



# HELPDESK HIGHLIGHTS

*Weekly newsletter for Master Gardeners*

## WEEK 2: JULY 10-17

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### TEST YOUR MASTER GARDENER SKILLS

(Answer on page 7)

Identify this plant!

#### IMAGE FROM HELPDESK



Please refer only to the current [VCE Pest Management Guide: Home Grounds and Animals](#) for pesticide recommendations. All pesticides recommended are at the risk of the user. Read and follow all label instructions for use, storage, and disposal. Remember, the pesticide label is the law.

## ANTHRACNOSE OF MAPLE

**Relevance:** Disease is most common in spring, but can reoccur in summer when cool, wet weather is paired with rapid leaf growth

**Pest:** Several fungi including *Aureobasidium apocryptum* cause Anthracnose. Hosts include sugar, red, Norway, silver, and Japanese maples. Spores spread through splashing water and wind. The fungi can also overwinter in senescent leaf tissue on the ground and in infected twigs/buds.



**ANTHRACNOSE ON SUGAR MAPLE LEAVES**  
IMAGE FROM UMASS AMHERST EXTENSION WEBSITE

**Damage to plants:** Anthracnose usually causes minor damage that only affects the tree's aesthetic value.

### Symptoms:

- Irregularly shaped, angular spots or blotches on leaf veins and margins
- Light brown to tan, papery spots
- Severe infection results in premature defoliation and distorted young leaves

### Best control method:

- Remove affected leaves
- If severe, prune out infected shoots
- Maintain tree vigor

### More Resources for Controlling Anthracnose of Maple

[VCE Pest Management Guide: Horticultural and Forest Crops](#)

[UMass Amherst Extension: Anthracnose of Maple](#)

[University of Minnesota Extension: Anthracnose](#)

## VOLUTELLA BLIGHT OF PACHYSANDRA

### IMAGES FROM PENN STATE EXTENSION WEBSITE



Damage to  
pachysandra is  
severe.

**Relevance:** First signs of blight usually seen in the start of summer; plant more susceptible when fully exposed to sun.

**Pest:** Caused by the fungus *Volutella pachysandricola*, an opportunistic pathogen that attacks weak plants. Infects leaves, stems, and stolon.

**Symptoms:** Tan to brown splotches with concentric lighter and darker zones with dark brown margins; blotches increase in size until leaf is black.

**Best control methods for Volutella Blight:**

- Maintain plant vigor
- Remove diseased plants and do not place in compost
- Thin plants in fall during dry weather to remove dense growth
- Select planting area carefully: plants should be in well-drained soil
- Control pests since they can make the plant more susceptible to the

**More Resources for Controlling Volutella Blight**

[Missouri Botanical Garden: \*Volutella Blight\*](#)

[Penn State Extension: \*Volutella Blight\*](#)

[Cornell University Publication: \*Volutella Blight\*](#)



## DUTCH ELM



**AN INFECTED TREE**

**IMAGES FROM UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION**

**Damage to plants: Lethal**



**Relevance:** Symptoms appear in late spring or any time during the growing season

**Symptoms:**

- Wilting of leaves proceed from yellow to brown
- As the disease progresses, limbs will wilt and once it reaches the trunk, the entire tree may wilt
- Branches and stems have deep discoloration

**Best control methods for Dutch Elm:**

- Pruning dying, weakened, or dead branches
  - Removing diseased branches
  - Breaking root grafts of diseased trees
- Controlling insect vectors (native elm bark beetle, smaller European elm bark beetle, branded elm bark beetle)

**IMAGES FROM USDA**



**SMALLER EUROPEAN ELM  
BARK BEETLE**



**BRANDED ELM BARK BEETLE**



**NATIVE ELM BARK  
BEETLE**

**More Resources for Controlling Dutch Elm:**

[Pest Management Guide: \*Horticultural and Forest Crops\*](#)

[USDA Forest Service: \*Elm Bark Beetles\*](#)

[University of Minnesota Extension: \*Dutch Elm Disease\*](#)

[USDA Forest Service: \*Dutch Elm Disease\*](#)

[UMD Extension: \*Dutch Elm Disease\*](#)

## TEST YOUR MASTER GARDENER SKILLS

**Answer: Purple Loosestrife!**

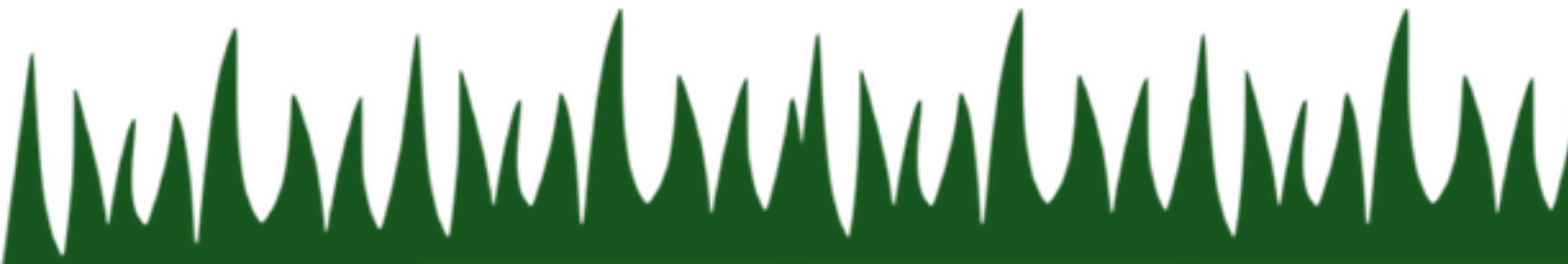
**Scientific Name: *Lythrum salicaria***

Purple loosestrife is a non-native, perennial wetland herb. The plant is native to Eurasia. Mature plants can be up to ten feet tall and five feet wide. During late summer (July to September), the plant produces vibrant purple flowers. Purple Loosestrife is a noxious weed in Virginia and DC. The USDA states that Purple Loosestrife is a harmful weed to ecosystems as well as horticultural and agricultural crops.

Purple Loosestrife proliferates in poor nutrient conditions, rapidly matures, and has high seed production as well as high germination success.

**More Information for Purple Loosestrife:**

[USDA Forest Service: \*Lythrum Salicaria\*](#)



THANK YOU FOR READING!



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