

Cottonwood



Plant Problem	November 1-10	November 11-20	November 21-30	October 1-10	October 11-20	October 21-31	September 1-10	September 11-20	September 21-30	August 1-10	August 11-20	August 21-31	July 1-10	July 11-20	July 21-31	June 1-10	June 11-20	June 21-30	May 1-10	May 11-20	May 21-31	April 1-10	April 11-20	April 21-30	March 1-10	March 11-20	March 21-31
Aphid, Giant Bark																											
Gall, Poplar Vagabond Aphid																											
Scale, Oystershell																											
Scale, Scurfy																											
Anthracnose																											
Cottonwood Dagger Moth																											
Gall, Poplar Petiole																											
Leaf Beetle, Cottonwood																											
Leafminer, Aspen or Poplar																											
Mycosphaerella Leaf Spot																											
Spider Mites																											
Webworm, Fall																											
Borer, Cottonwood																											
Borer, Flatheaded Appletree																											
Borer, Poplar																											
Cankers																											
Carpenterworm																											

KEY: fruit (red) flower (pink) branches (teal) leaves (light green) trunk (brown) crown (tan) roots (dark brown)

Plant Problem

Signs/Symptoms

Treatment

Aphid, Giant Bark



Large, quarter-inch long, gray-brown, spotted, long-legged aphids in dense colonies on new twigs; many winged. Heavily infested branches may be stressed or wilted.

These aphids have many hosts and are most evident in late summer. Older established trees tolerate them well, but monitor newly planted trees. For severe infestations, dislodge aphids with a strong spray of water, or treat with a contact insecticide.

Gall, Poplar Vagabond Aphid



Large, irregular, green swellings on new twig growth that turn brown by the end of the season. The galls are hollow within and contain numerous dark green aphids.

The galls are unsightly, but they are not detrimental. Eggs overwinter within galls and in bark crevices. Remove galls during the winter to reduce aphid populations next season. Treat trees with a horticultural oil spray before bud-break to kill newly hatched aphids.

Scale, Oystershell



Small, brownish, oystershell shaped scales are crowded on branches and may cover the bark completely. Infested branches suffering dieback. Newly hatched nymphs are white.

Prune out heavily infested branches, as appropriate. Dormant oils are not effective, as scales are in the egg stage beneath female shells. Monitor in June to detect newly hatched nymphs and apply oil spray, insecticidal soap or insecticide.

Scale, Scurfy



Small, flat, pear shaped, dirty-white scales crowded on branches; heavy infestations look crusty. Plants are weakened, and dieback of twigs or branches may be evident.

Prune out heavily infested branches, as appropriate. Dormant-season oil sprays not as effective as treating newly hatched nymphs (“crawlers”) in June. Monitor to detect crawlers and apply an oil spray, insecticidal soap or insecticide.

Anthraxnose



Tan circular lesion with black margins. Irregular brown to black lesions that coalesce.

Sanitation. Improve air circulation. Trees that are affected perennially should be sprayed with a foliar fungicide at bud break and repeated according to label instructions.

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Treatment

Cottonwood Dagger Moth



Yellow or white, fuzzy caterpillar with several tufts of long black hairs in a row along the top of the body; black head. Ragged holes chewed in leaves.

Usually not numerous nor damaging enough to justify control. Young caterpillars are susceptible to microbial insecticides.

Gall, Poplar Petiole



Cherry-sized, spherical swelling on leaf petiole, sometimes on leaf blade or stem. Greenish aphids covered with waxy secretions are inside. Galls frequently damaged by squirrels.

The galls are not at all harmful to host plants. No need to control, and natural enemies often reduce aphid populations.

Leaf Beetle, Cottonwood



Leaves skeletonized by young, yellowish-gray larvae feeding in clusters. Older larvae and adults with black dashes on yellow wings chew large ragged holes in leaves.

Damage is cumulative, as there are 2–3 generations. Monitor for yellow egg clusters or small larvae in May and regularly thereafter. Spray thoroughly as needed with neem oil, a horticultural spray oil, insecticidal soap, microbial insecticide or a contact insecticide.

Leafminer, Aspen or Poplar



Silvery, serpentine tunnels wind throughout the middle layer of leaves, often involving most of the leaf blade. Center line of dark excrement within mines. Larvae are pale, whitish-green.

Leafminers pose little threat to health of trees. In most years, natural enemies keep populations in check. If control is warranted, use a contact spray when adults are present. Apply an appropriate systemic insecticide to control larvae early or prior to infestation.

Mycosphaerella Leaf Spot



Leaves develop tan to reddish-brown lesions typically associated with leaf veins. Leaves that have already expanded may become cupped and distorted with large areas of dead tissue.

Sanitation. Improve air circulation. Apply foliar fungicide just as buds are beginning to swell but before bud break and repeat according to label instructions.

Plant Problem

Signs/Symptoms

Treatment

Spider Mites



Leaves stippled or yellow with fine webbing on undersides of leaves. Tiny greenish mites moving beneath webbing. When foliage turns brown, mites may mass together at tips of stems.

Populations explode during prolonged hot, dry weather. Monitor in late July, checking undersides of leaves. Keep host plants well-watered. Dislodge colonies with a strong spray of water. Apply an insecticide/miticide if infestations become serious; repeat in 10 days.

Webworm, Fall



A nest of webbing covers several leaves initially, then later envelops entire branches as caterpillars grow. Fuzzy, yellowish or brown caterpillars feed on leaves inside webbing.

Rake out nests, or dislodge with a powerful jet of soapy water from a power washer. Apply a microbial insecticide to control young caterpillars in small nests; larger nests are almost impenetrable with insecticidal sprays. Damage is more unsightly than serious.

Borer, Cottonwood



Large, clean, round exit holes through the bark at the base of the trunk; accumulations of coarse sawdust on the ground. Younger trees may be stressed with wilted branches.

Monitor in mid-June for the appearance of new exit holes, which indicate beetle emergence. Thereafter, until August, make regular applications of an insecticide to the trunk and major branches to discourage re-infestation.

Borer, Flatheaded Appletree



Loose bark with shallow, serpentine tunnels beneath, packed tightly with fine sawdust. Oval exit holes evident on trunk and branches. Tree is stressed or with dead branches.

Monitor trees for exit holes beginning in May and through the summer. Keep especially younger trees healthy, with regular watering, if needed. Treat the trunk and major branches of infested trees with an insecticide, and treat regularly thereafter as per label directions.

Borer, Poplar



Large exit holes on bark, especially at branch junctions with trunk. Branch dieback evident. Fibrous sawdust accumulates at base of tree. The adult is a tan, speckled longhorned beetle.

Prune out and destroy dying, dead, or fallen branches. Monitor for appearance of new exit holes, which indicate beetle emergence. Thereafter, until August, make regular applications of an insecticide to the trunk and major branches to discourage re-infestation.

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Treatment

Cankers



Yellow or orange-brown to black discolored areas on trunk and branches. Liquid ooze from canker area. Cankers, sunken dead areas of bark. Reddish brown discoloration of the wood.

Prune out affected areas.

Carpenterworm



Large, weepy, circular, exit holes usually at base of tree and in main branches. When adults emerge, pupal skins often protrude from holes. Some branches may be dead or stressed.

Moths are active June–July. This insect requires more than one year to complete its lifecycle. Eggs are deposited on the bark and lower parts of the trunk. Spray the trunk in late May and late June. Successive applications may be warranted when infestations are heavy.