

PHYTOPHTHORA LATERALIS DISAPPEARS FROM THE RADAR



Phytophthora lateralis first appeared in 2010 on Lawson's cypress which is the most widely traded and planted conifer in the UK landscape. It was initially treated with great concern by UK plant health authorities but arrival of Chalara fraxinea put paid to that. P. lateralis disappeared from the radar in 2012 when UK government 'drew a line in the sand' following the unprecedented public outcry over Chalara ash dieback.

P. lateralis now goes unreported outside the confines of obscure government reports. How it entered the UK is portrayed as a mystery but the avenues of entry are clear to me. Root cause is the British passion for importing and planting trees without proper attention paid to the integrity of the planting material.

Foliar browning symptoms in Lawson's cypress (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*) at Balloch Country Park Estate in Scotland and caused by P. lateralis were apparent in 2009 and worsened during 2010. Forestry Commission (FC) waited until November 2010 to report finding P. lateralis.

Infrastructure development at Balloch Country Park Estate involving Rhododendron clearance, a major replanting programme using 'imported' topsoil, and financed by a £2.4 m Heritage Lottery Fund grant, had taken place in 2003-2006. Tree and shrub planting material was sourced from a number of nurseries including 10 in the Netherlands, four in Italy and two in France. P. lateralis had been confirmed in French nurseries in 1999 and Dutch nurseries in 2004.

Further UK outbreaks were confirmed on Lawson's cypress at Greenock Park Cemetery and on Thuja occidentalis (Northern white cedar) at a Scottish nursery and a Renfrewshire Park. The Northern white cedar trees had been imported from France. At least two

different genetic lineages have since been identified indicating separate UK introductions of the pathogen.

The outbreak of P. lateralis at Balloch Country Park Estate was followed by a flurry of more highly publicised findings in Scotland, Northern Ireland and England, including Yorkshire and Devon, in 2011. But with no public utterances from FC or Fera during the whole of 2012 and 2013 (just a website mention in passing of one outbreak in South Wales and one in Sussex) it would appear P. lateralis is no longer considered to be a problem.

P. lateralis may have disappeared from the radar screen but with a spore dissemination potential equivalent to Phytophthora ramorum, and a history of air-borne spore spread in France, it has certainly not gone away. What has disappeared is UK plant health authorities' earlier concern and consideration for an aggressive and lethal disease of conifer species vital to the landscape, amenity and garden sectors.

Management guidance has been effectively downgraded. FC now says suspected cases should only be reported to them if they involve a number of trees on a public site such as a park or churchyard, on the basis that large numbers of visitors will pose a higher risk of spreading the disease. For suspected cases in private gardens (and presumably golf courses) owners are told to consult a reputable arborist, leaving the arborist to decide on and organise safe disposal and

destruction of infected material (by burning or chipping and deep burial) and preferably on site.

In the absence of legal permission for burning large amounts of debris on site, or the facilities for deep burial, then the arborist is forced to take the contaminated debris away, risking spread of disease to other customers and his/her reputation as a 'reputable' arborist. There is as much if not more risk of disease spread by forcing a large number of small-scale arborists, mostly doing domestic work, to deal with this particular disease without proper intervention or at least guidance from the centre.

After all Lawson's cypress is the most widely planted conifer in the UK landscape, amenity and garden sectors and P. lateralis a highly infective pathogen. This is another example of UK plant health authorities not understanding the needs of the arb and amenity sectors even if they are concerned, which many the industry simply do not believe.

Dr Terry Mabbett





Membership News

The latest news from BIGGA

Following the Greenkeeper International survey, we've revamped the Membership pages – and we want you to get involved.

As before, this section will highlight the many benefits BIGGA membership gives you, but will feature you, the members.

We want to hear your stories and experiences – so whether you've

found a new job through BIGGA, got help through our Legal Helpline or Lifestyle Counselling, worked at a high-profile tournament or even won a golf competition we want to hear from you!



WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED

This month we're highlighting another membership benefit available to all full BIGGA members – Personal Accident Insurance Cover.

We've teamed up with Gallagher Heath to offer you cover worldwide, 24 hours a day. The Insurance provides cover for accidental bodily injury which occurs during the time of cover which results in death, loss of limbs or sight, hearing and speech, permanent disability or temporary disability.

There are additional payments for medical expenses, funeral expenses, hospitalisation, bodily injury resulting in a coma, retraining and relatives' expenses.

Another level of cover is temporary total disability.

This is a weekly compensation resulting from bodily injury which temporarily prevents you from carrying out the whole of your occupational duties.

For example, you may have an accident playing football which means you are unable to go to work. This would trigger a payment of £50 a week. Please note there is no amount payable for the first 4 weeks.

BIGGA General Manager Tracey Maddison said: "There seems to be a misconception that members can only claim if they have an accident at work.

"But you can claim for any accident, whether it happened at work, home, playing sport or even on holiday.

"We would still encourage all members to take out individual health insurance as this cover is designed to work alongside any existing cover you may have taken out. But it really is an important member benefit that we want to make all members aware of."

To make a claim, please call Gallagher Heath (formerly Heath Lambert) on 020 7204 8952 quoting the policy number – 0010625173 – and your BIGGA membership number.

For more information, and to download a policy summary PDF of the Full Members Personal Accident Insurance, click on the 'Members Services' tab in the Members Area and visit the Personal Accident Insurance.



Contact Details

Tracey Maddison
traceymaddison@bigga.co.uk

Elaine Jones
elaine@bigga.co.uk

Tel: 01347 833800
(option 1 for Membership)



You can follow BIGGA on Twitter @BIGGALtd

BIGGA Regional Offices

Scotland & Northern Ireland

John Young
Mobile: 07776 242120
johnyoung@bigga.co.uk

Northern & Midland

Sandra Raper
Mobile: 07866 366966
sandra@bigga.co.uk
@sandra48077948

South East

Clive Osgood
Tel: 01737 819343
Mobile: 07841 948410
cliveosgood@yahoo.co.uk
@cliveosgood

South West & Wales

Tracey Harvey
Mobile: 07841 948110
tracey.harvey@bigga.co.uk



John Young Sandra Raper



Clive Osgood Tracey Harvey

OTHER USEFUL NUMBERS

(Full Members only)

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Greenkeepers Legal Assistance
0800 177 7891

Lifestyle Counselling Helpline
0844 770 1036
www.arclegal.co.uk/carefirst



L&D News

The latest from the Learning and Development department at BIGGA

BIGGA REAP REWARDS WITH EVERRIS AND SYNGENTA



A brand new Turf Rewards programme for golf, sports and amenity turf managers in the UK and Ireland launched this month.

Benefitting the turf manager, their team, their turf, and the organisation they work for, the programme offers the opportunity to gain learning opportunities for members of staff to attend Continue to Learn at BTME, and essential agronomic and workplace tools.

Participants will be the first to receive the latest offers and research data, and have the opportunity to attend exclusive events.

Purchases of qualifying Everris and Syngenta products earn points which can be redeemed against a range of rewards.

Register now to attend one of nine Turf Rewards and ParryMeter launch events.

4 BIGGA CPD credits are available for each event. A CPD

code will be issued on the day. The dates and locations are:

Wednesday 30 April – Castle Golf Club, Rathfarnham, Dublin

Thursday 1 May - Adare Manor Hotel & Golf Resort, Co. Limerick, Ireland

Tuesday 6 May - Blackwell Golf Club, Worcestershire

Wednesday 7 May - Bowood Golf Club, Wiltshire

Thursday 8 May – The Wentworth Club, Surrey

Tuesday 13 May - The Mere Golf Resort & Spa, Cheshire

Wednesday 14 May – Sandmoor Golf Club, Leeds

Thursday 15 May - The Carrick, Loch Lomond, Dunbartonshire

Tuesday 20 May – Clondeboyne Golf Club, Newtownards, N.Ireland

Combining education, new techniques and practical demonstrations, the events run 10am-2:30pm. Refreshments and lunch will be provided.

