



# Heads UP! \*

## Welcome

...to the July 2015 edition of:

### ii Heads UP!

a publication of the Diagnostic Lab of the King County Master Gardeners. The Diagnostic Lab operates year-round at CUH with an increased presence during the summer growing season.

In 2014, we processed 97 samples in the month of July. That was 23% of the total number of samples for the entire year. It was a busy month!

In comparison, in July 2013, we only processed 19% of the total number of submissions for that year.

Of all the samples we processed in the month of July in the past three years:

- 36% were fungal
- 31% were cultural
- 16% were insect-related

Number One Problem Plant  
for July is:

## Prunus (spp.)

including cherry, plum, peach, apricot and laurel.



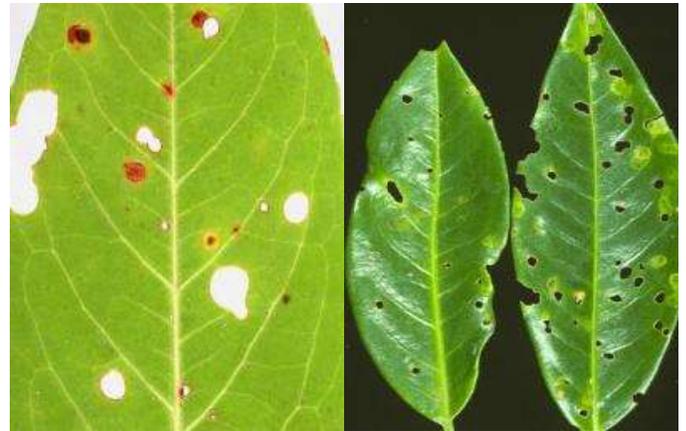
## Dog Vomit or Scrambled Eggs?

If you said it looks like dog vomit, you're right. If you said it resembles a veggie and egg concoction, you're also right. We don't want to gross you out, we just want to share information about plant pathogens that might appear at your clinic. Don't blame Rover or a chef for the gelatin-like mass you see. Recognize it as [fuligo septica](#), aka "Dog Vomit Fungus" and/or "Scrambled Egg Fungus." It's really a slime mold, a blob, found on bark mulch and turf (with decaying leaves and other organic matter) after heavy rains or watering. Avoid touching or breathing it. Recommend that your client dispose of it and NOT in the garden waste or in a compost pile. It should disappear on its own in a week or so but in the meantime, all we'll say is..."ewwwwww!"

# That "Cultural" Tomato

Many of the problems associated with growing tomatoes in Western Washington can be attributed to cultural (abiotic) factors. Here are three common ones:

<a href="#">Sunscald</a>	<a href="#">Blossom-end Rot</a>	<a href="#">Catface</a>
Sun is necessary and good for tomatoes, but too much is damaging	Got milk? The soil in which tomatoes are grown needs calcium	Misshapen and scarred tomatoes don't equate to good taste. Apologies to Hello Kitty



## July Prunus Problems

Some common problems you might see this July in cherry and other Prunus genus members are:

- [brown rot blossom blight and fruit rot](#) (fungal)
- [shothole](#) (fungal and bacterial)
- [shothole](#) (cultural)
- [leaf spot](#) (fungal)
- [aphid](#) (insect)



Pictures...

- (upper) brown rot on cherry
- (middle left) bacterial shothole
- (middle right) physiological shothole
- (lower left) cherry leaf spot
- (lower right) aphid damage to cherry tree

## **!! ANTHRACNOSE !! WARNING for DOGWOODS ☐**

Many of the dogwoods (*Cornus* spp.) we saw in the clinic during July for the past three years presented with the same, devastating fungal diagnosis of [Anthracnose](#). The Latin name for this fungus is *Discula destructiva*, and should indicate its seriousness. While there are a few controls, clients will most likely need help from a professionally applied spray for larger trees. The ultimate recommendation, of course, is to plant a [disease-resistant kousa dogwood](#).

## **Apple (*Malus* spp.) Scab**

We find many instances of the fungal disease [scab](#) on apples, crabapples, quince and hawthorn (*Malus* spp.) in July.

Moisture from overhead watering encourages scab. If a client irrigates only at the base of the tree, the likelihood of scab is reduced.



## **Pear Rusts**

If a client brings in pear leaves with orange pustules on them, it is very likely the pear has rust. There are two primary rusts affecting pears in this area: [Pacific Coast Pear Rust](#)



and [Pear Trellis Rust](#)



Most rusts require an alternate host to complete their life cycle. Incense cedar is the alternate host for the Pacific Coast Pear Rust, and Pear Trellis Rust makes use of juniper spp. as its alternate host. The only complete control is to remove any nearby alternate host. Some *Pyrus* varieties are resistant to rust, so if a pear tree is a must encourage your client to check them out!

## Maple (Acer, spp.) Issues for July

Probably because there are so many maples around King County, we have seen lots of maple problems. Cultural issues stemming from harsh winters and hot, dry summers manifest themselves.

Be aware of the following maple problems:

- [Powdery mildew](#) You should have no problem seeing and identifying this fungus.
- [Anthracnose](#) Look at the veins for discoloring and for black spots.
- [Verticillium Wilt](#) is a tragic way for a maple to die. Leaves on one side of the tree or an individual branch suddenly wilt and die, and may hang on the branch. Leaves are often yellowish and smaller than normal.
- [Mites](#) Even though they have a great name, damage by Bladder gall mites is mostly cosmetic. Removing affected leaves can help reduce the infestation.
- [Leaf scorch](#) Even though we have a Mediterranean climate, maples showing leaf scorch reflect wrong plant in the wrong place principles - too much sun, and not enough water.

## Odds and Ends

Raspberries will show damage from [botrytis](#), [spotted-wing drosophila](#) and [brown marmorated stink bugs](#). If you smell skunk (or cilantro), think BMSB!

Depending on the weather, certain rhodies and azaleas are going to show signs of [powdery mildew](#) and [sun scald](#) or [leaf scorch](#). [Lace bugs](#) are nearly always present on susceptible plants.

Conifers can show signs of drought. If the pattern of tree decline is top down, it's probably a water problem. If it's from the bottom up, it's probably a root problem. Stressed trees also attract insect predators like the [balsam woolly adelgid](#) on true firs. Look for cottony masses and swollen knobs at branch nodes and tips.

### \* ¡¡ Heads UP!

We began publishing this newsletter as an "early warning" communication for MGs in the field so you could do your jobs better...hence the name.

We've been playing with the name and logo, using dos Spanish exclamation points at the head of the name to indicate "heads" (dots) are up. We've also capitalized "UP" thinking it could provide a subtext like "understanding plants" or "uncovering problems." What are your thoughts? Let us know:

King County Master Gardener  
Diagnostic Lab  
Diagnostic.clinic@WSU.edu  
(206) 221-2537