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Rhododendron: Phytophthora root rot

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

Biology

The symptoms produced by Phytophthora root rot are often confused with those caused by environmental or cultural problems. Above ground, infected plants may show stunting, yellowish-green leaves, branch dieback, wilt, and even plant death. Dead leaves persist on the branches instead of dropping. Underground, the roots rot, progressing from the smallest to the largest. The fungus may also cause rot in the main stem. Phytophthora persists in the soil and can infect new plants. Diseased plant tissues and debris are other sources of infection.

Management Options

Non-Chemical Management

- ~ Select resistant rhododendron species such as Rhododendron davidsonianum 'Serenade', R. delavayi, R. glomerulatum, R. hyperythrum, R. lapponicum, R. occidentale, R. pseudochrysanthum, R. quinquefolium, R. sanctum, R. simsii, R. websterianum. Resistant varieties include 'Caroline', 'Martha Isaacson', 'Pink Trumpet', 'Professor Hugo De Vries', 'Red Head'.
- ~ Choose the right plant for your location. A healthy plant is more resistant to disease.
- ~ Prevent disease by planting only disease-free materials.
- ~ Practice good sanitation to prevent the spread of disease.
- ~ Remove and destroy all infected plants.

Select non-chemical management options as your first choice!

Chemical Management

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

None recommended

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Images



~ Caption: *Phytophthora root rot on rhododendron*
~ Photo by: *R.S. Byther*