

THE PURDUE LANDSCAPE REPORT

Leaf Curl and Leaf Blister Brought By Wet Weather

By: John Bonkowski, jbonkows@purdue.edu

The past two months have been relatively wet and cool to warm. This prolonged period of overcast conditions, high humidity, and light to moderate rainfall is perfect for some of our foliar disease issues. "April flowers bring May Leaf spots" doesn't have the right ring to it, but we are seeing quite a bit of leaf curl and leaf blister. These are two disease issues caused by *Taphrina spp.* fungi. Like the common names of their diseases, the symptoms caused by a *Taphrina* infection include leaf deformation.



Figure 1: Peach trees showing symptoms of peach leaf curl caused by *Taphrina*

In the case of Peach, the leaves turn light yellow, bright pink, or red where tissue puckers and twists leading to curled leaves. In oak, leaves develop localized blisters that are light green early in the season and are easy to miss since the color is not very different from healthy tissue. However, the blisters will turn brown later in the season which makes them more noticeable. Maples also get a disease caused by *Taphrina*, but it does not cause as much distortion as it does on oak or peach. Severe maple leaf blister can lead to leaves becoming slightly contorted, but the primary symptom is brown necrotic lesions.



Figure 2: Oak leaf blister symptoms ranging from light green early infections, changing to yellow and then becoming necrotic as the season progresses.

With cool wet weather over an extended period of time, we have been seeing more foliar disease issues than in the last few years. Since disease problems can take time to develop, *Taphrina* is likely just the harbinger for some other disease issues we may see in early summer if moderate conditions continue. If the weather dries out as it heats up, it will halt many of these foliar problems in their tracks.



Figure 3: Symptoms of leaf blister on maple trees.

It is the policy of the Purdue University that all persons have equal opportunity and access to its educational programs, services, activities, and facilities without regard to race, religion, color, sex, age, national origin or ancestry, marital status, parental status, sexual orientation, disability or status as a veteran. Purdue is an Affirmative Action Institution. This material may be available in alternative formats. 1-888-EXT-INFO Disclaimer: Reference to products in this publication is not intended to be an endorsement to the exclusion of others which may have similar uses. Any person using products listed in this publication assumes full responsibility for their use in accordance with current directions of the manufacturer.