Branching Out

An Integrated Pest Management Newsletter for Trees and Shrubs

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Contents...

Thank You to Our Scouts and Diagnosticians

Amy Albam, Carol Bradford, Dawn Dailey O'Brien, Don Gabel, Sandra Jensen, Hillary Jufer, Karen Klingenberger, Elizabeth Lamb, Jen Lerner, Jessica O'Callahan, Zaidee Powers, Alice Raimondo, Mina Vescera, Mike Voss, Sandra Vultaggio

Scouting Report Notations:

(#) Numbers in regular type note plate(s) in *Insects that Feed on Trees and Shrubs* (2nd edition) by W.T. Johnson and H.H. Lyon.

(#) Numbers in italics note plate(s) in *Diseases of Trees and Shrubs* (2nd edition) by W.A. Sinclair, H.H. Lyon, and W.T. Johnson.

Scouting Report

Conifers

Arborvitae Leafminer (14)—moth activity reported in Suffolk Co. One or 2 applications of spinosad around peak moth activity provides good control.

Bagworm (80, 81)—larvae active on junipers in Rockland Co.

Cooley Spruce Gall Adelgid (49)—cottony egg masses on Douglas-fir needles in Ontario Co.

Cooley Spruce Gall Adgelid (Elizabeth Lamb)

Distorted, Matted Tips— on landscape Colorado blue spruce with stunted foliage on upper 90% of tree. Samples tested negative for phytoplasma so remains a mystery!

Distorted tips (Stephen Raimondo)

Juniper/ Minute Cypress Scale (46)—very similar species, adults on juniper in Tompkins Co. Juniper scale eggs in Westchester Co.

Juniper or minute cypress scale (Michael Lawless)

Larch Casebearer (11)—adults emerging in Westchester Co.

Pestalotiopsis Blight (*94*)—short areas of brown dieback on arborvitae in Suffolk Co. due to Pestalotiopsis. See *Under the Scope* for sporulation.

Pestalotiopsis blight (Margery Daughtrey)

Pine Needle Scale (47)—settled crawlers on pines in Rockland Co.

Spruce Budworm (7)—report from Clinton Co., expecting possible increase this year.

Broad-leaved Trees and Shrubs

Anthracnose (*50*)—on sycamore in Tompkins Co.

Right: sycamore anthracnose; below: aphids on U. parvifolia *(Michael Lawless)*

Aphids—unknown species causing leaf galling on *Ulmus parvifolia* in Tompkins Co., resembles *Aphidounguis mali*, not previously reported from the region, which alternates with roots of *Malus*.

Ash Rust (*134*)—in Suffolk Co. near coast where alternate host *Spartina* (cordgrass) grows.

Cornell University Cooperative Extension

Ash rust

Azalea Bark Scale (160)—eggs in Westchester Co.

Azalea Lacebug (204)—low numbers of *Stephanitis pyrioides* on azalea in Rockland Co.

Bead Gall Mites—on tupelo leaves caused by eriophyid mite *Aceria nyssae* in Suffolk Co.

Bead gall mites (Margery Daughtrey)

Bean Aphid—on *Euonymus europaeus* distorting foliage in Monroe Co., soon leaving for many summer hosts.

Bean aphids (Carol Bradford)

Black Knot (*75*)—on smooth stem of *Prunus mume* in Suffolk Co.; many other local complaints this spring of this disease on purple leaf plum (*P. cerasifera*).

Black Oak Twiggall Wasp (213 E,F)—on shingle oak in Suffolk Co. ID not confirmed but symptoms identical. This is the first case I've seen on host other than *Q. velutina*. Note photo on plate is misidentified as *Callirytis crypta* – actually now *Zapatella davisae*.

Blackheaded Ash Sawfly (59F)—on green ash in Suffolk Co.

Blackheaded ash sawflies (Dan Gilrein)

Boxelder Leaf Spot—possible fungal leaf spot or plant bug feeding damage in Rockland Co.

Boxelder leaf spot (Amy Albam)

Boxwood Psyllid (137)—leaf galling and adults on 'Suffruticosa' in Suffolk Co.

Cottony Maple Scale (163)—numerous complaints about egg masses in Suffolk Co. on kousa dogwood, viburnum, maples, mulberry. Look for crawlers now; plan treatments after egg hatch.

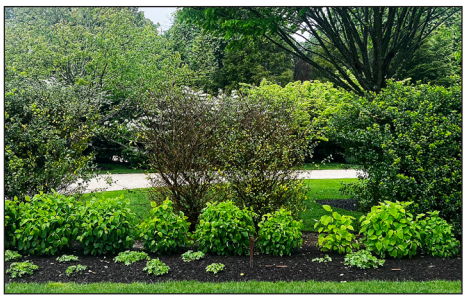
Elm Zigzag Sawfly—report from Columbia Co. Current map: https://tinyurl.com/EZZSMay2025

Above: elm zigzag sawfly damage (Taylor Boria); left: elm zigzag sawfly larva (Tawny Simisky)

Emerald Ash Borer—adults on green ash in Suffolk Co.

Fall Cankerworm (63)—several reports of high numbers and defoliation around Suffolk Co. Caterpillars should be pupating now

***Ilex* Root Rot**—section of *Ilex* hedge has died out repeatedly in Suffolk Co.; suspect a former roadway beneath interfering with drainage. Lab cultures showed *Cylindrocarpon* and *Fusarium* spp., root-rotting fungi that thrive in wet soil conditions.



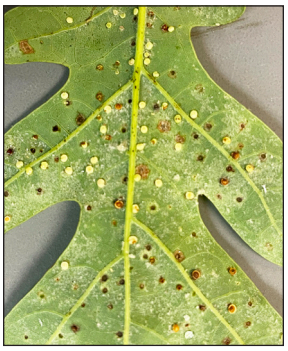
Ilex *root rot (Bryan Nunan)*

Imported Willow Leaf Beetle (106)—larvae and adults on *Salix* spp. in Suffolk Co. Also in Westchester Co.

Imported willow leaf beetle adult, larvae, and damage (Hillary Jufer)

Japanese Maple Scale—on crabapple in Suffolk Co.

"Jumping Oak Galls" (212 C, D similar)—in Suffolk Co. *Neuroterus tantulus* makes tiny saucer-like galls under white oak leaves. Similar species, *N. saltarius,* on bur & swamp white oaks.



"Jumping oak galls" (Dan Gilrein)

***Kretzschmaria deusta* (*206*)**—"brittle cinder" on sugar maple in Tompkins Co., deemed a hazard and cut down. Heart rot visible in cross-section photo.

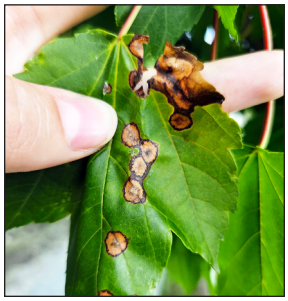
Brittle cinder showing heart rot (Michael Lawless)

Lilac Leafminer (90)—on privet in Rockland Co.

Magnolia Scale (169H-J)—nymphs on twigs of saucer magnolia in Tompkins Co. Crush nymphs or (later) adults with a stick, treat crawlers in early fall.

Magnolia scale (Michael Lawless)

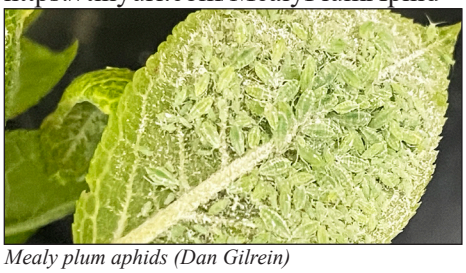
Maple Eyespot Galls (223)—"ocellate gall midge" (*Acericecis ocellaris*)



Maple eyespot galls (Kathleen Strahan)

makes distinctive.regular-sized galls; midge larvae develop beneath. Old galls in photo.

Mealy Plum Aphid—high numbers of *Hyalopteris pruni* under terminal leaves on beach plum in Suffolk Co., some with numerous lady beetle predators. This aphid summers on *Phragmites*, see https://tinyurl.com/MealyPlumAphid



Mealy plum aphids (Dan Gilrein)

Microstroma Leaf Spot (125)—pale irregular spots on the top of English walnut leaves mirrored by white patches beneath in Suffolk Co. See *Under the Scope* for closeup.

Microstroma leaf spot (Margery Daughtrey)

Oak Lecanium Scale (174)—likely on *Quercus margarettae* and other *Quercus* in Suffolk Co.

Oak lecanium scale (Michael Voss)

Periodical Cicada (236)— Brood XIV spotty populations in Suffolk Co.

Periodical cicadas(Dan Gilrein)

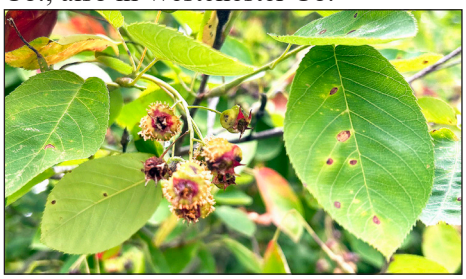
Pinkster Gall (124)—several reports of galling by *Exobasidium* sp. on azalea in Suffolk Co. Remove galls before they turn white with spores to disrupt the life cycle of the fungus.

Pinkster gall (Evan Dackow)

Potato Leafhopper (199)—adults and nymphs on many plants in Suffolk Co.; hopperburn starting on English walnut.

Powdery Mildew (*3-6*)—on ninebark in Tompkins Co.

Quince Rust (*131*)—sporulation of *Gymnosporangium clavipes* noted on fruit and leaves of *Amelancher* in Suffolk Co.; also in Westchester Co.



Quince rust

Redheaded Ash Borer (131G)—adults emerging from felled lilac trunks in Tompkins Co. Usually a secondary pest, attacking woody plants dying or in poor condition, occasionally newly planted nursery stock.

Redheaded ash sawfly (Shaun Gendrue)

Spittlebug (202)—foam masses on silver linden flower scapes in Suffolk Co. Not sure the species; pecan, alder and lined spittlebugs have been reported from linden.

Spittlebug masses (Dan Gilrein)

Spongy Moth (61,62)—older instars, some dead (likely from Entomophaga) on oaks in Suffolk Co., noticeable defoliation in spots. Reports of some defoliation around lower Hudson Valley.

Tuliptree Scale (173)—high numbers of overwintered nymphs on tuliptree in NYC.

Viburnum Leaf Beetle (104)—larvae and defoliation in Tompkins Co.

Viburnum leaf beetle larva, damage (Elizabeth Lamb)

Virginia Creeper Leaf Spot—not confirmed in a lab, but injury resembles Guignardia leaf spot caused by *Phyllosticta ampelicida* in Onondaga Co. Other hosts: Boston ivy and grape.

Virginia creeper leaf spot (Carol Bradford)

Under the Scope:
Reports from Diagnostic Labs

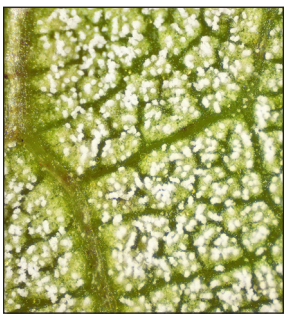
Anthracnose (*54*)—black blighting on maple identified as an anthracnose by examining acervuli and spores in the lab.

Maple anthracnose (Sandra Jensen)

Dothistroma Needle Blight (*13*)—leaf banding symptoms on Serbian spruce with Dothistroma infection, identified by microscopic examination of spores.

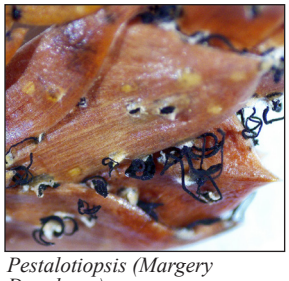
Dothistroma needle blight (Sandra Jensen)

Microstroma Leaf Spot (*125*)—magnifying white patches on the leaf undersurface with a dissecting scope shows conidiophores of the fungus, *Microstroma juglandis*, looking like many miniature snowballs.



Microstroma leaf spot (Margery Daughtrey)

Pestalotiopsis (*94*)—samples still coming in related to drought stress/winter injury. Photo of arborvitae under dissecting



Pestalotiopsis (Margery Daughtrey)

Branching Out
Plant Pathology and Plant-Microbe Biology
Cornell University
334 Plant Science Building
Ithaca, NY 14853

scope shows impressively long black spore tendrils oozing out from acervuli in dead tissue. Symptoms in *Scouting* section.

Sclerotinia Blight—white mycelium grew across the leaf surface on an incubated sample of peony with leaf blight symptoms in Suffolk Co. Fungus also forms distinctive sclerotia.

Sclerotinia blight (Sandra Jensen)

Miscellany

A little boring insect. Look closely at ash leaves and you may see *Agrilus subcinctus*, a 3/16" dark greyish flatheaded borer of recently dead ash twigs often associated with emerald ash borer. Not a pest, some concern the species may also disappear from the landscape along with its host tree. More: https://tinyurl.com/2war4cww

Phenology by County

Monroe: Siebold's magnolia 'Colossus', Japanese horse chestnut, 'Stellar Pink' dogwood

Onondaga: Kousa dogwood, roses, common dogwood, Japanese tree lilac, golden raintree, elderberry 'Black Beauty'

Rockland: catalpa, spiraea 'Anthony Waterer', Japanese tree lilac, privet, hydrangeas: bigleaf, climbing, oakleaf

Suffolk: Japanese tree lilac, kousa dogwood, common elderberry, California privet, climbing hydrangea

Tompkins: forsythia, *Cornus mas*, star magnolia

Westchester: Kousa dogwood, Virginia sweetspire, tree lilac, oakleaf hydrangea, linden, catalpa

Dan Gilrein, Karen Snover-Clift, Margery Daughtrey & Shari Romar, editors

Growing Degree Days

As of June 17, 2025

Station	GDD_{50}
Albany	680
Binghamton	509
Boston, MA	686
Bridgeport, CT	738
Buffalo	586
Central Park	970
Farmingdale	760
Hartford, CT	764
Ithaca	525
New Brunswick,NJ	926
Poughkeepsie.	788
Riverhead	809
Rochester	579
Syracuse	620
Watertown	470
Westchester	778
Worcester, MA	578

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Why worry about new woodies? Understanding invasive plants

Abby Bezrutczyk Marino, Program Manager, Long Island Invasive Species Management Area (LIISMA) (all photos courtesy of the author)

Beautiful but beware

It's a blaze of red in the autumn, thin branches with tiny leaves aflame. Despite being covered in thorns, red barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*) likely won over the hearts of homeowners with its colorful fall display. But today this woody plant can be seen far from yards, flanking woodland streams, harboring ticks, and spreading in the Pine Barrens of Long Island, and it is now prohibited for sale in New York State. Understanding how we can prevent the impacts of the "next" barberry and other woody invasive species is a mission horticulturists, landscapers, and ecologists can take on together.

*Stem of wintergreen barberry (*Berberis julianae*) with yellow flowers compared with stem of red barberry (*Berberis thunbergii*, AKA Japanese barberry).*

Barberry did not get up and invade North America on its own. Rather, very often these woody invasive species had a human mediator that helped the plants cross oceans, facilitated their reproduction, showed off their best features, and distributed them widely in order to make a profit and populate gardens with exciting new plants.

For example, in 1862, avid plant collector Thomas Hogg sent numerous Japanese plants to North America during his time as a U.S. Marshall in Japan, including itadori knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*), miscanthus (*Miscanthus sinensis),* vine honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), Asian bittersweet (*Celastrus orbiculatus*), porcelain berry (*Ampelopsis glandulosa* var. *brevipedunculata*) and kudzu (*Pueraria montana*) – today all known to be invasive species in New York. Samuel Browne Parsons of Flushing, Queens planted and propagated many of these plants for sale at his Kissena Nurseries, facilitating their movement around the region (Del Tredici 2017). We know how the rest of the story goes: introduction, establishment, invasion, panic! – but is it always that simple?

Presumably many plants propagated by Parsons were introduced but never became "invasive" species. Many non-native species, including some cultivated by Parsons, are enjoyed today for their beauty and style – 'PeeGee' hydrangea (*Hydrangea paniculata* var. *grandiflora*) and zelkova (*Zelkova serrata*) being two examples. Non-native horticultural species may also be prized generally for their resistance to diseases, pests, and deer herbivory. All of these features make a great woody plant for the discerning landscaper.

Why be concerned?

Invasive species are defined as being non-native and also posing harm to the economy, environment, and/or human health. While most species introduced to a new location do not become invasive, the issue really lies with the ones that do. A study from 2024 estimated that invasion rates average 17-25% globally, meaning that in some regions up to 25% of established, non-native species eventually become invasive (Pfadenhauer & Bradley 2024).

*Tea viburnum (*Viburnum setigerum*) leaves and immature fruits.*

You might ask yourself, how do species "eventually" become invasive? Scientists have long documented a lag phase with invasive species: the period of time between a species' introduction and spread outside cultivation. One study from New Zealand found over 90% of 142 invasive plant species have a lag phase, and 5% of these species were present for more than 40 years before becoming invasive (Coutts et al. 2017). As our summers and winters get warmer, we expect to also start seeing the emergence of "sleeper species", or those that are not yet invasive because they are limited by current climate

conditions but could become invasive with climate change (Bradley et al. 2018).

So that leaves us with a challenge for assessing new non-native woody plants. Which of the bunch will demonstrate that invasive tendency in the future? If there's a lag phase, how long would we have to wait to see invasiveness? And how would we recognize it if we saw it?

*Melody Cerniglia, LIISMA Early Detection and Rapid Response Manager, examining fuzzy deutzia (*Deutzia scabra*).*

We can learn something by looking back at the non-native plant invasiveness ranking that helped inform the prohibited species list for New York State (see: https://tinyurl.com/332pw6tf). The ranking asks dozens of questions about the plant of interest, including its escape from cultivation, known suitable habitats, impact on ecosystem processes and community structure, dispersal ability, germination requirements, and more (NYIS.info 2025). Invasive species are defined in large part by their negative impacts, so ecologists, landscape professionals, and horticulturists can document the impacts we observe and look to existing research from other areas to make sound decisions.

*The bittersweet-like woody vine of hardy kiwi (*Actinidia arguta*). Note the pink petioles on enlarged image.*

Ones to watch

In light of these questions, some woody species emerging on our radar in the Long Island Invasive Species Management Area include wintergreen barberry (*Berberis julianae*), Japanese tree lilac (*Syringa reticulata*), sapphire berry (*Symplocos paniculata*), fuzzy deutzia (*Deutzia scabra*), hardy kiwi (*Actinidia arguta*), and tea viburnum (*Viburnum setigerum*). Our early detection and rapid response team is on the lookout, following up on reports of these species in natural areas and coordinating their management where applicable.

*Flowers of sapphire berry (*Symplocos paniculata*).*

The overall goal is to move from being reactive to proactive prevention before introducing new invasive species, to protect the environment, economy, and human health. As woody plants play an important role anchoring our landscapes, giving structure to gardens, and defining ecological communities, it seems like a great place to start.

See more information about LIISMA's work at https://liisma.org and about the work of other NY PRISM's at https://nyis.info/partners/

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