

University of Idaho Extension – Nez Perce County
Master Gardener Plant Clinic 'Cheat Sheet'



GENERAL PLANT GROWTH QUESTIONS

What makes my _____ grow slowly, turn yellow, die back generally and slowly have small leaves?

Root rot. Affects most plants.

Fairly common where no other diagnosis seems to fit and especially in compacted and/or poorly drained soils. Often seen in vegetables when symptoms recur and crop rotation is not practiced. No cure. Fungus remains in soil, will infect new planting often. See in PNW Diseases Handbook.

What makes the newer leaves on my _____ pale with veins darker green than surrounding tissue (INTERVEINAL CHLOROSIS)?

Can be several things, but in LC valley is often is iron deficiency.

See in PNW Disease Handbook.

May also be root rot or death, herbicide damage.

LAWNS

What is the green spongy plant that grows in my lawn? And the short scummy green one? How do I get rid of them?

Mosses and algae. Usually soil land moisture conditions are cause. Control in fall and spring. See PNW Weed Handbook.

What makes the dark green ring in my lawn? It has mushrooms in it.

Fairy ring. No real reliable control. See in PNW Weed Handbook.

Common Lawn Diseases

See in PNW Diseases Mgmt Handbook.

Helminthosporeum leaf spot—bluegrass only

Powdery mildew

Red thread

Rust

How do I properly maintain my lawn?

Over 1/2' of thatch usually contributes to lawn problems.

<http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/idahogardens/lt/index.htm>

How do I properly fertilize my lawn?

Fertilizing lawns <http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/idahogardens/lt/fl.htm#what>

How do I get rid of nightcrawlers in my lawn?

Nothing legal!!!! Earthworms have many benefits and contribute greatly to a healthy lawn.

LANDSCAPE TREES

What makes my evergreen needles brown and fall off in autumn or spring?

Natural drop of oldest (innermost) foliage. Can be made more dramatic by various stresses. Vigor inducing management is best.

<http://www.clemson.edu/extension/hgic/pests/pdf/hgic2353.pdf>

What makes individual branches of sprawling juniper brown and die?

Rodent damage to bark near ground or juniper twig blight.

Rodent damage

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/gardeninfo/diagnostics/evergreen/juniper/needlesbrowntip.html>

See in PNW Disease Mgmt Handbook, The Ortho Problem Solver

Juniper twig blight <http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/factsheet.aspx?RecordID=638>

What makes my dogwood leaves roll downward and burn on edges?

Leaf scorch. An environmental stress. Wind, sun, too little water are most common causes. Also, consider dogwood anthracnose possibility; it looks similar. See both in PNW Disease Mgmt Handbook,

Dogwood leaf scorch <http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/factsheet.aspx?RecordID=424> .

Dogwood (*Cornus sp.*) Anthracnose

<http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/factsheet.aspx?RecordID=421>

Leaf scorch also common on maple

What makes the elongated dead area on trunks of my cherry, apple, mountain ash and other thin bark trees?

Sun scald or southwest damage. See PNW Disease Mgmt Handbook, **Winter Injury of Landscape Plants in the Pacific Northwest** http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/article_index.aspx?article_id=11

LANDSCAPE TREES - DISEASES

Powdery mildew

What causes powdery white "dust" and distortion on leaves, especially apples, sycamores, lilacs (roses and veggies, also)?

Powdery mildew. Very common. Rarely fatal, but quite disfiguring. See in PNW Disease Mgmt Handbook, **Apple Tree** <http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/factsheet.aspx?RecordID=52>

Rose <http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/factsheet.aspx?RecordID=987>

Also, on **grapes** <http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/factsheet.aspx?RecordID=525>

Verticillium wilt

What makes a branch, branches or even entire tree suddenly wilt and die, usually in early, hot spells? Also, can cause a chronic weak look failure to thrive, in affected branches.

This fungus disease affects many species. Remains in soil so must replant with resistant species. No real cure. Prune off affected branches (sterilize tools) and induce vigor: may work.

Smoke Tree *cotinus coggyria*—Verticillium Wilt

<http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/factsheet.aspx?RecordID=1294>

Resistant/Susceptible species http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/article_index.aspx?article_id=41

Sycamore anthracnose

What makes the leave fall off sycamores in early summer< especially in tree's lower half?

