

TREE DOCTOR TIPS

Cankers

DESCRIPTION:

Cankers are caused by various species of fungi that infect wounded or stressed trees. The canker itself is the dead area on the bark that can be found on the trunk or branches. There are multiple types of canker disease, but common species of the disease include:

- Cytospora Canker of Spruce
- Pitch Canker of Pine
- Seiridium Canker
- Hypoxylon Canker of Oak
- Botryosphaeria Canker
- Phytophthora Bleeding Canker

HOSTS:

Trees of various species, such as oaks, pines, firs, willows and many more, are at risk for cankers. Any trees suffering from drought, injury and other stressors are more susceptible to fungal diseases.

BIOLOGY AND SYMPTOMS:

Symptoms vary depending on the type of pathogen and plant infected. The most obvious symptom on any tree is the appearance of lesions on the bark and dead leaf buds. These lesions sink into the bark, creating the cankers and eventually causing dieback. Trees can lose branches, sections of the crown or the entire tree could even be lost.

MANAGEMENT:

Once cankers appear, it is difficult to manage them. The best management practice is prevention. By keeping your trees stress free and minimizing wounds to the trunk, you can help keep them free of fungal diseases. Some tips to keeping your trees stress free include:

- Properly mulching
- Watering regularly, especially during drought periods
- Fertilizing regularly with a slow-release fertilizer
- Pruning dead or dying branches



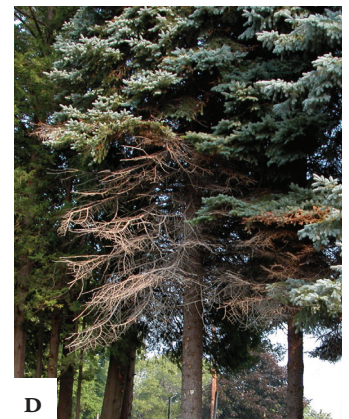
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FIGURE A. HYPOXYLON CANKER OF OAK (Photo credit: JRonald F. Billings, Texas A&M Forest Service, Bugwood.org)

FIGURE B. BOTRYOSPHAERIA CANKER, DISCOLORATION

FIGURE C. SEIRIDIUM CANKER

FIGURE D. CYTOSPORA CANKER OF SPRUCE (Photo credit: Penn State Department of Plant Pathology & Environmental Microbiology Archives, Penn State University, Bugwood.org)

*The scientists at **The Davey Institute** laboratory and research facility support our arborists and technicians in diagnosing and prescribing based on the latest arboricultural science. For specific treatment and application details, your arborist may consult *The Davey Institute's Plant Health Care Book*.*