, here are some of their favorites!

*Acer* – maple

*Malus* – crabapple and apple

*Prunus* – cherries and plums

*Pyrus* – pear

*Quercus* – oak (deer love small bur oaks in shelterbelts)

*Sorbus* – mountainash

*Taxus* - yew

*Thuja* – arborvitae (a favorite food!)

### **Go Away Deer!**

Another approach is to treat landscape plants with a repellent. First, the amount of repellent needed is directly proportional to the deer's preference of the plant being protected. Plants that deer prefer are going to require more repellent than those that are not. Repellents work through a number of mechanisms, most commonly grouped as odor-based and taste-based. Generally speaking, odor-based repellents work better than taste-based (and taste-based don't work until they take a bite). The most common odor-based products, such as Deer Away and Big Game Repellent, have putrescent whole eggs as their active ingredient. Eggs are considered one of the most effective deterrent and egg-based products are often used as the standard for comparisons. Taste-based products, such as hot sauce are usually not as effective as repellents but as many people swear by them as at them. The difference is due to the percentage of cayenne pepper extract in the particular product, it needs to be more than 6% to be effective. Coyote urine is also effective, but good luck training a coyote to pee on your ornamental plants. Soap, such as Lifebuoy, has little effective and I have had browse samples sent in with the soap bar still hanging from the branch!

### **E-samples**



Here is a sample I do not frequently see, an apple mealybug. The adult females are covered with a white wax which makes them stand out easily against the twig. The apple mealybug is found on more than just apple trees; they are also found on hawthorn and even maples and basswoods on occasion. These insect suck the sap from the branches and in large numbers can become a serious stress to their host. The insect is considered a pest in apple orchards along the east and west coast.

There is one generation per year and they overwinter as a nymph, however our cold winter usually kills them. The few times we see them the mealybugs hitchhiked into South Dakota on nursery stock and are killed during their first winter. Our cold winters are the best insecticide and prevent a number of serious pests from establishing here.

## **Samples received/site visits**

You can tell the season is winding down as the samples volume has become more “What is this?” than questions about pests.

Campbell County

### **What is this shrub?**

This is the Tatarian honeysuckle (*Lonicera tatarica*), a very common ornamental and windbreak shrub in our state (considering the number of samples I receive of it). Tatarian honeysuckle has become even more common due to the birds dropping the seeds almost anywhere.

Gregory County

### **What is this plant? It was found growing in a fence line.**

This is common buckthorn (*Rhamnus cathartica*), a plant frequently submitted to this office. The plant is common in windbreaks and fence rows throughout eastern South Dakota due to the habit of birds eating the glossy black fruit and depositing the seeds beneath anywhere they perch. The plant is the alternate host to the cereal rust disease and makes a nice home for the soybean aphid so there is not much to recommend it and many good reasons for removing it.

McPherson County

### **Is this saltcedar or eastern redcedar?**

This is saltcedar (*Tamarix ramosissima*) also known as tamarix. This is now considered a weed in South Dakota and much of the western United States due to its invasive habit along any source of water. It is often confused with eastern redcedar (*Juniperus virginiana*) and the best way to tell a twig sample apart during the summer (winter is easy as the tamarix drops its small scale-like leaves) is the slender twig of tamarix is a glossy and dark green with very light buds alternating along it. Eastern redcedar will have a darker green twig and the scale-like leaves will not alternate but be 4-ranked with each pair opposite one another.

Turner County

### **What is this plant?**

I called up the woman then followed-up with an email. The plant (with attractive white berries) was poison ivy! Thank goodness the sample was enclosed in plastic bag!

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This publication made possible through a grant from the USDA Forest Service.