

## Out, darn hosta spots!

*What causes spots on hosta? These spots are whitish gray with brown borders. As the problem increases, it destroys the leaves and the plants look ugly.*

— NORTH CAROLINA

The problem appears to be related to a fungal leaf spot disease caused by *Colletotricum* spp. This fungus produces large white or grayish spots with brown borders. As the disease progresses, the leaves and petioles can be disfigured.

An application of a copper-containing product such as Bordeaux mixture should help. Repeat the application as needed.

Another possible culprit is foliar nematodes. These tiny microscopic worm-like pests can cause extensive damage to foliage. Contact your local county extension agent or send a sample to our laboratory for diagnosis and management recommendations.

## London plane pain

*Some of the London planetrees in our area have severe lacebug problems each year. Not only do these plants look bad, but they drip a black substance on the cars parked beneath them. How can we manage these lacebugs without spraying? Because of drift, we don't want to spray these trees.*

—MICHIGAN

Lacebugs can become a serious, ugly pest on a number of ornamental plants. The infested leaves will show a bronze color with stippling. They can infest relatively healthy trees. These

sucking insects can weaken the plant, as well, and their black excrement can cause aesthetic problems. The damage is most severe during the summer.

Injecting with products such as Inject-A-Cide®, Abacide® or Imicide® from Mauget Co. will help manage the lacebug problem. Studies on London planetrees in Europe have shown effective control for two years with only one treatment of Imicide. Abacide and Inject-A-Cide B® also reportedly work well but do not last as long as Imicide.

Trunk injecting using these tools can be effective, if it is done correctly. Treat the trees in spring for best results.

Extensive feeding by lacebugs can weaken the plants. Therefore, consider providing proper mulching, watering and fertilizing, as needed, to help improve plant health.

## St. Louis jumping beans?

*Many white oaks in and around St. Louis are dropping leaves prematurely. The leaves show small pinhead-size, yellow-brown, gall-like structures on the lower side and brown spots on the upper side. What are they? What can be done to protect the trees?*

—MISSOURI

Your comments suggest a problem known as jumping oak gall. It is caused by a tiny gall wasp. A severe infestation can cause defoliation. The affected leaves will have tiny pinhead-size galls ranging from yellow-

brown spheres on the underside of leaves and many small brown spots on the upper and lower surfaces.

The tiny galls contain a single wasp larva, which eventually drops from the leaves. Larval activity causes the fallen gall to "jump" or bounce around, similar to jumping beans. This activity helps the gall to fall deeper into the turfgrass or on leaves lying on the ground. The wasp overwinters inside the gall and emerges as an adult the following spring.

The damage from jumping oak gall is primarily an aesthetic concern. Although the damage looks severe, generally trees will survive. Insecticide management is difficult and not practical because the pest is hidden.

## These sprouts must go

*How to we manage sprouts growing from the base of tree at ground level?*

—MICHIGAN

These sprouts are often called "root suckers." Depending on the size and stage of development, they can be hand-pruned or mowed off carefully. After removal, the area can be mulched to inhibit or slow-down further growth. However, this may not work well in every situation.

Tree collar devices made out of biodegradable materials, similar to the product made from biodegradable planting containers, can also be useful in managing sprouts. Once installed, they can last for one to two years.

LM



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