

(revision date:7/22/2015)

## ***Viburnum: Ramorum leaf and shoot blight (Sudden oak death)***

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

### ***Biology***

Ramorum leaf blight is caused by *Phytophthora ramorum*, the same organism that causes sudden oak death (SOD). In Washington, most cases have been found in nurseries on rhododendrons and camellias, which are highly susceptible to this disease. Some oak species, kalmia, and Pieris are also considered highly susceptible, along with native plants such as salal and evergreen huckleberry. On viburnum, leaf damage consists of water-soaked, irregular, discolored lesions with diffuse margins. Infected leaves wilt and die. Lesions can progress from the leaf into the branch and cause cankers, while affected shoots die back. Cankers may also develop on the stem near the soil line. If the branch is girdled, the remaining leaves wilt and turn brown; they may drop or remain attached to the stem. Occasionally, bleeding is seen on infected stems. Similar symptoms may be caused by a wide range of problems on viburnum, including sunscald, frost injury, or a variety of fungal infections. Also, *P. ramorum* has a wide and varied host range, so if ONLY viburnum is affected, the problem is likely NOT *P. ramorum*. **IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO CONCLUSIVELY DIAGNOSE THIS PROBLEM BASED ON VISIBLE SYMPTOMS ONLY.** In Washington, Ramorum leaf blight has so far been found only in association with infected nursery plants and water runoff from infected nursery sites. While this disease has the potential to become a serious and economically significant problem, it is not yet considered to be widespread in Washington in either cultivated or native landscapes. *P. ramorum* infection is **NOT LIKELY** in the landscape **UNLESS** the plant (1) is a highly susceptible species **AND** (2) was purchased since 2002 **AND** (3) is showing symptoms associated with *P. ramorum* infection (or is located near another plant that meets all these criteria). Currently, the only way to confirm a SOD diagnosis is with laboratory tests.

### ***Management Options***

#### **Non-Chemical Management**

- ~ If infection with *P. ramorum* is **CONFIRMED** by a laboratory test, remove and destroy the infected plant material where practical.
- ~ Avoid overhead watering.
- ~ Good sanitation is important. Clean up and dispose of fallen diseased leaves and remove blighted and cankered twigs and branches.
- ~ Quarantine new plants for 4-6 weeks before adding them to the landscape. This disease can be spread by plant debris, contaminated soil, and contaminated irrigation water and run-off, so keep quarantined plants isolated from healthy plants in the landscape and watch closely for any symptoms of disease.
- ~ Do not buy any plants that have been lying in standing water or that have disease symptoms including leaf blight or lesions, severe leaf loss, or shoot dieback.
- ~ Purchase plants from reputable nurseries only. Carefully inspect all plants before purchase, especially those considered highly susceptible to *P. ramorum*.

***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

***Viburnum: Ramorum leaf and shoot blight (Sudden oak death)***

***Images***



~ Caption: *P. ramorum* leaf tip necrosis symptom on viburnum  
~ Photo by: M. Elliott



~ Caption: *P. ramorum* shoot blight on viburnum  
~ Photo by: M. Elliott



~ Caption: *P. ramorum* basal canker symptom on viburnum  
~ Photo by: M. Elliott