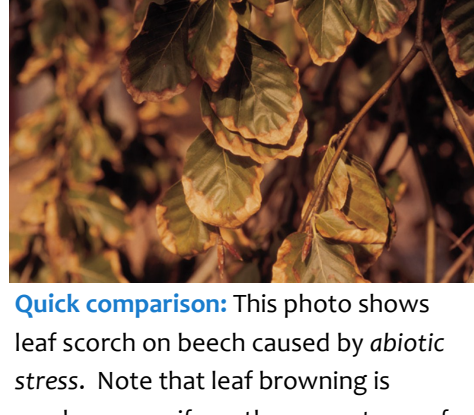


## Bacterial Leaf Scorch on Shade Trees

This is the time of year to start watching for symptoms of bacterial leaf scorch on shade and ornamental trees. Hosts include [dogwood](#), [elm](#), [gingko](#), [hackberry](#), [maple](#), [mulberry](#), [oak](#), [sweetgum](#), and [sycamore](#). Oaks are particularly susceptible to this disease.

Unfortunately, there is **no cure** for

the disease. Infected plants often *appear* healthy in the spring but later suffer **leaf browning** and **premature leaf drop** in **late summer** and **early fall**. These symptoms only worsen each year and eventually result in dieback and the tree's death.



**Quick comparison:** This photo shows leaf scorch on beech caused by *abiotic* stress. Note that leaf browning is much more uniform than symptoms of bacterial leaf scorch.

Photo: A. B. Gould

If you suspect bacterial leaf scorch is present in your nursery, you can have your plants tested by the University of Kentucky Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab. Please let me know if you need help with this service, or you can contact the diagnostic lab directly.

For more information about the disease, see [UK's Plant Pathology Fact Sheet](#).



Bacterial leaf scorch on shingle oak

Photo: A. B. Gould

Browning begins at the **leaf margins** and progresses toward the leaves' central veins. A distinct **yellow margin** between the brown and green areas is common (see photo above). However, this pattern differs somewhat between tree species.

Bacterial leaf scorch tends to cause **random patterns of foliar browning**. These patterns can differ remarkably from one leaf to the next and from one branch to another (see photo above). This may help **differentiate symptoms** of bacterial leaf scorch from those of abiotic stresses which often cause similar, but much more uniform symptoms (see left photo).

### Recent Findings of the Plant Disease Diagnostic Lab

**Pythium root rot** and **Fusarium wilt** on chrysanthemum

**Bacterial wilt** on mandevilla

**Rhizoctonia** and **Pythium root/stem rots** on petunia

**Cedar-quince rust** on hawthorn

**Cercospora leaf spot** on hydrangea

**Canker** on boxwood

**Anthracnose** on beech, dogwood, maple and oak

**Powdery mildew** on lilac

**Rosette** on rose

**Rhizosphaera needlecast** on spruce