FACT SHEET

Spider Mites of Deciduous Trees

A Pest That Causes Damage by Feeding On Leaves
Spider mites are a common pest on a variety of tree and shrub species. Spider mites fall into two general categories: cool season mites, which are generally active in early spring and fall, and warm season mites, which are generally active during the summer months. Spider mites of deciduous trees such as honeylocust, oaks, fruit trees and others are typically warm season mites.

Infested Trees Require Treatment For Control
Trees or shrubs infested with spider mites can be sprayed with topical miticides or can be treated with soil-applied systemic miticide. Sometimes both types of treatments are used in combination to keep spider mite populations in control.

Although mites are very small, their populations build up quickly. When extensive damage is observed, it may be too late to treat for the season. If treatment is timed correctly, mites are easily controlled and rarely life threatening.

What To Look For
Spider mites suck out cell contents, leaving behind tiny pale dots in leaf surfaces, often called "stippling". As populations build up, leaf surfaces develop a dull, bronzed appearance due to the feeding activity of spider mites.

Life Cycle
- Female mites become active in spring and lay eggs.
- Eggs can hatch in a few weeks to five days, depending upon temperatures.
- Multiple generations of spider mites can hatch in a single season.
- Spider mite activity decreases and females over winter with onset of cool temperatures.

Treatment and Prevention
Make sure your trees have adequate water during the growing season. Drought stress makes trees and shrubs more susceptible to attack by spider mites.

Flowering plants placed in your landscape will provide nectar sources for spider mite predators.

High nitrogen levels can contribute to increased spider mite populations. Use low nitrogen, slow release fertilizer such as Rainbow's Tree Nutrition Fertilization. Another option is to improve tree vigor with the Root Enhancement System™.

Timelines for sprays or soil applications to control spider mites are dependent upon a number of factors: time of season, infestation levels, and available treatment options.

Spider Mites

Spider Mite Damage on Red Oak