Places are limited. Register at www.turfrewards.com or contact your Everris Technical Area Sales Manager.

LEVER LEAD IN HORTICULTURE TRAINING IN SCOTLAND

Lever Training Ltd, based in Fife, Scotland is leading the way for horticulture training across Scotland having received approval to deliver Modern Apprenticeships (MA's) in Sports turf, Groundsmanship and Horticulture.

Wayne Roberts, Managing Director, comments, "Everyone here at Lever Training is very pleased to be able to offer a range of MA's to the industry. Our background and experience have been developed in the sports turf and landbased sector over many years and we can now use this to help benefit young people and promote careers throughout the sector".

A Modern Apprenticeship is available to any employer or any young trainee aged between 16 and 19 years at the start of the course and will cover both the level 2 and level 3 qualification within their chosen sector along with a range of industry specific 'add on' qualifications.

Jacky Carstairs, Learning Manager at Lever Training adds "All our MA's are delivered locally to the candidate and fully in the workplace, this removes the need to travel long distances to access training, time that can often be better spent in the workplace. This also has benefits to the employer in that the trainee is in a familiar environment, learning 'on the job' with equipment and materials that they are used to". We work with the employer and the learner to manage the learning around the work programme over a full 12 calendar months and deliver the programme with industry recognised and approved learning materials.

To find out more information on Modern Apprenticeships being offered, contact Lever Training at learning@levertraining.com or contact Jacky Carstairs, Learning Manager on 01592 786709/719



Individual Contributors: Steven Tierney MG, Chris Lomas MG, Andrew Campbell MG CGCS, W J Rogers, Sam Langrick, Espen Bergmann, Nick Gray, Steve Dixon, Richard McGlynn, Douglas Duguid, Jaey Goodchild, Michael Beaton, David Barker

The funding and assistance provided by BIGGA Partners and BIGGA Education Supporters underpins the Associations considerable investment in Continuing Professional Development and all our educational activity. They are investing in the future of BIGGA members, we are hugely grateful and urge you to show them your support.

Contact Details

Sami Strutt
L&D Manager
sami@bigga.co.uk

Rachael Duffy
L&D Executive
rachael@bigga.co.uk

Stuart Green
L&D Executive
stuart@bigga.co.uk
[@Stuart_BIGGA](https://twitter.com/Stuart_BIGGA)

01347 833800 (option 3)
www.bigga.org.uk

By Royal appointment



The 143rd Open Championship at Royal Liverpool Golf Club will be Craig Gilholm's second as Links Manager. He told Steve Castle about how he almost left greenkeeping at one point in his career, his 16 years at Muirfield and his thoughts ahead of July's showpiece event, plus his battle with a spot of troublesome moss...



Craig Gilholm has the tidiest office I've ever seen. It's a converted spare bedroom in his bungalow nestled alongside the maintenance facility at Royal Liverpool Golf Club in Hoylake, a seaside town on the Wirral.

In a couple of months' time, the Open Championship and the circus that surrounds it arrive at the course, which was designed by Harry Colt.

He has a tough act to follow. Last July The Honourable Company of Edinburgh Golfers put on a superb show for the worldwide TV audience complete with stunning weather. But it turns out that Craig is extremely familiar with Muirfield as he spent most of his career at the legendary East Lothian links.

Prior to that, as a golf-obsessed youngster he became a member at Harburn Golf Club in West Lothian before he was a teenager. At 16, he dreamed of becoming a professional golfer but being a few shots shy of the standard required, he accepted a greenkeeping apprenticeship at Harburn combined with studying at Oatridge Agricultural College. He was keen to rejoin his mother's side of the family back in East Lothian, so secured a seasonal position at Muirfield in 1989. Coincidentally, his son Josh has just acquired exactly the same position at the same course.