This disease, generally no problem with warmish, dry weather when trees budding out, expanding leaves. Problem rarely fatal by itself, unless client can't bear cosmetic aspect, no control is ok. Vigor inducing management is best bet. Spraying of large trees impractical. Injection of fungicides not proven effective and safe for trees in long run.

Fact sheet <http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/factsheet.aspx?RecordID=1069>

Found in # 4 black portable file under Tree Disease.

Fireblight

What makes branch tips blacken or redden and die back real rapidly? Happens on apples, pears, cotoneaster, pyracantha, hawthorne mainly.

All rose family members susceptible. Bacteria caused. Very infectious. Most common on new, vigorous growth. Resistant varieties are available. Management to avoid too much vigor (light pruning, low nitrogen doses) is desirable

On **apple** tree <http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/ShowDisease.aspx?RecordID=43>

LANDSCAPE TREES - INSECTS

What makes the putrid looking pitch blobs on the bases of my pine tree branches?

Sequoia pitch moth. No spray available. See in PNW Insects Mgmt Handbook

<http://uspest.org/pnw/insects> **Pine (*Pinus*) Sequoia pitch moth**

What makes the sticky, wet, drippy stuff on my trees and under then?

Aphids. Can control with dormant oil in winter. Harsh water sprays help in summer. For large trees, rarely do aphids do serious harm. PNW Insects Mgmt Handbook, **Landscape Common Pests**

<http://uspest.org/pnw/insects?16LAND01.dat> and also individual tree species.

LANDSCAPE SHRUBS

What makes the notched chewing on my lilacs, rhododendrons, bergenia, euonymus, peonies, and many other plants?

Root weevils. Very common, disfiguring to plant tops when adults feed there. Grub feeding on roots, crown can weaken, kill plants. Spraying of adults in early to mid-June is control. See in PNW Insects Mgmt Handbook **Azalea (*Rhododendron*)—Root weevil** <http://uspest.org/pnw/insects> and

Landscape, Common Pests, Root Weevil <http://uspest.org/pnw/insects>

What makes the edges of my rhodie and azalea leaves brown or black?

Most usually in this valley is environmental stress*. These plants are not at home here, especially in sunny wind swept places like new neighborhoods. (**Root weevil larvae can cause similar symptoms—see above**) Too tight, too dry, too wet or poorly drained soil is usual scenario. Really ugly, weak plants should be replaced.

*Winter desiccation a big problem--See Pacific Northwest Disease Mgmt. Handbook, **Winter Injury of landscape Plants in the Pacific Northwest**

http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/article_index.aspx?article_id=11

What makes my rose buds contort with brown petal edges? They seem not to open.

Thrips. See in PNW Insects Mgmt Handbook, Look under **Landscape Common Pests**

<http://uspest.org/pnw/insects?16LAND01.dat> and

Rose (*Rosa*)—Thrips <http://uspest.org/pnw/insects>

Thrips also affect gladiolus and other flowers.

FRUIT – GENERAL

Fruit russeting

What causes netted, scabby brown places on skin of fruits, especially apples and pears?

WSU Apple Fruit Russeting

<http://pep.wsu.edu/hortsense/scripts/query/displayProblem.asp?tableName=plant&problemID=8&categoryID=3>

Plant Disease Control Apple Fruit Russeting

<http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/ShowDisease.aspx?RecordID=45>

University of Minnesota

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/yardandgarden/ygbriefs/h200appleruss.html>

What make my walnut husks turn black and fail to fall off?

Walnut husk flies, See PNW, CIS

When should I spray my _____ fruit tree?

A fruit tree spray guide and bud development chart for homeowners.

Share freely with all fruit clientele.

Located in #1 black portable file holder.

Oregon State University "Managing diseases and insects in home orchards"

<http://library.state.or.us/repository/2007/200707031130572/index.pdf>

Growth Stages In Fruit Trees From Dormancy To Bloom

http://extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000511_Rep533.pdf

VEGETABLES

Parsnips, are they poisonous after overwintering in the garden?

No

I have herbicide damage on my vegetable plants. Can I eat the produce?

Our answer is always "we cannot tell you it is ok; sorry." We do not recommend that you eat the produce. (This one is a legal hot potato.)

If any client wants to pursue a possible case of pesticide misapplication, put him/her in contact with:

Chuck Hawley/Tim Stein, Idaho Department of Agriculture Investigators

(208) 762-9586 (208) 762-9598

We are educators, not regulatory

VEGETABLES - INSECTS

What makes the dead brown spots that ruin my spinach, beet and chard leaves?

Beet leaf miner. A maggot. No cure. Inspection and hand crushing of eggs in spring or regular spraying (questionable) or floating row covers are prevention.

See in PNW Insects Mgmt Handbook <http://uspest.org/pnw/insects?22VGTB58.dat>

Corn earworm

How do I control the worm that eats my corn kernels?

Dust as soon as silks appear.. direct to where silks enter ears,

See PNW Insects Mgmt Handbook <http://uspest.org/pnw/insects?22VGTB21.dat>

How do I control worms on my tomatoes, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower?

Watch. When seeing eggs on stems, leaves, apply insecticide. These are cabbage worms and tomato hornworm. See PNW Insect Mgmt Handbook <http://uspest.org/pnw/insects?22VGTB21.dat>

What makes the tiny white scar-like lesions on my tomatoes?

Stinkbugs. PNW Insects Mgmt Handbook; <http://uspest.org/pnw/insects?22VGTB21.dat>

UC IPM Online

<http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/GARDEN/VEGES/PESTS/stinkbug.html>

What are the striped beetles eating my potato leaves?

Colorado potato beetle. PNW Insects Mgmt Handbook <http://uspest.org/pnw/insects> ,

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What eats holes in my potatoes, carrots, and other root crops? Also, makes tops weaken, wilt?

Wireworm, a shiny, brown beetle larvae. PNW Insects Mgmt Handbook ,

<http://uspest.org/pnw/insects?22VGTB02.dat> or <http://uspest.org/pnw/insects>

The Ortho Problem Solver

VEGETABLES - DISEASES

Virus disease

What makes leaves on my beans, peppers, tomatoes, squash and cucumbers stunt, mottle, streak, harden off, yellow, and twist? The fruits are small and distorted.

Transmitted by aphids and leafhoppers, mostly. Quite common. Affected plants should be pulled and thrown out. No cure. Resistant varieties best bet. Preventing insect attack is another approach but spraying only moderately effective and physical barriers a hassle.

See PNW Disease Mgmt Handbook . http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/plant_index.aspx?title=disease

What makes the ends of my tomatoes shrivel and turn brown and rot?

Tomato blossom end rot. <http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/factsheet.aspx?RecordID=1076>

PNW Disease Mgmt Handbook http://plant-disease.ippc.orst.edu/plant_index.aspx?title=disease

The Ortho Problem Solver

COMPOSTING

Can I use walnut leaves and shells on my garden or in my compost?

Yes, exception is freshly fallen walnut leaves. Leaf decomposition destroys the phytotoxin in walnut leaves. Exudates from roots, especially black walnut, are more toxic than leaves. Not all plants damaged by these toxins. Can be an overrated problem.

INSECTS - GENERAL

How do I get rid of Grasshoppers? PNW, OPS

How do I get rid of earwigs? PNW, OPS

How do I get rid of box elder bugs? PNW

How do I get rid of slugs and snails? PNW, OPS

What makes my plants turn bleached and pale looking with some foliage drying out?

Spider mites, PNW, OPS

How do I get rid of wasps in my attic in winter?

Paper wasps, usually (identification is important first step). Seal house against them.

There's a swarm of bees in my tree. Do you know a beekeeper?

Yes! Clients can visit the Idaho State Department of Agriculture Apiary Webpage for more information.

<http://www.agri.idaho.gov/Categories/PlantsInsects/Bees/indexapiary.php>

Front desk may have a list of local contacts too.

INSECTS—HOUSEHOLD

How do I get rid of box elder bugs?

PNW

What are the moths flying around in my house? What are the worms in my dry goods? How do I get rid of them?

Indian meal moth. PNW, CIS on dermestid/beetles. Pests of Stored Foods