



# *Path News*

Scotland & Northern Britain

## Dieback of Norway spruce

Norway spruce in a number of plantations in the south and south-west of England have shown varying amounts of dieback and some trees have died. Initial investigations suggest a condition known as 'Top Dying'. This condition, first described in the late 1950s, has been found in plantations where stocking density is high and thinning has recently been carried out, the thinning having been delayed for many years. It is believed to be mainly a physiological effect but more information is needed. We would be very interested to know of any plantations of Norway spruce in England or Wales exhibiting similar symptoms.



## Powdery mildew

Powdery mildew, apparent as whitish powder coating on leaves and shoot tips, has been especially visible this summer. Many hosts including oak (see right), horse chestnut, apple and Acer have been found infected by this fungal pathogen (mainly *Erysiphe* spp.). With severe infections new foliage and shoots are distorted and even killed. Weather conditions (warm but with high humidity) have probably favoured infection and symptom development this year.



## Horse chestnut leaf miner

The highly visible reddish-brown disfigurement on horse chestnut foliage (see right) has sparked many reports of 'rust' disease. In fact, the symptoms are caused by larvae of the horse chestnut leaf miner (*Cameraria ohridella*) as they feed within the leaves. Infestations can be dramatic (severely affected trees may look 'autumnal' from midsummer onwards) but trees are well able to withstand the damage and reflush normally in the spring. More information about this pest at [www.forestresearch.gov.uk/fr/INFD-68JJRC](http://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/fr/INFD-68JJRC)

