



# BRANCHING OUT

An Integrated Pest Management  
NEWSLETTER  
for Trees and Shrubs

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### Thank You to Our Scouts and Diagnosticians

Amy Albam, Carol Bradford, Dawn Dailey O'Brien, Don Gabel, Sandra Jensen, Hillary Jufer, Karen Klingenberg, 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* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition) by W.T. Johnson and H.H. Lyon.

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

## Scouting Report

### Conifers

**Arborvitae Leafminer (14)**—adults in Westchester and Suffolk Cos.

**Bagworm (80, 81)**—tiny larvae on juniper in Rockland Co. Bt, spinosad and several other insecticides are effective against this insect, use now to prevent further defoliation.



Bagworm larvae (Amy Albam)

**Larch Casebearer (11)**—adult moths in Westchester Co.

**Phytophthora Root Rot (176-182)**—possible *Phytophthora* strike on Douglas fir in Tompkins Co. Droopy new growth one week turned reddish yellow the next week.



Phytophthora root rot (Elizabeth Lamb)

**Seiridium Canker (95)**—several cases on arborvitae in Suffolk Co.

**Tip Moth (17,18)**—in Mugo pine in Westchester Co. The single relatively large pupa found in one terminal suggests it may be European pine shoot moth; Nantucket pine tip moth is also common in Mugo pine, but pupae tend to be smaller and often multiples per terminal. The moths are easily reared out to confirm. Brown terminals from Diplodia tip blight won't be hollow inside.

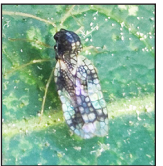


Tip moth damage and larva (inset) (Hillary Jufer)

### Broad-leaved Trees and Shrubs

**Andromeda Lacebug (204)**—adults on *Pieris* in Westchester Co.

Adult andromeda lace bug (Ryan Schmidt)



**Aphid Galls**—possibly the “oriental grass root aphid” on Chinese elm in Rockland Co.

**Azalea Bark Scale (160)**—reddish crawlers in Westchester and Rockland Cos.



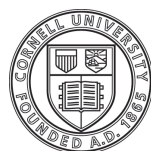
**Barklice**—observed on holly in Westchester Co. These common insects are mostly scavengers feeding on fungi, algae and other materials, and are not plant pests.

Barklouse (Hillary Jufer)

**Bean Aphids**—causing distorted terminal leaves on *Euonymus alatus* in Tompkins Co. Aphids will soon leave for summer hosts.



Bean aphid damage (Elizabeth Lamb)



Cornell University  
Cooperative Extension

**Beech Leaf Disease**—leaf banding noted in Westchester and Tompkins Cos.



Beech leaf disease (Melanie Filiatrault)

**Black Cherry Aphid**—stunted, curled foliage likely due to black cherry aphid (*Myzus cerasi*) in Chautauqua Co. Aphids have migrated to summer hosts, including some plants in the mustard family and others. More info and photos: <https://tinyurl.com/blkcherryaphid>. We have seen much more dramatic curling and reddish discoloration on Kwanzan cherry due to another invasive species, *Tuberocephalus sakurae*.

**Black Spot (39)**—on rose in Rockland Co.

**Brittle Cinder (102)**—new growth of *Kretzschmaria deusta*, which causes a serious basal canker and butt rot, was observed on a linden in Suffolk Co. and a beech tree in Ontario Co.

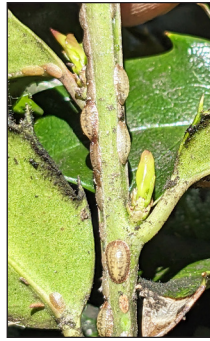


Top: brittle cinder on beech (Brian Eshenaur); above: on linden (Rich Gibney)

**Cottony Camellia (Taxus) Scale (164)**—on *Ilex* producing eggs under leaves in Westchester Co.

Still on stems but soon migrating to leaves in Tompkins Co.

*Cottony camellia (taxus) scale* (Michael Lawless)



**Cottony Maple Leaf Scale (163)**—crawlers active in Westchester Co.

**Crapemyrtle Bark Scale**—on *Lagerstroemia indica* 'Muskogee' in Suffolk Co.



Crapemyrtle bark scale (Michael Voss)

**Dogwood Anthracnose (52)**—in Westchester Co.

**European Fruit Lecanium Scale (174)**—tentative ID on *Tilia americana* 'Continental Appeal' in Suffolk Co., with tending ant feeding on honeydew (see TREE Fund webinar in *Miscellany*).



