

Scotland & Northern Britain

Summary of enquiries 2011/2012

152 enquiries were received with 59 relating to forests and woodlands, and 70 associated with parks and gardens.

Enquiries came from Forestry Commission staff (44) as well as private individuals (72). Many enquiries (19) concerned suspected *P. lateralis* infections of Lawson cypress. Several cases of stem bleeding on beech were also reported, and one 150 year old beech tree was found to be infected with *Phytophthora pseudosyringae* (below), the first record of this pathogen infecting *Fagus* sp. in Scotland.



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Biotic damage

Phytophthoras have been causing great concern recently, and in 2011/2012 *Phytophthora austrocedrae* was confirmed for the first time causing dieback and mortality of mature upland juniper at sites in the Pennines, The Lake District and Perthshire (below left). These are the first findings of this pathogen on a juniper species worldwide.

P. austrocedrae typically infects the stem bases of juniper causing orange-brown lesions in the phloem (below right). Surveys are underway to determine the distribution of this pathogen in Britain.



Abiotic damage

Severe browning of trees was visible along the north-west coast of Britain last summer following hurricane force winds on 23rd May 2011. Winter injury was also once again reported on Scots pine in the spring of 2011 (below) and 2012. With this kind of damage, browning often occurs at higher elevation and may have a directional pattern, i.e. it appears worse on one side of the crown, usually the windward side.



England & Wales

Summary of enquiries in 2011/2012

542 enquiries were received, 325 for privately or publicly owned amenity trees, while 107 related to forest/woodland trees. Most frequently reported diseases were bleeding canker of horse chestnut, honey fungus, oak dieback and *Phytophthora* diseases. Public interest in Acute Oak Decline generated many requests for information as well as reports of new cases (91). There was also a resurgence of enquiries relating to suspected *Phytophthora ramorum* (32) but only 3 of these were confirmed as this disease (below).



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Abiotic damage

During the winter of 2011/2012 many coast redwoods throughout England and Wales were reported to have needle browning (below). It appears that this symptom was caused by desiccation of the foliage due to the very dry soil conditions, akin to a severe summer drought, combined with cold dry winds. In the past, trees suffering such damage have recovered well when soil moisture levels improved, although some trees have shown minor dieback of twigs and small branches.



Chestnut blight

Caused by the fungus *Cryphonectria parasitica*, chestnut blight causes dieback and mortality of sweet chestnut. Although widespread in Europe the disease remained absent from Britain until recent findings on chestnut trees planted for nut production in Warwickshire and East Sussex. Symptoms include cankers, visible as sunken or fissured bark which girdle entire stems or branches. Fruit bodies visible as orange pustules also develop on infected bark (below). More details are available at: www.forestry.gov.uk/chestnutblight.

