UMass Extension Landscape Message #2 - 2009

February 6, 2009

Scouting Information by Region

Regional Notes

Cape Cod Region (Barnstable) – General Conditions: January has been a very cold month, with low temperatures going down to -2° F overnight on January 16. Several storms started out as snow but finished as sleet/rain and then re-froze, making travel hazardous. *Hamamelis* ‘Jelena’ is just beginning to bloom, which is about two weeks later than in recent years. **Pests/Problems:** Ice covered limbs have been subject to breakage during periods of high winds. Deer browsing has been reported as heavy in some areas of the Cape.

Southeast Region (Hanson) – General Conditions: The amount of precipitation varied throughout the county in January, with Halifax receiving 16.5 inches of snow and Hingham receiving 19 inches. Reported rainfall amounts also varied from 3.5-4.5 inches of rain. Overall, January was very cold with temperatures of -2° F on Jan. 16 and -3° F on January 17th, being reported in Halifax, MA. January 28th, presented the area with a mixture of snow, sleet and driving rains with wind. Some white pines lost branches in that storm, as did some of the dead oaks around the county. Plant damage was minimal and nothing compared to the ice storm damaged trees observed along the Mass Turnpike in Worcester County. **Pests/Problems:** The cold temperatures may 'knock-back' the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid populations but probably will not effect the Winter Moth. Time will tell. Deer continue to browse. The fruit of cranberry viburnum, the berries of many hollies and Hawthorne, the spent flowers of *Hydrangea paniculata*, and the bark of *Acer griseum*, *Acer triflorum*, *Cornus kousa* and *Heptacodium micoinioides* are providing much needed interest and/or color in the winter landscape.

East Region (Boston) – General Conditions: No report this month.

Metro West (Waltham) – General Conditions: No report this month.

Metro West (Hopkinton) – General Conditions: No report this month.

Central Region (Boylston) – General Conditions: A solid snow/ice cover is now concealing most of the debris that was brought to the ground in December's ice storm. **Pest/Problems:** Deer are active and feeding on fruit trees and ornamentals.

Pioneer Valley Region (Amherst) - General Conditions: Amherst received about 15 inches of snowfall and even a couple inches of rain during the period. Temperatures were variable, with highs a couple of times in the 40° F, but generally, high temperatures ranged from mid 20°s to low 30° F. There were also several below zero F nights during the period. The ground currently has 8-10 inches of snow cover and the ground remained frozen the entire month in the Amherst area. **Pest/Problems:** There is a considerable amount of deer browsing on smaller woody landscape plants. On one particular site, yews, junipers, and forsythia shrubs had significant damage.

Berkshire Region (Great Barrington) - General Conditions: No report this month.

Environmental Data

The following growing-degree-day (GDD) and precipitation data was collected for a four-week period, January 8, 2009 through February 4, 2009. Soil temperature and phenological indicators were observed on February 4, 2009. Accumulated GDDs represent the heating units above a 50° F baseline temperature collected via our instruments from the beginning of the current calendar year. This information is intended for use as a guide for monitoring the developmental stages of pests in your location and planning management strategies accordingly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region/Location</th>
<th>2009 GROWING DEGREE DAYS</th>
<th>Soil Temp (°F at 4”)</th>
<th>Precipitation (4-Week)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Woody Ornamentals

Insects
No report this month.

Diseases

**Ramorum blight**, also known as **sudden oak death (SOD)** and **ramorum dieback**: Since 1995, oaks and tanoaks have been dying in the coastal counties of California. Since then, surveys found other plants infected or associated with this disease caused by the water mold, *Phytophthora ramorum*. Researchers in the U.S. first isolated the pathogen in Mill Valley (Marin County) on tanoak, but since that time additional surveys confirmed the pathogen on various native hosts in fourteen coastal California counties and in Curry County, Oregon. Through ongoing surveys of nurseries, USDA-APHIS-PPQ continues to define the extent of the pathogen’s distribution in the U.S. and limit its artificial spread beyond infected areas through quarantine and a public education program.

**USDA-APHIS Phytophthora ramorum Program 2008 Year-end Summary:**

**Background:** The *P. ramorum* program has completed its seventh year as an APHIS regulatory program. The program started with regulations in nine counties in California and part of one county in Oregon and focused on regulating the movement of risk articles such as wood, soil, foliage, and nursery stock. The infested areas have grown to 14 California counties and a large part of a county in Oregon, which has been under an aggressive survey and treatment program by Oregon since 2001.

The program received some policy revisions in 2004 when close analysis revealed that a large production nursery shipped *P. ramorum* infected Camellia plants to many nurseries nationwide. As a result, in January 2005 USDA-APHIS extended regulation of nursery stock to the entire states of California, Oregon, and Washington.

**Nursery Detections to Date:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Nurseries</th>
<th>Number of States</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000 and prior</td>
<td>Zero</td>
<td>Zero</td>
<td>There were no reported nursery detections prior to 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>California</td>
<td>In infested area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>Zero</td>
<td>Zero</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3 - CA, OR, WA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2004 176 21 125 linked to one nursery’s shipments
2005 99 7
2006 62 11
2007 23 6
2008 28 8 - CA, OR, WA, TX, FL, MS, NC, SC Details below under “Detections in 2008”

Program Goals:
1. To mitigate the risk of *P. ramorum* moving out of currently infested areas.
2. To stabilize and maintain markets for nursery stock taking the least restrictive actions.
3. To shrink regulation from the entire three states back to the infested areas.
4. To detect and eradicate *P. ramorum* in the nurseries in the three regulated states, eradicate and maintain nurseries in all states as free of *P. ramorum* with adoption of self inspection and best management practices by nurseries at risk.

Detections in 2008:
In 2008, *P. ramorum* surveys occurred in 31 sites: 28 nurseries and 3 landscape plantings. In addition, Oregon identified an expansion of their Curry County infestation resulting in an increase in the area quarantined to about 162 square miles.

Here are details on the site detections:
- **California** – Surveys detected *P. ramorum* in 12 nurseries via regulatory inspections, state nursery inspections, and self-reporting. Of these 12, one retail nursery was positive in 2007.
- **Oregon** – Surveys detected *P. ramorum* in five nurseries via regulatory inspections and one landscape planting found in a trace forward. Of these, five, one production nursery was positive in 2007.
- **Washington** – Surveys detected *P. ramorum* in five nurseries by regulatory inspection and state nursery inspection and one landscape planting found in a trace forward. Of these, five, one production nursery was positive in 2007.
- **Texas** – Surveys detected *P. ramorum* in one residential find from a trace forward.
- **Florida** – Surveys detected *P. ramorum* in two nurseries. One nursery was positive in 2007, found by follow-up inspection, and one was positive through a link to a nursery that was positive in 2007.
- **Mississippi** – Surveys detected *P. ramorum* in one nursery that was also positive in 2007, found by follow-up inspection.
- **North Carolina** – Surveys detected *P. ramorum* in one nursery detected under the CAPS (Cooperative Agricultural Pest Survey) program.
- **South Carolina** – Surveys detected *P. ramorum* in two nurseries, one by a link to the NC detection and the second by a sharp-eyed State inspector.

Reported by Dan Gillman, Plant Pathologist, UMass Extension Plant Diagnostic Lab, Amherst