

Spray Fungicides At Correct Times

Dear Plant Doctor: My rhododendrons suffer from recurrent "brown spot." I aggressively spray them in the spring with a combination of Volck oil and daconil. This was applied at two-week intervals for a total of three applications. However, I can already see brown spots returning this fall.

I have tried removing and disposing of infected leaves before spraying but to no avail. A yard specialist told me the plants have a virus and would always get "brown spot" and I should simply dig and dump all my rhodies!

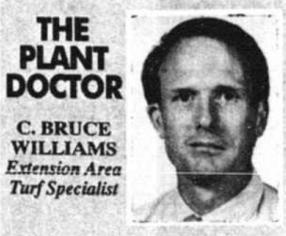
I love my rhododendrons and look forward to your thoughtful advice.—Southern Pines, N.C.

Answer: Rhododendron are susceptible to a host of leaf spot diseases and I cannot identify the problem without seeing diseased plant. However, I suspect your problem can be easily remedied by proper spray timing and application. In general, fungicide sprays only protect plants for two or three weeks following treatment. Spray applications in the spring only protect foliage for diseases present in the spring. Each flush of growth must be sprayed in order to protect those leaves from fungal infection. Hot temperatures and high humidity of August have lead to a multitude of foliage diseases this fall. Severe foliage disease problems can weaken plants before winter dormancy.

In order for a plant disease to develop you must have the disease pathogen, a susceptible plant host and favorable environmental conditions.

Fungicides work because they protect the plant from fungal infection. Fungicides are not curative. Daconil 2787 is an excellent fungicide for leaf spot but you should rotate application with other fungicides (ie. Cleary's 3336, Bayleton or Chipco 26019). Continue to remove infected leaves before spraying and periodically change the mulch under your plants to reduce the available pathogen inoculum.

Two common leaf diseases that often occur in your area during the



THE PLANT DOCTOR
C. BRUCE WILLIAMS
Extension Area
Turf Specialist

summer are *Colletotrichum* and *Cylindrocladium* leaf spot. Contact the local N.C. Cooperative Extension office in Carthage and they will assist you in diagnosing your particular disease problem.

Dear Plant Doctor: I have a tree-type peony and it does not bloom. This plant bloomed beautifully immediately following its planting (about seven years ago). The flower buds start out full but never seem to properly develop.

I am thinking about moving it to another location and want to provide the plant with a proper soil mix. I also want to know the best time to move the plant and any other important information. Thank you for your advice.—Bolivia, N.C.

Answer: The tree peony (*Paeonia suffruticosa*) is a shrub that exists in a multitude of horticultural forms and types. Most tree peonies are grafted and I suspect that your plant may have "lost" the grafted portion due to disease, insects or a past cold winter.

If the graft is still present, then blooming is surely inhibited by the acid soil in your area. Tree peonies love alkaline soil and a soil pH approaching 7 is nearly ideal. The average soil pH in your area is great for Venus Fly trap plants (pH 4) but is 1,000 times more acidic than is desirable for the tree peony.

Get a soil sampling kit from the

N.C. Cooperative Extension office and get your soil tested. The most important single gardening task is to properly adjust the pH of the soil. After the recommended amount of dolomitic limestone has been added to the soil, thoroughly incorporate into the soil two to three cups of a high phosphorus fertilizer (like bonemeal or 0-20-0) per 100 square feet. Dig and move your plant in October or November and mulch heavily around the base of the stems during the first winter. Good luck!

Send your gardening questions and comments to The Plant Doctor, P.O. Box 109, Bolivia, N.C. 28422.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

Riek Yard Selected

Mr. and Mrs. Vinnie Riek have been chosen for September yard of the month honors at Sea Trail Plantation in Sunset Beach. They have a variety of palm trees with colorful begonias for accent in their planting islands, which set off their spacious home.

College Is Offering Sign Language Class

Brunswick Community College is offering an intermediate class in American Sign Language starting this week at the main campus in Supply.

Jean Kaczynski, a board certified teacher, will be the instructor. The class will meet every Thursday at 6:30 p.m.

The class is a continuation of the beginners' sign language course taught during the summer quarter. The cost of the eight-week course is \$50 per person based on a minimum of 12 students.

To register, call BCC's continuing education department at 754-6922.

New Legion Post Chartered; Officers Sworn

The Calabash American Legion Post 503 recently received its permanent charter during a special 9th District meeting held at the Calabash VFW Post.

Presenting the charter was Department of North Carolina Commander Garnett G. Shropshire of Raleigh.

During the meeting, Shropshire administered the oath of office to the newly elected officers of Calabash Post 503. They are William Krous of Calabash, post commander; Richard Lanahan, first vice-commander; Joe Marshall, second vice-commander; Richard Riley, adju-

tant; Don Mahncke, finance officer; Larry Bollinger, secretary; and Harvey Miller, Chaplain.

The American Legion is a federal corporation chartered by Congress in 1919 as a patriotic, mutual-help and community service organization of honorably discharged war veterans. It is the country's largest veterans' organization with a membership of about 2.5 million.

The Calabash post meets on the fourth Monday of each month at the Calabash VFW hall. Veterans interested in joining the post should contact William Krous at 579-1202.

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Winnabow VFW Serves Barbecue

Winnabow Volunteer Fire Department will serve barbecue on Saturday, Oct. 2, from 11 a.m. until 5 p.m.

Plates will include pork barbecue, potato salad, cole slaw and hush puppies. Cost will be \$3 or \$4.50 for a "super plate."

The department is on Governor's Road off U.S. 17 in Winnabow.

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