

PLANT HEALTH CARE REPORT

5/3/97 - 5/9/97

Another slow week here at the Morton Arboretum insect- and disease-wise, although we have a few things to report. We were at 1115 degree days base 30 and 90 degree days base 50 as of May 4. We're even behind last year which was another slow year. We were at 95 degree days base 50 on May 4, 1996. The Chicago Botanic Garden reports they were at 91 degree days as of May 6.

The telia on the cedar-apple rust galls on junipers really swelled and became gelatinous in the rain we had mid-week. We're also observing early signs of rust on Crabapple leaves.

We've gotten reports that European pine sawfly eggs have hatched at Cantigny, although our eggs haven't hatched yet. Thanks to Doris Taylor for the tip.

We've observed some problems on white pine (*Pinus strobus*). The needles first look chlorotic, then become necrotic. We're going to test for nematodes that cause pine wilt, although they're supposed to be more common on Scots and Austrian pine than on white pine. We'll keep you posted.

We spotted a Korean poplar (*Populus koreana*) with distorted, cupped leaves with black edges. The leaves and twigs were very sticky. We also found some bacteria on the leaves apparently taking advantage of the situation. Thinking we had a disease or pest problem, we showed it to poplar expert Dr. George Ware who pointed us in the right direction. It seems that Korean poplar is one of the earliest poplars to leaf out and frequently suffers frost damage which appears as distorted, cupped, leaves with black edges. He also informed us that the tree is naturally quite resinous. The tree will recover. We have learned a lesson--don't assume everything unusual is a disease or pest and know your trees.

We have been reading about the amazing physical abilities of insects relative to their weight. Apparently some researchers fit beetles with a special harness in their laboratory and determined the beetles were able to lift over 800 times their own weight. I am curious if there is a video of this experiment. It sounds like a potential cartoon for Gary Larson.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact us by E-mail at kjacobs@mortonarb.org.

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