Bugs and Blights

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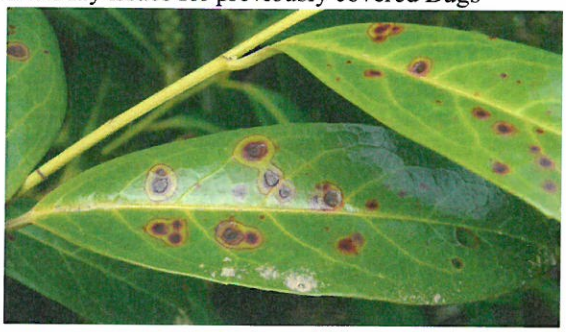
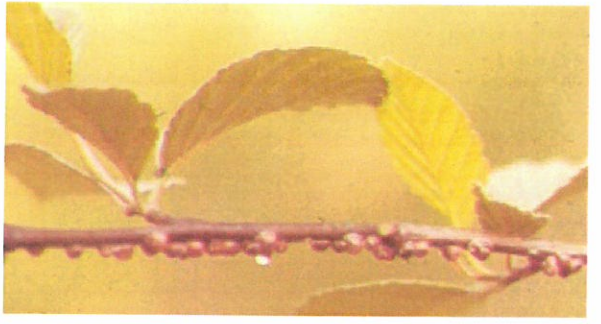
As the song goes "April showers, bring May flowers…" But they also bring on a lot of plant disease. Most of these somewhat clear up as the weather warms and rains cease. Watch for Siroccocus fungus on true cedars, and even some other conifers and brown rot of stone fruits. Review March, April and May issues for previously covered Bugs and Blights.



Shotholing on cherry laurel can have several causes: several leaf spot fungi or a physiological.shothole with no known cause. Identifying the diseases is difficult once the disease has aged. Diseases will be random on the leaf; a few spores land here or there, later a few more spores so the symptoms include large and small spots which widen as the disease progresses. The plant forms an abscission layer of cells that isolates the fungus and eventually the spot drops out. Confirm this by looking for spots about to drop out. The result is a plant that looks like it's been chewed up by insects.

Yellowing lawns can become yellow for many reasons. European crane fly http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/eb0856/eb0856.html has captured enough media attention so that people presume that any yellowing lawn is caused by craneflies. In Bellingham, WSU Master Gardeners went out to check lawns suspected of having crane fly damage, most did not have cranefly larvae in numbers large enough to cause any significant damage. Sample to detect larvae in the upper areas of lawn. http://whatcom.wsu.edu/CraneFly/faq.htm scroll down to "how do I know I have a problem with craneflies"). Other causes of yellowing lawn can be soggy lawns (squishy underfoot), buildup of thatch (spongy like memory foam or , lack of nitrogen, compaction or.some lawn diseases (http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/eb0938/eb0938.html)

Lecanium scales overwinter as immature scales (crawlers) on the branches of many hosts. Crawlers look like a very small oval bit of light yellow gelatin. In spring comes on some of the crawlers split and a small winged (gnat-like) male emerges, finds the female and mates. After mating, the female begins to swell, and excretes excess sap in the form of honeydew. That is when customers will notice this insect, described as "brown 'ladybugs' don't move and drip sap". However, this is not the vulnerable stage for this insect. As the female grows and begins laying eggs under the scale she hardens. Pesticides won't reach the eggs beneath. At this time scales can be squished or picked off and discarded. When the eggs hatch , the little crawlers will move along the branch and out to the leaves where they spend the summer. This is when they are vulnerable to pesticides. For homeowner IPM and registered pesticides go to HortSense http://pep.wsu.edu/hortsense/ And for more detail, see the text and photo gallery at http://jenny.tfrec.wsu.edu/opm/displaySpecies.php?pn=510



Rust on roses starts out as small spots on leftover leaves, stems or fruit. Remove older canes and infected leaves and hips, before the orange spores are produced. If too severe select a fungicide effective on rust from the options in Hortsense http://pep.wsu.edu/hortsense/

April 2012