Probable European fruit lecanium scale and tending ant (Michael Voss)

**European Red Mite (228)**—in Westchester Co.

**Fire Blight (187)**—wilting, shepherd's crook shoot tips turned brown on recent hot days in Suffolk Co.

*Fire blight* (Margery Daughtrey)



in at least 2 sites. Less common on crabapples than apples.

**Fourlined Plant Bug (190)**—leaf spotting apparent on many herbaceous and some woody plants in Westchester and Suffolk Cos.

**Gymnosporangium Rusts (129-133)**—seen in Suffolk and Westchester Cos. on apple and hawthorn, respectively. Spores from juniper infections are now affecting the rosaceous alternate hosts (apple, crabapple, hawthorn, quince, etc.). Heavy spotting now indicates cultivar susceptibility, proximity to junipers, and rainy conditions over a month ago.



*Gymnosporangium* rusts on hawthorn (left, Hillary Jufer) and on apple (right, Chris Kempton)

**Maple Bladdergall Mite (232A)**—sparse eriophyid mite galls on upper leaf surface of 'Autumn Glow' maple in Tompkins Co.



Maple bladdergall mite gall (Elizabeth Lamb)

**Maple Leaf Spot (1-2)**—symptoms in Tompkins Co. on maple 'Autumn Glow' but not on neighboring Norway maple. Identity not yet determined; possibly infection by *Taphrina* sp., *Venturia* leaf spot or anthracnose.



Unidentified leaf spot on maple (Elizabeth Lamb)

**Norway Maple Insects**—numerous unidentified leafhopper nymphs fallen on patio furniture in Tompkins Co.



Unidentified leafhopper nymphs on torch lighting (Michael Lawless)

**Oystershell Scale (177)**—crawlers on lilac in Westchester Co.

**Rhododendron Borer (121)**—adults active in Westchester Co.

**Rose Leafhopper (198)**—in Rockland Co.; slight stippling damage on leaves in Suffolk Co.

**Rose Plume Moth**—small green caterpillars, webbing and chewing damage on terminal growth of rugosa rose in Tompkins Co., tentatively identified by Dr. Jason Dombroskie as *Cnaemidophorus rhododactyla*. Photo of moth and distribution map at <https://tinyurl.com/4ww4juan>



Rose plume moth larvae (Sandra Jensen)

**Scales (163, 174)**—two scales on persimmon in Suffolk Co. likely oak lecanium (close relative of European fruit lecanium) and cottony maple scale.



Possible cottony maple scale (left) and oak lecanium scale (right) (Kimberly Simmen)

**Spotted Lanternfly**—first and second instars in Rockland, Suffolk Cos.

**Viburnum Leaf Beetle (104)**—noticeable damage to viburnums in Westchester Co.

**Whitefly**—adults on Japanese holly in Westchester Co.

**Willow Scab (45)**—leaf spots noted on willow, probably willow scab caused by *Venturia saliciperda*, in Rockland Co.



Willow scab (Amy Albam)

**Wool Sower Gall (214)**—from gall wasp *Callirhytis seminator* on white oak in Suffolk Co. with a predatory pale green assassin bug, a common species, perched on the gall.



Wool sower gall and wasp (Timothy Myers)

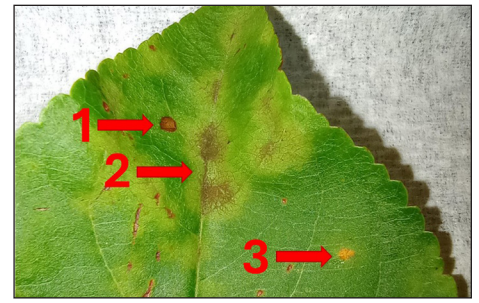
**Woolly Beech Leaf Aphids (140)**—on European beech in Tompkins and Westchester Cos. Biocontrols appear to have taken out many in Westchester; mild symptoms of beech leaf disease and of the blotch leafminer moth *Phyllonorycter maestingella* ("beech midget") seen on the Westchester sample.



Woolly beech leaf aphid residue, leafminer (oval, lower left) & beech leaf disease (blistering) (Hillary Jufer)

## Under the Scope: Reports from Diagnostic Labs

**Crabapple Diseases**—The PDDC won our informal editorial staff contest for how many diseases we could find on one leaf. Even without a microscope, you can see the different fungal infections here: a rust lesion (129-133), a round frog-eye leaf spot (62), and apple scab (43) on the leaf vein.



Frog-eye leaf spot (1), apple scab (2) and rust (3) (Sandra Jensen)

**Stigmina Needlecast**—a microscopic view of the sporulation of *Stigmina lautii* on a Norway spruce needle.



Stigmina needlecast (Hillary Jufer)

**Tobacco Rattle Virus**—seeing lots of virus suspects in the PDDC this spring on herbaceous and woody plants, such as this peony on our Ithaca campus with TRV. But be aware...not all ringspot symptoms are caused by viruses. Due to the pattern of damage, we suspect ringspots on a sweet gum were caused by pesticide droplets.



Tobacco rattle virus on peony (Karen Snaver-Clift)

## Miscellany

**Lacewing**—eggs on European beech in Suffolk Co.  
Lacewing eggs (Timothy Myers)



**Bark Splitting/Peeling (247)**—on cherry in Tompkins Co. Can be due to late winter/spring freeze damage to cambium following unseasonable warm conditions.

Split/peeling bark (Michael Lawless)



**TREE Fund webinars:** *Increasing Biological Control of Soft Scale Insects by Excluding Ants from Trees*. Recording

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

at <https://treefund.org/webinar-archive>. On July 21 at 1pm (EST): *Efficacy of Aphidoletes aphidimyza Predator Releases to Control Aphid Populations on Linden Street Trees*. Register at <https://treefund.org/webinars>.

**Box tree moth in Cape May Co. (NJ).** A June 10 report confirms BTM in Rio Grande Twp.; quarantine in place to restrict movement of boxwoods out of the County. Since discovered in Canada in 2018 and Niagara Co., NY in 2021, BTM has spread to many states, including western NY, MA, WV, VA, MD, OH, MI, PA and DE. Though susceptible to many insecticides including Bt, initial feeding is often within the dense canopy so not easily detected early until damage is extensive. Chewing damage on foliage is a strong indicator to check further for possible infestation. More info & management for NYS: <https://tinyurl.com/NYSIPM-BoxTreeMoth>. and NY's intrastate quarantine: <https://tinyurl.com/5n97yua3>.

### Phenology by County

**Monroe:** beautybush, smokebush, Kentucky coffeetree  
**Onondaga:** privet, Kousa dogwood, linden, climbing hydrangea, bush clematis, elderberry, common dogwood  
**Rockland:** catalpa, deutzia, elderberry, Japanese honeysuckle, Japanese tree lilac, privet, smooth and staghorn sumac  
**Suffolk:** Japanese tree lilac, southern magnolia, catalpa, sweetspire, privet, Kousa dogwood, European linden  
**Tompkins:** mock orange, weigela, peony, sweetshrub, beautyberry, Japanese tree lilac  
**Westchester:** tree lilac, sweetspire, kousa dogwood, snowball viburnum, catalpa

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

### Growing Degree Days

As of June 16, 2026

Station	GDD <sub>50</sub>	Station	GDD <sub>50</sub>
Albany.....	727	Ithaca.....	558
Binghamton.....	611	New Brunswick,NJ.....	1088
Boston, MA.....	768	Poughkeepsie.....	823
Bridgeport, CT.....	774	Riverhead.....	868
Buffalo.....	615	Rochester.....	678
Central Park.....	1079	Syracuse.....	710
Farmingdale.....	815	Watertown.....	463
Hartford, CT.....	808	Westchester.....	827
		Worcester, MA.....	641

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## Prescribed Burns to Improve Woodland Health and Safety

*Rob Cole, Supervising Forester, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (all images courtesy of the author)*

### The history of fire

For many people fire is seen as a destructive force, something to fear, a killer. News outlets show us wildfires in California burning forests and homes, threatening vehicles as residents flee to safety. Wildfire smoke from hundreds, even thousands of miles away in Canada has been drifting south into the US, casting a thick haze and causing acute respiratory illness for millions. It might make you wonder why we are talking about intentionally lighting fires.

Ecosystems around the world evolved with fire as a major driver of their development and maintenance, whether ignited by lightning or by humans. The idea of using fire to shape the landscape of New York has been around for thousands of years. Indigenous Peoples used fire to influence the environment around them for a variety of reasons which resulted millions of acres of open woodlands, savannahs, and grasslands. Almost 500 years of fire suppression have caused those landscapes and the species that depend on them to disappear.

The resulting dense forests are now more susceptible to insects and disease, and less resilient to extreme weather and wildfire. Some forests aren't regenerating due to the lack of fire. Prescribed fire intends to correct some of the issues caused by suppressing natural fires.

In 2025, 1,649 acres of fire-adapted land were burned in New York using prescribed fire. This was done primarily by agencies such as NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC); NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation; Albany Pine Bush; Brookhaven National Lab; and The Nature Conservancy. While this is the most acres burned in a single year in NY, it is a small fraction of what could be burned. DEC alone has identified over 50,000 acres of fire adapted ecosystems on its properties. The remaining acres not managed by agencies are on private land.

