

Thousand Cankers Disease of Walnut

Thousand Cankers Disease found in the Mid-Atlantic

A newly described insect/fungus complex, called thousand cankers disease, has been responsible for the death of thousands of black walnut trees in the western U. S. for at least a decade. In the summer of 2011, the disease was confirmed for the first time in Virginia and Pennsylvania. This disease was first found in Cecil County, MD in October 2014. We are asking Marylanders to be on the lookout for this lethal disease of black walnut trees.

What is Thousand Cankers Disease? The disease is caused by a newly described fungus, *Geosmithia morbida*, which is spread by a native insect, the walnut twig beetle (*Pityophthorus juglandis*). The beetles attack trees in large numbers, and carry the fungus into trees when they create breeding galleries under the bark. The fungus invades the phloem around the beetle galleries, forming cankers that coalesce and eventually girdle the trunk and branches.



Declining black walnut



Dark brown cankers around insect galleries just under bark



Walnut twig beetle (~2 mm long)

Look for:

- Dead or dying black walnut trees
- Trees with wilted or dead branches in upper crown
- Trees with shoots sprouting from the lower trunk
- Insect galleries (tunnels) and dark brown cankers just under the bark of branches or trunks of declining trees

If you find a suspect tree, contact:

UMD Plant Diagnostic Laboratory (301-405-1611)

Links to additional information:

http://na.fs.fed.us/pubs/palerts/cankers_disease/thousand_cankers_disease_screen_res.pdf

<http://extension.umd.edu/hgic/invasives/thousand-cankers-disease>

<http://news.maryland.gov/mda/press-release/2015/01/13/thousand-cankers-disease-detected-in-cecil-county/>

<http://plantpath.psu.edu/facilities/plant-disease-clinic/news/spotlight/sample>