



**SOUTH DAKOTA STATE
UNIVERSITY EXTENSION**

Tree Pest Alert



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In This Issue

Plant Development.....	1
Treatment to begin now	2
Watering trees now for winter protection	2
Timely topic	2
Emerald ash borer update	2
Tree planting season is over	2
Start removing pines that died of pine wilt	2
E-samples	3
Black knot on chokecherry	3
Sulfur yellow fungus on ash.....	3
Weir's cushion rust	4
Sample received/site visits.....	4
Lincoln County (Lilac/ash borer in lilac).....	4
Minnehaha County (Picloram backflash treated stump).....	5
Stanley County (Lilac/ash borer in grafted lilac).....	5

Samples

John Ball, Professor, SDSU Extension Forestry Specialist & South Dakota Department of Agriculture and Natural Resources Forest Health Specialist

Email: john.ball@sdsu.edu

Phone: 605-688-4737 (office), 605-695-2503 (cell)

Samples sent to: John Ball
Agronomy, Horticulture and Plant Science Department
Rm 314, Berg Agricultural Hall, Box 2207A
South Dakota State University
Brookings, SD 57007-0996

Note: samples containing living tissue may only be accepted from South Dakota. Please do not send samples of plants or insects from other states. If you live outside of South Dakota and have a question, please send a digital picture of the pest or problem.

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 listing of a product shall not be taken as an endorsement or the exclusion a criticism regarding effectiveness. Please read and follow all label instructions as the label is the final authority for a product's use on a 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.

Reviewed by Master Gardeners: Carrie Moore and Dawnee Lebeau

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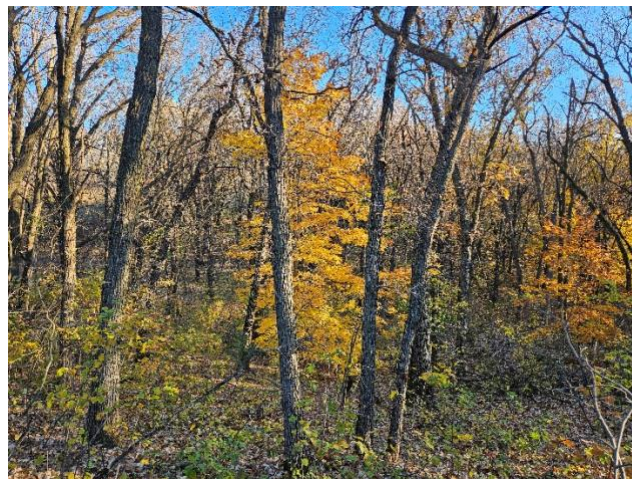
Plant development for the growing season

Autumn is finally here. Daytime temperatures hovered in the 80s two weeks ago but now they have settled in the 50s and 60s. We have finally seen frost on the roofs and lawns after a chilly night.

The mild temperatures slowed the accumulated growing degree days (GDD base-50). Here is the current GDD accumulation for communities across the state.

Aberdeen	2985
Beresford	3570
Chamberlain	3585
Rapid City	2920
Sioux Falls	3534

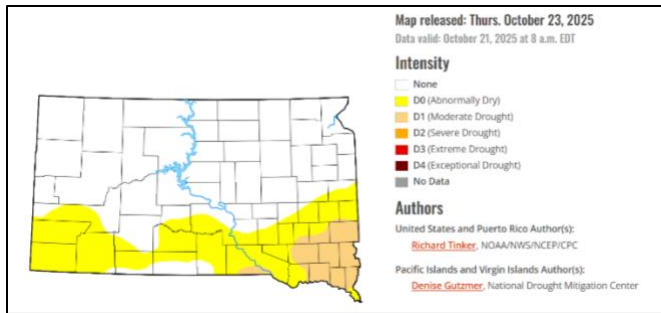
The fall foliage color display is fading fast. The windy weather is forcing trees to shed their leaves. There are still a few areas of good fall color. The maples of Sica Hollow were at their best last week. The gold and yellow foliage was in sharp contrast to the dark trunks of the oaks.



Drought monitoring

The rain seems to have stopped across the state, so we are sliding back into drought. Slightly less than 70 percent of the state is drought free. Another 25 percent of the state is classified as "Abnormally Dry." We are seeing a few areas, about five percent of the state, which slid back to "Moderate Drought."

