

Fungi Can Cause Dieback In Azaleas

BY C. BRUCE WILLIAMS
Extension Area
Turf Specialist

Dear Plant Doctor: I read your column and do hope you can help me. I hope you can tell me what to use on my ailing plants. I have very large azaleas and camellias. The azalea is dying limb by limb. The camellia has buds that are dying on the limb before they are opening. The buds of the camellia also tend to fall off before they are completely open.



WILLIAMS

I know very little about plants. I hope there is something that I can use to help retard whatever is wrong with my plants. Thank you.

Answer: The dieback of azalea stems could be due to any number of insects or diseases. However, one of the most common problems on azaleas in this area is limb dieback due to the *Phomopsis* or *Phytophthora* fungi.

Phomopsis dieback is most common in large specimen landscape plants. The symptoms are death of leaves and stems on portions of the plant. The dying or dead stems exhibit a reddish-brown discoloration of the wood just under the bark.

This disease can be controlled with judicious pruning, fungicide sprays and a little TLC. Prune out all the diseased tissues in your azalea. Spray with the fungicide benomyl immediately following pruning. Moisture stress and stem splitting due to cold damage tend to encour-

THE PLANT DOCTOR

age the disease, so be sure that your azaleas are protected.

Phytophthora root rot is a systemic fungal disease that has over 1,900 plant hosts. Formosa and the Indica group of azaleas generally have a higher resistance to the disease than the Kurumes. Once plants have contracted *Phytophthora* there is little a gardener can do to cure the plant.

At best, you can hope to keep the plant alive several years by pruning out dead limbs combined with judicious fertilization and watering practices.

Bud drop on your camellias is a problem where there is not going to be a simple solution. Bud drop can be caused by excessive fertilizer salts, too much water, too little water, high spring temperatures, insufficient light, nutrient deficiency or freezing temperatures.

In other words, your plants are not happy. Check the conditions around your plants and try to pinpoint the environmental conditions that may be limiting your plants' growth.

Now is the season to fertilize your lawn. In the absence of soil test results, the application of a 3-1-2 (nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium) ratio fertilizer mix to your lawn will be your best bet.

For bermudagrass or St. Augustine grass lawns, the application of 6.5 pounds of 15-5-10 or equivalent per 1,000 square feet will supply your grass with all the nutrients needed for four to six weeks of rapid healthy growth. Fertilizer application should be repeated in four to six weeks.

For centipede grass lawns use a lower grade nitrogen-containing fertilizer. The application of 10 pounds of 5-5-15 or equivalent per 1,000 square feet should be all the fertilizer needed for a season's growth.

The development of a slow-release nitrogen fertilizer is the greatest contribution to good gardening since well-rotted manure.

However, very few gardeners used the slow release nitrogen forms for maximum benefit.

Make sure your fertilizer uses a slow release form of nitrogen. This will keep your lawn greener longer and reduce the frequency of fertilization.

(Send your gardening questions to *The Plant Doctor*, P.O. Box 109, Bolivia, N.C. 28422.)

White Lake Hosts Water Festival

Barefoot water skiing, performing arts, craft exhibits and a lighted boat parade will be featured at the 13th Annual White Lake Water Festival this weekend at White Lake.

Festivities start Saturday at 7:30 a.m. with a One Mile Fun Run followed by a 10K race, according to a news release from the Elizabeth-town-White Lake Chamber of Commerce.

The Embers will entertain at the dance at White Lake Beach Saturday starting at 9 p.m.

Other events Saturday and Sunday include a softball tournament, parade, water ski show, art show, photography show and performing arts on an outside stage.

For more information, call the chamber of commerce at 862-4368.