Craig said: "I started at Muirfield under Chris Whittle who's now at Royal Birkdale. I worked my way up through the ranks, also working on the mechanical side and then became Deputy under Colin Irvine.

"After a few years, the day comes

when you think, 'I need to move on, do my own thing'. A couple of Head Greenkeeper jobs came up and I got nowhere – I didn't even get an interview. I did then turn one role down, then I had some more interviews but with no joy. I started to wonder what I was doing wrong, although I think some things in life are partly down to luck and mine seemed to be out at that time.

"I even considered a change of career as I'd done a bit of landscaping. But watching Colin with the presentation party at the 2002 Open Championship convinced me to stick at it. I love The Open, I've watched it every single year since 1985, and the prospect of being in charge of one of the Open venues was incredible."

2005 proved to be a sad year at Royal Liverpool as the hugely respected then Head Greenkeeper Derek Green died. He was such a part of the fabric of the links that his funeral cortege completed a circuit of the course before he was laid to rest.

Then came the job of finding Derek's successor.

He recalled: "I saw the job advertised, and after coming here for the interview I knew it was the sort of role I was prepared to relocate my young family for. I started in June 2005.

"It's amazing how your brain comes back to life when you get your first Course Manager position – you realise that the education you had 20 years ago is still in there somewhere! When you're Deputy you know that ultimately, everything comes down to the head guy and maybe you get set in your ways.

But when you're the head guy, you walk round the course buzzing with all manner of ideas. You ask questions and challenge things."

Craig admitted that he had to keep most of his more ambitious plans in check initially, knowing The Open was just over a year away.

"During my first six weeks here there was no rain whatsoever, and I began to understand some of the challenges, particularly as the irrigation system was too old and needed replacing.

"The main issue that Derek had been tackling was the area from the tee to the start of the fairway. It was worn out. So he came up with the excellent strategy of putting paths in to reduce the wear and tear.

"The thing I didn't like about the paths was their ash composition. They tended to throw up dust and this was exacerbated in 2006 because it was so dry.

"So I decided to take things in a different direction, probably because of the time I spent at Muirfield where all paths are grass. I wanted a more natural look with meadowgrass, ryegrass and fescue paths, properly irrigated, with traffic flowing round.

"I knew I would have egg on my face if it didn't work. But it has worked and aesthetically it's fantastic. Of course, we wouldn't be where we are now with the paths if it hadn't been for the hard work Derek and the team had put in before I arrived.

"I was really proud to see how fabulous the course looked on TV when we held the British Women's Open in 2012. It was very wet that summer as everyone knows, but



PROFILE

Name: Craig Gilholm
Role: Links Manager
Born: Aberlady, East Lothian, 23 May 1972
Handicap: 6
Favourite Sports
Team: Glasgow Rangers



Craig (left) with Deputy Paul Gardner



the condition was still spot on. I knew that if I could match that condition for The Open I would be made up, and that remains my aim.”

Recently, the ten-strong team led by Craig and his Deputy Paul Gardner (who has been with the club since leaving school 28 years ago) have concentrated on the paths, lengthened a few Championship tees slightly, and altered the definition and size of some of the bunkers.

At last year’s Championships, Craig discussed expectations for the 2014 Open with agronomist Stuart Ormondroyd.

Craig explained: “Some of the readings on the Clegg at Muirfield were 130. I’d been getting 110. I asked him what our target should be. “He said we should be aiming for 115-125, moisture levels of 10-12%, and green speeds of ten and a half.

“Every Friday during summer season we double cut and roll the greens and that gives us a great guide for what the green speed and firmness should be.

“This year we’ve changed to a slightly finer topdressing sand, previously we used 80:20 Fendress. The pure fine sand was deemed more appropriate to achieve the firmness required for the Championship. We’ve applied five dressings so far this year.