### Creating a fire plan

While not a common practice currently, prescribed fire is allowed on private lands under NYS Environmental Conservation Law and the regulations describing burning on private lands are found in 6 NYCRR Part 194. Burning can be done for the purposes of silviculture, wildlife management, wildlife habitat improvement or maintenance, wildfire fuel reduction, insect or disease management, or to control vegetation. Before lighting up a burn, authorization must be received from DEC. The authorization is based on the written burn plan – the prescription; Part 194 focuses heavily on the requirements of the plan.



Burn plans must identify staffing and resources to be used for the burn. Most burns in NY can be controlled with small ATV or UTV (side-by-side) sprayer tanks. The recognizable yellow and green NOMEX often worn by agencies is an excellent choice for PPE but is not required and 100% natural fiber clothing such as wool or cotton can be used instead.

The plan identifies who will be leading the burn and verifies the burner has qualifications and experience appropriate for the complexity of the burn they want to conduct. Most agencies use National Wildfire Coordinating Group (NWCG) standards when training burn bosses, however, this level of training is cost and time prohibitive for most private land practitioners. NWCG also emphasizes firefighting as opposed to fire lighting. Several states have developed prescribed burn manager programs to make training more accessible and appropriate for meeting the goals of private land burners.



Agency staff and volunteers ignite a prescribed fire underneath pitch at the Albany Pine Bush (APB). Annual burning at APB maintains open habitat for dozens of species of mammals, birds, and plants.

Just as a doctor reviews a patient’s symptoms before prescribing medicine, conditions such as fuel types and quantity, topography, and weather must be considered before prescribing a fire for a given location. Part 194 requires burn plans to provide a map, description of the area, and the goals for the burn. When all factors are combined, predictions can be made on flame length and fire behavior. This will inform ignition tactics, personnel and mechanical resources needed, smoke potential, and contingency planning. Burn plans must address all sections required in Part 194 to the satisfaction of DEC prior to burn plan approval.



Reducing fuels to mitigate the risks of wildfire is one of the many benefits of Rx fire. Burning under controlled conditions reduces the risk to homes in the WUI from wildfire embers and smoke.

### **Burn benefits**

With a well-developed, approved plan, landowners can start reaping the benefits of prescribed fire. For some, the benefit may be increased wildlife, such as wild turkey, which thrive after a burn. Fire clears underbrush that can make travel and foraging difficult for young turkey, creates places for nesting, and creates openings that turkey can easily fly through to safety or to roost in the canopy. The increased new plant growth provides an abundant food source for many animals large and small. Several insect species, including showy butterflies such as the Karner Blue and the Frosted Elfin, feed on the fleshy new growth produced after fire.



Immediately after a fire, the landscape can look barren and destroyed. Many plants though, such as the pitch pine and blueberries, thrive in fire and will sprout from the base even if the top appears killed.



There are several species of ground dwelling bees in NY, such as the plasterer bee, that need bare soil to excavate their nests in. Rx fire can be used to remove excess organic material and restore bee habitats. Additionally, several insect species feed on the fleshy new growth produced in post-fire landscapes.

Prescribed fire has a positive effect on pollinator populations and distribution. Many bees nest in the ground and have the most success in bare soils not covered by excessive organic material. On Long island, plasterer bees were observed excavating nests in a forested area that had been burned just a few days prior. These bees can wait in their nests while the fire burns over or leave the area and then come back to re-excavate their nests.

Based on the plasterer bee observation, a study was set up to compare the pollinator populations in the site being maintained with prescribed fire to a site not managed. The results were clear with 93% of the individuals caught in the burned site. The fire managed areas had a higher diversity and abundance of native pollinators, including two highly specialized species, one depending on blueberry and the other on evening primrose.

In addition to the ecological benefits of fire, prescribed can reduce the risk of a catastrophic wildfire by consuming fuels in a controlled manner. This is especially important to communities built into fire dependent ecosystems, otherwise known as the Wild-Urban Interface. Methodically burning woody debris and leaves when wind conditions and humidity are right can ensure that flames and embers aren’t blowing toward and igniting structures.

### **Looking ahead**

In the coming years, DEC and other agencies plan to increase the number of prescribed fire acres. However, agencies only manage a small portion of fire dependent ecosystems. Private landowners can conduct prescribed fires and enjoy the benefits of a healthier, more resilient ecosystem. With agencies and private landowners working together, disappearing landscapes such as pine barrens and grasslands can be restored and ensure healthy communities for future generations.