Here is the current map from the National Drought Mitigation Center at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.



Treatments to Begin Now

Watering trees now for winter protection

Remember now is the time to water your trees, not just before the soil freezes. We have had good rains this year in much of the state, but it is turning drier as we move into fall. Trees need water to go through the biochemical processes to prepare for cold winters.

If you are in an area that has not received at least three inches of precipitation during the past few weeks of October, you may want to begin watering the trees. While root growth has slowed, it does not stop until the soil temperatures reach into the low thirties.

Timely Topics

Emerald ash borer update

We continue to monitor larval development of emerald ash borer (EAB) from Dakota Dunes to Milbank. The larvae are burrowing in the sapwood to carve out their overwinter chamber. The beetles are getting ready for the winter.

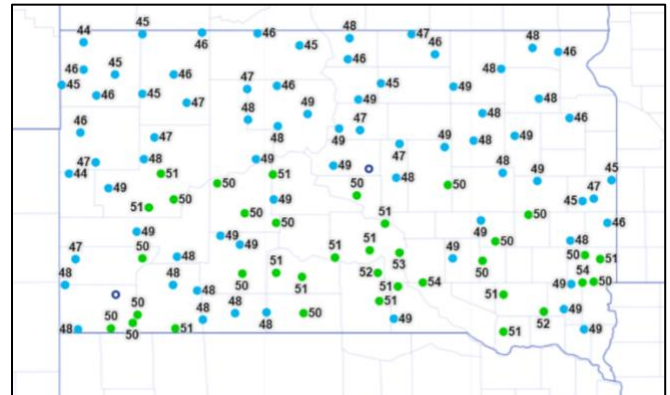


Tree planting season is over

We are finished with the fall planting season for container and balled-and-burlapped trees and shrubs.

Woody plants need to establish their roots after transplanting so they do not desiccate during the windy winter weather.

We need about three or four weeks of soil temperatures above 50°F for the roots to recover. We are at or below 50°F in the northern half of the state. The southern half of the state is still above 50°F but will slip below this threshold during the next week or two.



Start removing pines that died of pine wilt

This past week we have been busy removing Scotch pine (*Pinus sylvestris*) that died of pine wilt this past summer and fall. This fatal disease of exotic pines is caused by the pinewood nematode (*Bursapelenchus xylophilus*) and its associates. The nematode and bluestain fungi, both carried to a new host on sawyer beetles, kill a tree usually within a year of infection.



The now dead trees are easy to spot. The needles are discolored, dry and falling from the brittle twigs. The branches and trunk wood are dry, free of sap and light weight. The branch and trunk wood is also filled with pine sawyer beetles (*Monochamus*). Come spring, the adult beetle will emerge and carry with them thousands of nematodes and the bluestain fungi.

The sawyer beetles carry the nematode and fungi to healthy pines which start the infection. The way to break the cycle is to destroy the wood (along with the beetles

and nematodes) before next April 1. This will only slow the spread as sawyer beetles can fly from distance dead hosts.



The wood interior was blue with the bluestain fungi. We also found the dying trees were infested with the pine engraver beetles this past summer and fall. The small bb size emergence holes peppered the bark. The network of pine beetle galleries was laced through the wood. This bark beetle does not transmit the nematode.



E-samples

Black knot on chokecherry

Now that the leaves are falling, it is easier to see any abnormality with the branches and twigs. One that stands out is the black, lumpy appearance of black knot. The best description that accompanied an e-sample said "I have a question about what appears to be a growth on a small chokecherry tree. Frankly, it looks like an animal defecated on the tree. It is between 12 and 18 inches off the ground, and dark brown to black in color."

Black knot is the fungal disease *Dibotryon morbosum* syn *Apiosporina morbosa*. The infection results in knobby, swollen black galls along branches and small stems. Many cherry trees are never infected; others will

have a few branches infected and a few will have the entire canopy engulfed in these galls.



The woody galls seen now are the second year of the infection. The symptoms of the first-year infection are difficult to spot. They appear as a slight light-green swelling on the twigs. This is why pruning out the black cankers does not eliminate the disease on a tree. The first-year infections are missed during the pruning, so new black lumps will appear the following year.

Sulfur yellow fungus on ash

This picture was sent in by the ash tree owner that wondered what these "yellow globs" were. This was an ash that he was having treated by a commercial applicator to protect it from emerald ash borer.