“Basically, my attitude here is

that Rome wasn’t built in a day. I want to turn the greens from a bent meadowgrass to a fescue bent for a more traditional surface, but that’s not going to happen overnight. Yorkshire Fog and moss are asking for a stake in the low traffic areas of the greens but we’re fighting hard against them, they won’t give up!”

This leads to an animated discussion about the current bane of Craig’s life - silver moss, which despite the team’s best efforts has caused issues as discussed.

“It could be there because of our low nitrogen input, because we’re quite sandy, because the greens are large...in the summer you can’t see the moss on the greens, but I know it’s there because there’s a very slight difference in the softness in different areas of the green.

“There’s no thatch, just moss. It drives you mad! I use the same levels of Nitrogen as Colin at Muirfield but while they’re on top of it I’ve not quite cracked it yet. I’ve thrown everything at it. I’ve scarified, verticut, I topdress, hollow core, put Mogeton on it – everything I’ve learnt in my training on a links course to control moss. But greenkeeping’s constantly a learning process.”

Craig ensures he always walks the course at least once a week to get a feel for how it’s progressing and spot any potential issues.

He added: “I walk down the middle, the way I would like to play

it – although in reality I’m lucky to play four holes like that! I put myself in the shoes of a visiting golfer or member so I’ve constantly got a feel for how the course is progressing.

“Inevitably, a management role comes with some paperwork but I try and keep that to a minimum. I like working and being on the course, watching the guys at work and keeping them on their toes, I’m very much a working greenkeeper.

“Five years ago I said that by the time the 2014 Open came around, I would almost have my vision in place and we are nearly there. A couple of wet summers followed by a couple of dry summers can scupper your plans, as anybody knows, but I’m reasonably happy. I don’t think any greenkeeper is ever 100% happy!”

What advice would he give an aspiring young greenkeeper?

“Respect your boss, and all the guys you work with – be a team player. There are too many people in all walks of life who don’t work hard enough. When I take someone on here, I’m not looking for a superstar. I’m looking for a decent, respectful greenkeeper who wants to learn.”

With that, after a hugely enjoyable and engrossing chat, Craig heads back on to the links. Here’s to a successful tournament, and a well-deserved ovation for Craig and his team during the presentations on 20 July.

As well as the BIGGA Open Support Team, who are excitedly preparing to head to Hoylake, around 30 other greenkeepers from across the UK and the world will assist Craig and his team. They are sourced from local courses, the other Open venues, several from Canada and Sweden as well as four R&A scholars.



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How to write a report

Michael Astrop, Principal at 'Coach the Mind', presented a workshop at BTME 2014 on Preparing and Writing Effective Reports, which is becoming increasingly important for turf managers. Here Michael tells the story of a fictional Head Greenkeeper 'Eric' and how he can write a comprehensive, persuasive and accurate report

Eric, Head Greenkeeper at Dagmire Court Golf Club, walked towards the clubhouse with a furrowed brow and slumped shoulders. He had been at the club since he left school at 15 and he completed his City and Guilds in greenkeeping at the local agricultural college.

Today he looked as though he had the troubles of the world on his shoulders.

As he approached the clubhouse, one of the younger members came

out and said, "What's up Eric?"

He replied: "The new club manager needs everything in writing, but writing is not really my forte.

"The last four holes need refurbishment, so the manager wants me to write a feasibility report to present to the next committee meeting. In the past I would go to the meeting and give a verbal rundown of what we wanted to do, with some broad costings, and the committee trusted me to get it done.

"I've never let them down and

never gone over agreed budgets but now it's all reports and proposals, I really just don't know where to start".

The member replied: "I deliver seminars on this subject Eric, so I can guide you through the process. Why don't we go into your office and I'll give you some pointers?"

The Systematic Approach to Preparation

Follow these key steps in the right order to ensure a professional report is produced: