

(revision date:3/22/2021)

Cherry: Black cherry aphid

Use *Integrated Pest Management (IPM)* for successful plant problem management.

Biology

The black cherry aphid is a shiny, black, pear-shaped insect. Sweet cherry is the preferred host. The soft-bodied aphids feed in colonies on the tips of new growth, causing curling and distortion of the shoots and leaves. Injured leaves may turn brown and die back. The aphids overwinter on cherry as eggs, then young aphids feed on buds and leaves in the spring. Winged adults migrate to plants in the mustard family, which are the summer hosts of the aphids. Feeding aphids produce large amounts of honeydew, a sweet, sticky substance which may attract ants or become covered with a dark growth of sooty mold. The sooty mold can reduce fruit quality.

Management Options

Non-Chemical Management

- ~ Control weeds, especially mustard types.
- ~ Encourage natural predators including ladybird beetles, lacewings, syrphid flies, and parasitic wasps. Avoid use of broad-spectrum insecticides which kill beneficial insects.
- ~ Hand-wipe or prune to control small, localized infestations when practical.
- ~ Wash aphids from trees with a strong stream of water prior to leaf curl.
- ~ Control honeydew-feeding ants, which may protect aphid colonies from predators.
- ~ Provide proper nutrition. High levels of nitrogen encourage aphid reproduction. Switch to a slow-release or low-nitrogen fertilizer.

Select non-chemical management options as your first choice!

Chemical Management

IMPORTANT: Visit *Home and Garden Fact Sheets* for more information on using pesticides

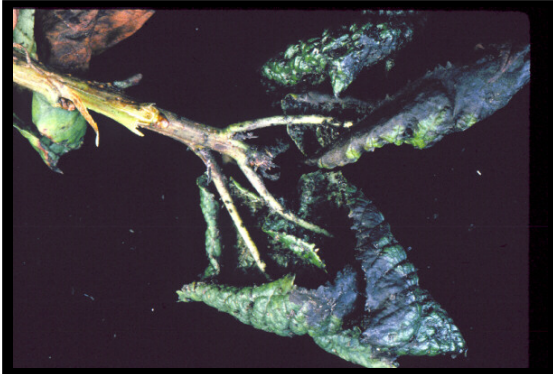
Do not apply after blossoms appear. Soaps may require several applications. Oils such as Ortho Volck Oil Spray can be used during delayed dormant period to control overwintering aphid eggs. Homeowners should not make foliar applications to trees over 10 ft tall. Consult a commercial pesticide applicator for treatment of trees and shrubs over 10 ft. tall.

Listed below are examples of pesticides that are legal in Washington. Always read and follow all label directions.

- ~ R-T-U Year-Round Spray Oil
 - active ingredient: oil/pet distillate
 - EPA reg no: 6218-78
- ~ Safer Brand BioNEEM Multi-Purpose Insecticide & Repellent Conc [Organic]
 - active ingredient: azadirachtin
 - EPA reg no: 70051-6-42697
- ~ Safer Brand Garden Defense Multi-Purpose Spray Conc [Organic]
 - active ingredient: clarified hydrophobic extract of neem oil
 - EPA reg no: 70051-2-42697
- ~ Safer Brand Insect Killing Soap with Seaweed Extract II [Organic]
 - active ingredient: potassium salts of fatty acid
 - EPA reg no: 42697-59
- ~ This list may not include all products registered for this use.

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Images



~ Caption: *Black cherry aphid damage*
~ Photo by: *A.L. Antonelli*



~ Caption: *Black cherry aphids*
~ Photo by: *R.S. Byther*