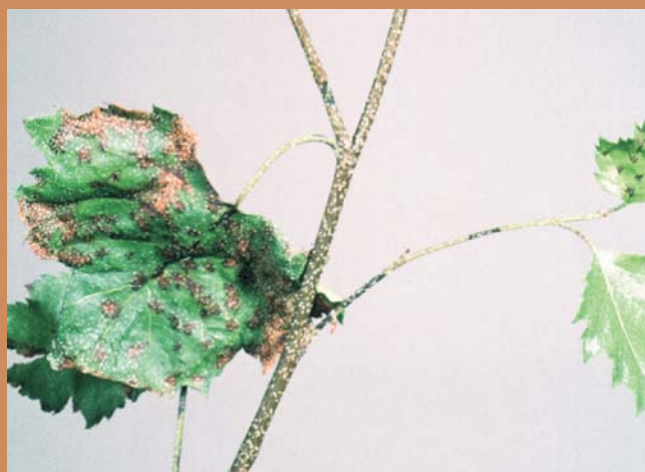


Die-back of young oak

So far this season there have been reports of shoot die-back of oak saplings planted in woodland grant schemes. This die-back is caused by a fungus, *Fusicoccum quercus*, which infects young shoots forming reddish/brown lesions which girdle and kill the shoots (see right). Infection by this fungus may be exacerbated by exposure to winds and/or dry weather and soil conditions.



Birch die-back

We have received a number of enquiries concerning die-back of birch, in particular within woodland grant schemes. In several cases 2002 shoots have failed to flush and are dying back, suggesting a physiological factor. The fungus *Marssonina betulae* (see left) has also been found infecting leaves and current shoots, particularly of silver birch planted on poorer sites.

Damage to Scots pine

Several higher elevation sites are reporting severe browning of Scots pine this year. Some of these sites were heavily infected by the needle cast fungus *Lophodermium seeditiosum* last year, causing loss of the previous season's needles. This year, damage appears to be a combination of exposure and *L. seeditiosum*, with damage usually more prevalent on the windward side of trees.



Contact:

Sarah Green,
Forest Research,
Northern Research Station,
Roslin, Midlothian,
EH25 9SY.

Tel: 0131 445 2176
Fax: 0131 445 5124
E-mail: sarah.green@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Needle cast of Douglas Fir

Swiss Needle cast of Douglas Fir is caused by the fungus *Phaeocryptopus gaumannii* and has been reported from 15 to 25 year old Douglas fir in SW England. The needles turn yellow and fall prematurely in spring and this can cause extensive defoliation of older needles. The presence of small black fruit-bodies in the stomata on the underside of the needles is diagnostic.



Herbicide damage

Herbicides frequently cause injury. A common example is the "little-leaf" symptom caused by glyphosate. When the tree flushes in spring the leaves are miniaturized and bunched. The damage is the result of contamination by glyphosate in the late summer or early autumn of the previous year. Most trees will recover unless contamination is repeated over several years.

Blossom and shoot blight of cherry

Blossom and shoot blight of cherries is caused by the fungus *Monilinia laxa* and affects many ornamental cherries and bird cherry but not the wild cherry (gean). It causes a shrivelling of flower and leaf shoots and the fungus can spread back down the shoot to affect twigs. When twigs are affected some gumming may be produced which can be confused with the symptoms of bacterial canker.



If you see any of these diseases in your area, we would be interested to know.

Contact:

David Rose,
Forest Research,
Alice Holt Lodge,
Farnham, Surrey, GU10 4LH.

Tel: 01420 22255
Fax: 01420 23653
E-mail: david.rose@forestry.gsi.gov.uk