

N.C. Cooperative Extension
Surry County Center
surry.ces.ncsu.edu



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September 5, 2018

Adam McComb, Assistant Town Manager
Director, Elkin Recreation & Parks Department
Elkin Recreation & Parks Department
PO Box 345
Elkin, NC 28621

Dear Adam,

On August 20 I visited with you at Hollywood Cemetery off North Main Street in Elkin, North Carolina to evaluate the boxwood plantings at the site for boxwood blight. The blight is a fungus that results in severe defoliation and decline of boxwood. Once it is found in the landscape, it is very difficult and costly to control with fungicides. The major means of spread of this disease is by movement of contaminated plant material. The spores are extremely sticky and can attach to animals, clothing, shoes, equipment (lawn mowers, weed eaters, etc.), vehicles and anything that might have contacted the infected plant(s).

The most characteristic symptoms of boxwood blight on susceptible boxwood cultivars are brown to purplish color leaf spots. This leads to defoliation and black streaking on the boxwood stem tissue. The black streaking on the stem tissue is the "tale-tale" sign of boxwood blight since it is a specific symptom of boxwood blight only. These symptoms were visible on the boxwood at Hollywood Cemetery. Plant samples were also taken from the boxwood and sent to the North Carolina State University Plant Disease and Insect Clinic for testing. The lab results confirmed boxwood blight. A copy of the lab report is attached.

Boxwood blight cannot be effectively controlled once infection begins. Infected boxwood will always have boxwood blight. There are several options: 1- do not do anything, 2- promptly remove diseased boxwood, and 3- spray boxwood not infected with Daconil Weatherstik to prevent infection from occurring and remove disease boxwood. The third option is the recommended option as it will help prevent any boxwoods on the site from becoming contaminated and it will help prevent the spread of the disease to other sites. However, it is an extensive spray program. The fungicide must be applied every 10-14 days and again soon if it rains. Treatment should continue through late September.

The leaf debris should also be removed. Be aware that removing diseased boxwood and leaf debris will not eradicate the boxwood blight pathogen from the location. The pathogen produces long-lived survival structures that can persist



in the soil for 5 to 6 years. These survival structures can infect susceptible replacement boxwood planted in locations where the disease has been diagnosed. Therefore, replanting susceptible boxwood cultivars or members of the Buxaceae family in a location where infected boxwood has been removed is not advisable. Sweet box and pachysandra are also susceptible to boxwood blight. Alternative plants to consider when re-planting would be Japanese holly and inkberry. Neither are susceptible to boxwood blight and both have similar compact leaf structure. When removing infected boxwood, cover plant debris on the truck or trailer to prevent scattering by wind. Infected boxwood may be buried or burned. Composting infected boxwood is not advised. Disease may spread to susceptible plants through composting and mulching.

Sadly, it has been a severe season for boxwood blight in Elkin and throughout Surry County. If I can be of further assistance to you, please feel free to email (Joanna_radford@ncsu.edu) or call (336.401.8025) me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink that reads "Joanna E. Radford". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Joanna E. Radford, Extension Agent
Agriculture and Natural Sciences
Commercial & Consumer Horticulture

Enclosure
JER/nv

Sample Report

SAMPLE INFORMATION

Please print a copy of this page for your records and to include when submitting a physical sample

Sample Number	30717
Date Entered	2018-08-20 11:07:07
Status	COMPLETE
Host	Boxwood (Buxus sp./spp.)
Variety	American and English
Invoice Status	\$0 NO_CHARGE (N/A) <i>There is no charge for this sample. Samples fees may be waived for non-profit agencies and others. This policy is subject to change without notice.</i>
Collected By	AGENT
Date Collected	2018-08-20
Host Site Type	OTHER
Host Address	TYPED_IN Hollywood Cemetery, North Bridge Street Elkin, NC 28621 US Surry County /
Problem Type	DISEASE
Expect Physical Sample	NO
Disease Symptoms	DEFOLIATION, DIEBACK, DISCOLORATION COLOR: BLACKENING, DISCOLORATION COLOR: BROWNING, LEAF SPOT
Disease Distribution	WIDESPREAD
Site Conditions	SHADY SITE
Disease Parts Affected	LEAVES, STEMS
Disease Percent Affected	70%
Insect Signs	
Insect Doing	
Insect Degree of Infestation	
Comments	This is a cemetery in the town of Elkin. Symptoms suggest boxwood blight. Please confirm. Thank you! Joanna

RESULTS

Sample Result #1

Date Entered	2018-08-22
Pest	Boxwood blight; Leaf and stem blight (<i>Calonectria pseudonaviculata</i>)
Findings	<p>--- Mike Munster @ Wed Aug 22 2018 14:19:52 GMT-0400 (Eastern Daylight Time) ---</p> <p>Boxwood blight was confirmed on this sample.</p> <p>The Virginia Boxwood Blight Task Force created sets of best management practices for this disease in different settings. The one that applies here would be the bmps for Professionally Managed Landscapes and Public and Historic Gardens.</p>
CONTACTS	
Client	<p>Adam McComb PO Box 345 Elkin, NC 28621 Surry</p>
Agent	<p>Joanna Radford / NCCE PO Box 324 DOBSON, NC 27017 SURRY joanna_radford@ncsu.edu 336-401-8025 work 336-401-8048 fax</p>
Pathologist	<p>Mike Munster / NCSU Plant Disease and Insect Clinic Campus Box 7211 RALEIGH, NC 27695 WAKE mike_munster@ncsu.edu 919-515-3619 work</p>

NOTE: If you have submitted payment for this sample, this report serves as your receipt for the appropriate amount. If payment was not sent with the sample the submitter will be billed on a quarterly basis.

IMPORTANT: This report concerns your specimen received by the Plant Disease and Insect Clinic, North Carolina State University. Findings reported by the Clinic are based upon examination of the material submitted. Some identifications and diagnoses require extensive studies. However, the time devoted to individual specimens must necessarily be limited, and the specimens usually represent only a small percentage of the crop or problem. Reports reflect considered opinion and best judgment but may not always be statements of absolute fact or define the major problems affecting the crop or site.

Turner Sutton, Department Extension Leader
Jack Bacheler, Department Extension Leader

E-mail correspondence to and from this address and PDIC sample records may be subject to the North Carolina Public Records Law and may be disclosed to third parties.

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