

Sycamore Trees Suffer From Fungus

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — Maryland Department of Agriculture field personnel report that sycamore trees across Maryland, and much of the Mid-Atlantic, are once again showing symptoms of infection by the sycamore anthracnose fungus.

This disease, caused by the fungus *Apiognomonia veneta*, has caused widespread defoliation of

sycamores this spring.

The cool, moist conditions the region experienced early this spring favor the development of the fungus. Young leaves, as they emerge from buds, become infected. These infected leaves soon turn brown, shrivel, and die. The fungus also can kill new shoots and cause cankers on twigs and small branches.

By late spring, as the weather becomes warmer and dryer, the fungus growth slows, and healthy leaves and shoots develop. Although sycamores look as if they are dying, most trees will survive.

Chemical control of sycamore anthracnose usually is not necessary and, by this time of year, is not recommended. Any spray program to control the disease should

be done in early spring at bud break, and continue during the cool, wet spring conditions. This year, heavy nitrogen fertilization should be avoided since this produces lush growth that is susceptible to fungal infection.

Other hardwood trees, especially oaks, also have been affected this spring by anthracnose diseases, which are caused by differ-

ent species of fungi on other kinds of trees. As with sycamores, most trees are able to survive the infection and, by mid-summer, with warmer dryer conditions, most will once again appear healthy.

For more information, please contact Dr. Robert Rabaglia, Maryland Department of Agriculture, (410) 841-5922.

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