

A HEALTHY TREE is a HAPPY TREE

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Black Knot

Description: The disease black knot is caused by the fungus *Apiosporina morbosa*. Black knot can occur on both sweet and sour cherry, Damson, American, European, and Japanese varieties of cultivated plums and prunes as well as wild cherries and plums. The disease is common throughout much of North Carolina occurring on many wild plum and cherry trees. These serve as an annual source of infection for cultivated varieties. Black knot occurs on the woody parts of the tree such as twigs, limbs and sometimes the trunk. The knot is unsightly and often becomes infested by borer-type insects.



Symptoms: The common name "black knot" describes the main symptoms of the disease. However, the first symptoms are small, light brown swellings usually located at the base of the leaf petiole or on the fruit spur. These appear usually during the summer and first year after infection. Black knot infections are initiated by spores which germinate and penetrate the current year's growth. The spores come from either galls formed on the cultivated plum or cherry or from galls on wild plums and cherries in the vicinity.

Control: Destroy sources of infection during fall and winter, or before new growth starts in the spring, prune out and destroy all visible knots. On large main branches and trunks, knots should be cut out with a knife or chisel. One inch of healthy bark around the knot should also be removed. Obtain disease-free stock. Fungicide sprays applied in a timely, regular manner can prevent most new infections. Use Benomyl at the rate of 1/2 tablespoon/gallon of water.

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