

From The Bedford Extension MG HELP DESK

Editor: Linda E., VCE Master Gardener, Help Desk Coordinator
May 2015 - Bedford Area Master Gardeners Association (BAMGA) news publication

QUESTION

A few years ago a client brought in specimens from her juniper plants, tips of which were dying back. She wanted to know what was causing it and what, if anything, could be done to stop or prevent further damage.

DIAGNOSIS



Phomopsis juniperovora_urbanext.illinois.edu

The specimens were sent to Virginia Tech for specific diagnosis and treatment recommendations. The diagnosis came back as 'tip blight.' However, the log sheet did not specifically state which one of the two different fungi, *Phomopsis juniperovora* or *Kabatina Juniperi*, that cause juniper tip blight in Virginia, it was.

According to the VCE publication Juniper Tip Blights (VCE Pubs 450-601), "Symptoms of the two diseases are

identical; however, some aspects of their control differ. Therefore, correct identification of the causal agent is important." It should also be noted that "these fungi can also attack other hosts, including *Cryptomeria*, *Chamaecyparis*, and *Thuja* species." In addition, these fungi seldom cause significant damage in landscapes unless weather conditions become favorable for disease development.



Phomopsis on juniper_extension.umd.edu



Kabatina Juniperi_urbanext.illinois.edu



Close-up of kabatina spores_extension.umd.edu

RECOMMENDATIONS [1]

Planting Resistant cultivars

Certain cultivars of juniper have been shown to have resistance to one or both of these diseases in field trials conducted in several states. Refer to Tables 1-3 in the aforementioned VCE publication, which include information from resistance trials conducted in Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio.

Cultural Control

“Viable spores of these fungi have been recovered from branches that have been dead for as long as two years. All blighted twig tips should be removed and burned or buried to eliminate the sources of infection. Pruning or shearing should be done on a dry day to reduce spread of the fungus to other plants on wet tools. Overhead irrigation, which spreads fungal spores, should be avoided.”

Chemical Control

“The fungicides, thiophanate methyl and mancozeb, are registered for control of both *Phomopsis* and *Kabatina* tip blights, but because the fungi have different infection periods, timing of application for the two diseases differs. Treatment for *Phomopsis* tip blight should begin in early spring and continue at 10-14 day intervals. Spring treatments are not effective for *Kabatina* tip blight. Fungicide applications should begin in the fall for *Kabatina* tip blight.” For information on rates of application, refer to the label or the information on *Phomopsis* needle and twig blight in the current Virginia Pest Management Guide for Home Grounds and Animals [2] or the Virginia Pest Management Guide for Horticultural and Forest Crops [3]. (For information on the proper use of pesticides and fungicides, refer to any current VCE Pest Management Guide.)

REFERENCES

- [1] <http://pubs.ext.vt.edu/450/450-601/450-601.html>
- [2] <https://pubs.ext.vt.edu/456/456-018/456-018.html>
- [3] <https://pubs.ext.vt.edu/456/456-017/456-017.html>

Answers provided herein were based on specific situations and growing conditions.

These recommendations may or may not be appropriate for all circumstances.

For specific recommendations for your particular situation please contact your local Cooperative Extension Office.

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