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EB1278

PLANT DISEASES

WILLOW SCAB

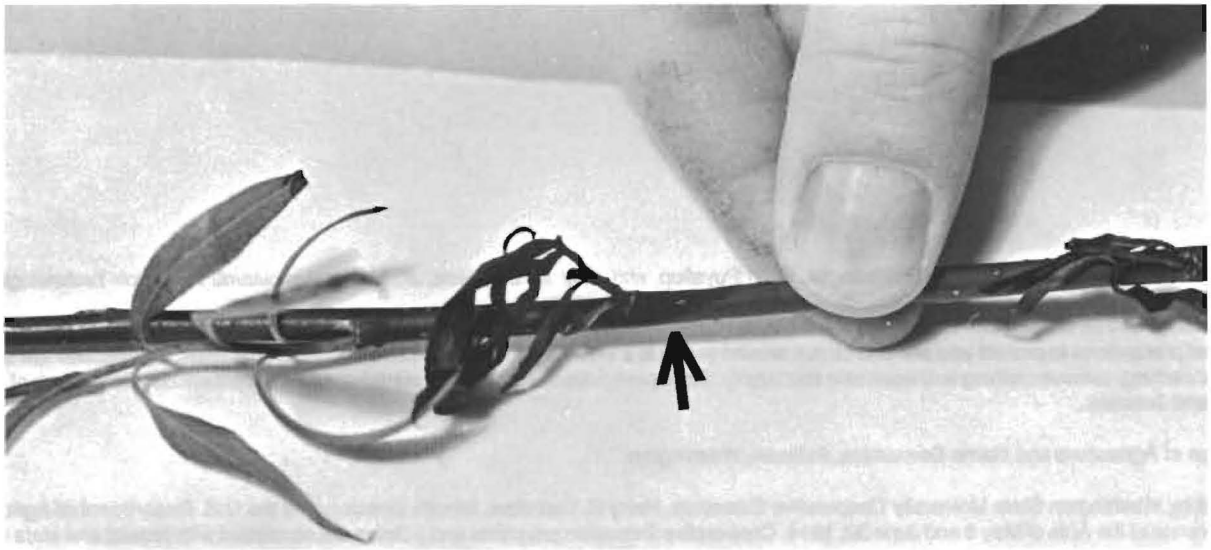
Willow scab caused by two species of the fungus *Venturia*, is a serious disease of many willow species. A very similar disease known as black canker is caused by the fungus *Glomerella*; together they are referred to as willow blight. Prolonged wet weather favors infection and can result in nearly complete leaf drop. Severe defoliation for several consecutive years can result in death of even large trees. The disease is usually most severe in late April and May, but during extended wet weather, infection may also occur in June. The fungus overwinters on old willow leaves and in twig cankers. In early spring, spores form and are spread by rain to leaves as they emerge.

Symptoms

Irregularly shaped, sharply bordered brown spots develop along the midribs and main veins on the lower leaf surfaces. The spots become olive green patches as spores form. Mature leaves may have only a few isolated patches, but on young leaves the spots are especially numerous along the lower midrib and veins. Severely infected leaves turn dark brown or black, dry up, and drop. The fungus grows down the leaf petiole into the twig or young branch, where dark brown to black cankers develop, resulting in twig and branch dieback. Dead twigs and branches are reddish brown to black and usually curved or hooked at the tips.

Cultural control

Rake and destroy fallen leaves and twigs during the growing season and in the fall. If possible and practical, properly prune out and dispose of diseased and dead twigs and branches. Wash cutting tools in soapy water and swab in rubbing alcohol after cutting.



Infected leaves turn dark brown or black and dry up. Dark brown or black cankers develop on twigs (note arrow) often resulting in death of the branch from the cankered area outward.

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
Washington State University

Willow species differ in disease susceptibility. Weeping willow (*Salix babylonica*) is apparently one of the more resistant. Bay-leaved willow (*S. pentandra*), Osier willow (*S. viminalis*), purple willow (*S. purpurea*), *S. alba*r var. trists, and *S. triandra* are reported to have some resistance. The cricketbat willow is immune. Black, goat, heart-leaved, Niobe, and white (especially its golden variety) willows are the most commonly damaged.

Chemical control

Applications of a registered fungicide need to begin at bud break when the new leaves are first visible and continue until the onset of dry weather. Follow the label directions concerning its use and the interval needed between applications.

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