



December 2008 / January 2009



HOMEOWNER PLANT DISEASE CLINIC REPORT

Holly Thornton, Homeowner IPM Specialist

Given the fact that sample submission in December was practically non-existent, I decided to once again combine reports for two months. Therefore, sample submission information provided in this report is from both December 2008 and January 2009.

This year has gotten off to a relatively slow start in terms of diagnostics here in Athens, likely due to temperature extremes and plant dormancy. I suspect, when the weather begins to warm, the diagnostic clinic in Athens will be swamped with plant samples that have been mildly to severely affected by the low temperatures, and many diagnoses will be related to cold damage.

Samples diagnosed can be found below as usual. There will not be a disease of the month included in this report. Some pathogens to be on the look out for include: *Sclerotinia* spp. (also known as crown rot) on any annual bedding plants or vegetables; *Thielaviopsis basicola* (also known as black root rot) on pansies, hollies, and other bedding plants; and *Botryosphaeria* spp. on various woody ornamentals with previous dieback, cankers, and/or cold damage. These pathogens are often times very easily identified.

Diagnostic signs & symptoms:

- ✓ Crown rot – *Sclerotinia* spp. – white mycelial mats, collapse and death of plants at the soil line, and the presence of small (size of a pencil eraser), black, irregular-shaped sclerotia;
- ✓ Black root rot – *Thielaviopsis* spp. – blackened roots or lesions on roots; yellowing foliage & wilting plants;
- ✓ *Botryosphaeria* – small, pin-like, black ‘pimples’ seen on branches that have died-back or in cankered areas – wounds & cold damage (cracks in bark)

If one or more of these disease organisms is suspected, identification will most likely need to be done using the compound microscope; except for *Sclerotinia* spp. (mycelia and sclerotia will be diagnostic identifying features of the disease). Feel free to contact me with any questions regarding the disease organisms listed above or with general questions about plant diseases in home gardens and landscapes.

December 2008/January 2009 Homeowner Samples

County	Plant	Common Name of Disease (Pathogen)	Type of Sample – DDDI or Physical
Bartow	African violet	Possible virus (INSV or TSWV)	DDDI
Ben Hill	Azalea	Cultural problems – over-mulched & planted too deep	Both
Bibb	Leyland cypress	No disease	Physical
Clayton	Cryptomeria japonica	No disease	Physical
Elbert	Azalea	No disease – likely environmental	DDDI
Gwinnett	Thuja occidentalis	Unable to determine	DDDI
Jasper	Apple tree	Possible fungal leaf spots	DDDI
Jasper	Pecan trees (volunteer)	Unable to determine	DDDI
Muscogee	Azalea & Cleyera	No disease	Both
Newton	Juniper	Possibly <i>Pestalotia</i> sp. or <i>Seiridium</i> sp.	DDDI
Newton	Azalea	No disease	Both
Newton	Lemon	No disease	Both
Thomas	Thuja 'Green Giant'	Possible cultural issues – water	DDDI
Total samples (December-January) = 13 DDDI = 7 Physical = 2 Both = 4			