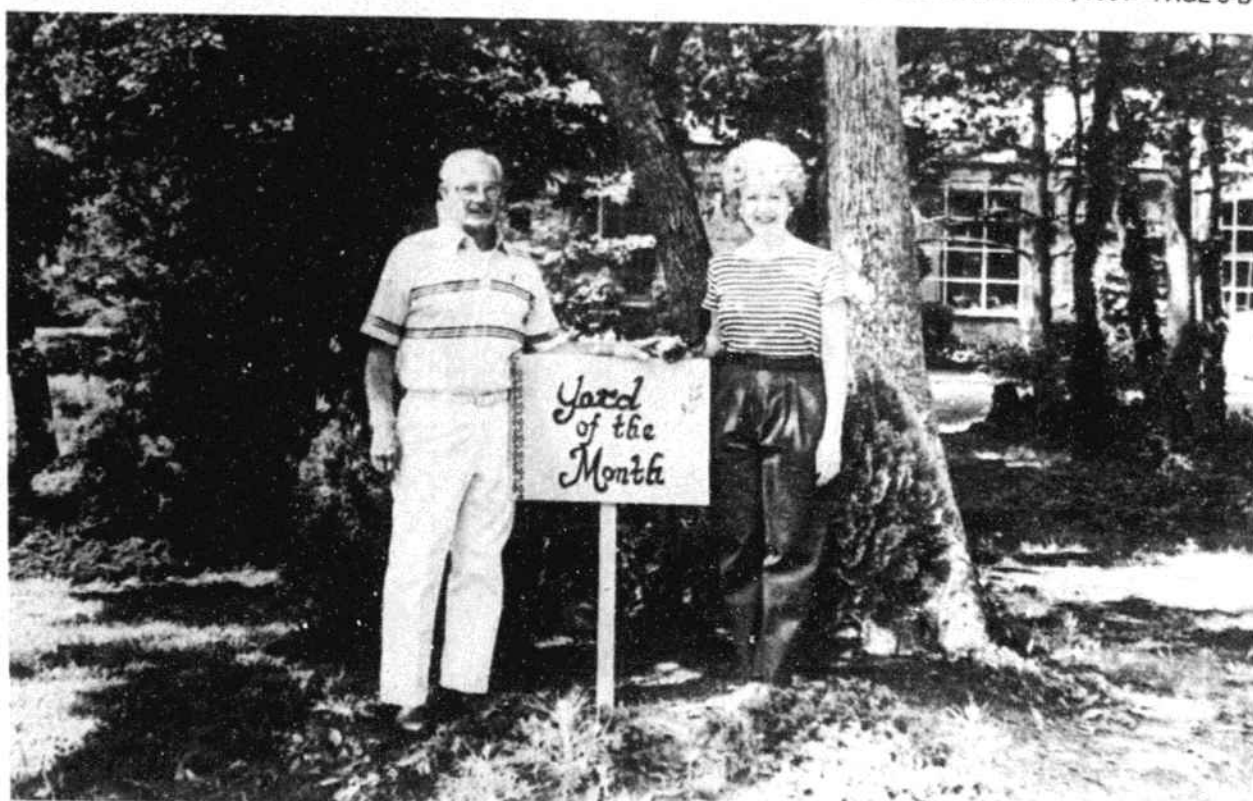


PHOTO BY JACK ELLIOTT

Inviting Yard Takes Honor

Matt and Dolores Stack's inviting corner lot at No. 2 Crane Court received the May Yard of the Month award from the Carolina Shores Garden Club, Calabash. Beds of aucuba, hardy azalea, golden eximus, day lilies, St. Joseph's Coat, juniper, holly, hydrangeas, oleanders and Korean fasta surround a natural grove of shade-providing oak trees.

Jazz Vocalist To Return For Arts Council Concert

Bus Brown and ensemble return Saturday for the third annual Brunswick Arts Council benefit jazz concert.

The concert is offered as part of the 1991 Brunswick Arts Council Cultural Arts Series and annual membership drive, said spokesman Ruth Somers.

Saturday's program begins at 7:30 p.m. at the Moose Lodge on Long Beach Road.

Brown, a Baltimore native, began his musical career in 1923 at age 16. Since then he has performed in several song and dance troupes, including the Brown Buddies and the Harlem Highlanders, operated nightclubs, run a music publishing business and released several records.

In fall 1977 he appeared in the public television series, *Yusef and Friends*, and two years later moved to Durham. He and several associates now operate a club and Brown also performs as a vocalist all along the East Coast area, including an appearance at Spoleto Festival '83 in Charleston, S.C. In 1986 he was

awarded the state Jazz Fellowship by the North Carolina Arts Council.

The Brunswick Arts Council must raise local funds with which to match Grassroots grant funds it receives from the North Carolina Arts Council.

Its membership dues and other funds sponsor varied programs and assist other groups in providing arts programming.

Recipients include support of the N.C. Symphony's local concerts, the Black Arts Festival at Brunswick Community College, the Brunswick County Schools, the Brunswick Little Theatre, Brunswick County Parks & Recreation Dept., a summer arts and crafts program for children offered through the Brunswick County Library bookmobile, After School Arts and the 1991 Artists In Our Midst directory.

To join the Brunswick Arts Council write the council at P.O. Box 172, Bolivia, N.C. 28422. Categories are member, \$10; sponsor, \$25; patron, \$50; friend, \$100; benefactor, \$250; and grand benefactor, \$500 or more.



PHOTO CONTRIBUTED

JAZZ VOCALIST Bus Brown returns Saturday for the Brunswick Arts Council membership drive gala.



PHOTO COURTESY LITTLE RIVER CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Rebels Perform At Festival

The Carolina Rebels, a bluegrass and country band from Columbia, S.C., will perform Saturday from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. at the Blue Crab Festival in Little River, S.C. The festival runs Saturday and Sunday along the Little River waterfront. Festival-goers can enjoy arts and crafts, seafood, entertainment and children's activities.

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