These are the fruiting bodies of the sulfur yellow fungus (*Laetiporus sulphureus*). The fungus is also known as Chicken-of-the-Woods due to its flavor (but doesn't every new food?). The fungus appears as a layered, fan-shaped growth on a dying or recently dead tree. The

fungus is orange yellow on top and sulfur yellow beneath. The fruiting bodies appear in late summer. They disappear by winter as many animals (and people) like to eat them.



The tree owner had a tree service that could knock the fungus off the tree. I explained that it would not eliminate the fungus. The bulk of the fungus is beneath the bark and living off the wood it is slowly rotting. Removing the fruiting bodies would be as useless as removing apples to kill the apple tree.

But an arborist should inspect the tree to determine the amount of decay present. Trees infected with sulfur yellow fungus eventually rot enough that the trees fail.

Final note: do not eat raw sulfur yellow fungi, it must be cooked. Also do not harvest any fungus that you cannot identify or base your identification on a brief description of the fruiting body!

Weir's cushion rust on spruce



Spotting of white spruce (*Picea glauca*) needles was the reason for this e-sample. The yellow spots and bands along the needles appear to be from colonization by Weir's cushion rust (*Ceropsora weirii* (formerly *Chrysomyxa weirii*). Proper diagnosis requires a physical

sample, of course, but the symptoms fit those of the fungal disease.

The disease infects the new foliage in the spring. The infected needles develop yellow spots and bands by fall. They turn even brighter gold in the spring when small pustules appear which release the spores. The infected needles fall that summer. Trees that are infected every year will appear thin and open.

Management is by fungicide applications to protect the new foliage from becoming infected. The first application is made when the buds begin to open with two more applications applied about 10 days apart. Use a chlorothalonil fungicide that is labelled for this use.

Samples received/Site visits

Lincoln County, Lilac/ash borer

There have been many stops this summer and fall to look at defoliated lilac (*Syringa vulgaris*). This stop was in response to a call about lilac canes that were snapping and falling. The problem here was not a fungus but a borer.



The base of the large canes had pencil-diameter size holes with coarse frass pellets around them. The wood had galleries that extended into the wood. This is the work of the lilac/ash borer (*Podosesia syringae*). This is a common native borer of ash and lilac. The insect is also called the lilac/ash clearwing borer. This helps

prevent confusion with the emerald ash borer which attacks ash but not lilac.

Management of the lilac/ash borer is two-fold. First, remove and destroy any large canes that show signs of previous infestations (large holes, coarse pellets). This will remove the borers that are within the wood.

Second, around the second week of next May, spray the remaining canes with an insecticide containing bifenthrin, carbaryl, or permethrin. This will kill any female adults as they lay eggs or small larvae after they hatch. These treatments may have to continue for a few years to reduce the infestation.

Minnehaha County, *Piclorum* backflash treated stump

The problem here started with a tree removed by the homeowner. The problem was not removing the tree but treating the stump. The stump was sprayed with Tordon (active ingredient is picloram).



The objective was to keep the stump from sprouting. An application of Tordon made within 30 minutes of cutting down the tree (and applied in a ring around the outer most wood on the surface of the stump) will kill the stump and prevent sprouting. The problem is the herbicide is carried out into the dying roots where it leaches into the surrounding soil. The herbicide is then

absorbed by the roots of other trees. This is referred to as backflash.

This is what happened in this instance. A birch within 15 feet of the stump died within two weeks of the application. A second birch a little farther away now has half the canopy with wilted leaves and dead twigs.

Unfortunately, not much can be done at this point. The damage is already done. The herbicide can persist in the soil for the next two years so any new planting will have to be delayed for a couple of years.

Stanley County, *Lilac/ash borer* in grafted lilac

These grafted lilacs are popular in the ornamental landscape. The round tops are a lilac cross between *Syringa meyeri* 'Palibin' and *S. pubescens* subsp. *microphylla* 'Superba'. The compact tops produce fragrant, pink flowers in late May into early June.

These are grafted on a Japanese tree lilac (*S. reticulata*) understock at about three to four feet above the ground. This creates an attractive globe on a stick.

Unfortunately, the graft sometimes provides a suitable spot for the lilac/ash borer to burrow into the wood. This is what is occurring with this tree. The borer holes appear above the graft.



The treatment is the same as discussed under the Lincoln County sample.