

# Botryosphaeria Canker

## TREE DOCTOR TIPS

### Botryosphaeria Canker (*Botryosphaeriales*)

#### DESCRIPTION:

Botryosphaeria canker is a fungal disease that infects many trees and woody shrubs, especially if they are already stressed or weakened. It causes cankers and dieback.

#### HOSTS:

Commonly affected plants include apples, crabapples, cherries, honey locusts, pines, dogwoods, maples, oaks, elms, hollies, azaleas, hemlocks and rhododendrons. The many genera and species in the *Botryosphaeriales* order can affect a wide variety of trees and shrubs.

#### BIOLOGY AND SYMPTOMS:

The fungus is dormant in the winter. Spores germinate in the spring and are spread by wind, contaminated pruning tools or feeding insects and enter natural openings in bark, pruning cuts or wounds. The disease blocks the movement of water and nutrients. Dead bark falls off cankered areas and foliage wilts as infected branches die. Under the bark, once-healthy wood turns black or brown. This area is the canker. Sometimes, depending on the host, cankers will even weep.

#### MANAGEMENT:

Botryosphaeria canker cannot be cured, but it can be managed.

- Keep plants healthy to help prevent this disease.
- Avoid injuring shrubs and trees with mowers or other lawn and garden equipment.

- Prune late in dormancy, before buds break and spores become active. Prune out dead wood. Disinfect pruning tools and destroy infected wood.
- Plant Botryosphaeria fungi-resistant cultivars if your area is prone to drought or where this disease is a problem.
- Use good cultural practices. Do not apply excessive mulch or plant trees and shrubs deeper in the soil than they grew in their nursery pots. Water properly, especially during drought conditions.
- If calluses develop around cankered areas, avoid cutting into them, which can start fungal activity.

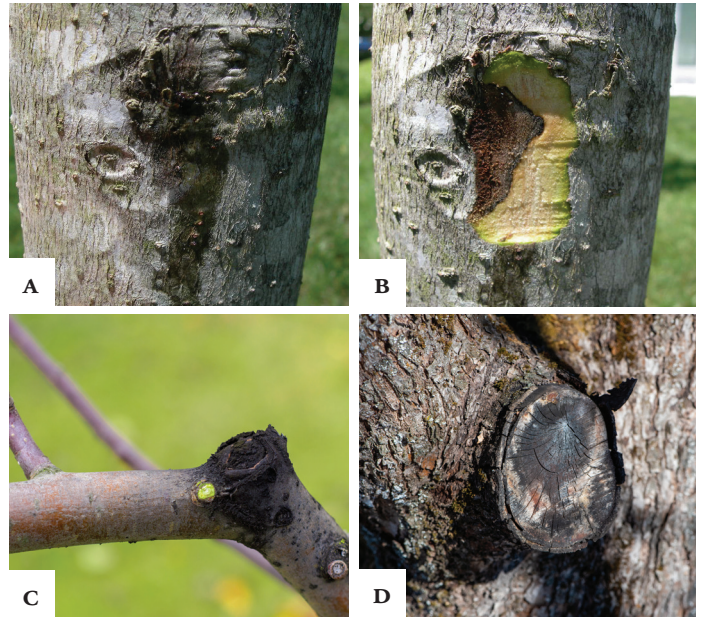


FIGURE A. OOZING GUM, BOTRYOSPHAERIA CANKER

FIGURE B. DISCOLORATION UNDER BARK, BOTRYOSPHAERIA CANKER

FIGURES C. & D. INFECTED APPLE TREES WITH WOOD UNDER THE BARK TURNING BROWN AND BLACK

*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*.*

