

## Bugs and Blights – June 15, 2020

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**Cold damage** to vegetable starts kills some leaf cells and arrests growth. Even above freezing temperatures will cause silvering of foliage if it is set out too early in spring. Foliage turns yellow or silvery, leaf cells may collapse and turn papery. If it's not too bad plants will likely recover. Because of the delay, it may be worth it to start over.

(Photo by Paul Bachi, University of Kentucky Research and Education Center, Bugwood.org)



**Sirococcus blight** is a fungus which attacks newest growth of needles on a variety of conifers such as hemlock, pine, douglas fir, and especially *Cedrus*. Needles have a pinkish cast and eventually turn brown; on *Cedrus* needles drop and damage is then less noticeable. <https://extension.umn.edu/plant-diseases/sirococcus-blight-conifers> (Photo by Jenny Glass, WSU Plant Clinic)



**Garden symphyla** are tiny white centipede-like critters. Adults have 10 and larvae 6 legs. Long antennae serve as their "eyes" in the soil where they live and feed on organic matter and roots. Some species feed on crop root hairs, roots and tubers. They are fast runners, and can move through soil via cracks. They need soil humidity that is above 75% or below 95% or they die; keeping soils on the dry side may help reduce their numbers. They favor corn, beetroot and potatoes and other crops. Known from Cretaceous amber.

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Symphyla>



**Wireworms** are the larvae of **click beetles**. The larvae live in the soil feeding on newly planted seeds, sprouts and roots of established plants. More than likely they have their favorite hosts. Larvae may live in the soil for 1-6 years. By the time they are in their last year, they are large enough to do significant damage. Adults prefer to lay eggs in grassy and weedy turf so are more abundant in gardens created where grass once grew.

<https://pnwhandbooks.org/insect/ipm/garden-symphylan>



**Downy mildew** causes yellow areas on the topsides of the leaves; undersides with patches of a fine bluish-gray powder; sometimes with small black specks (fruiting bodies). Leaves may dry and curl. Common on squash family, vegetables and other plants.

**Powdery mildew** forms a fine white or grayish powdery-looking material over top of leaf. Builds in warm humid conditions. (Photo by David B. Langston, University of Georgia, Bugwood.org)

<https://www.planetnatural.com/pest-problem-solver/garden-pests/wireworm-control/>



**Hail damage** occurs as spots (bruises), steaks and tears where hail punches through the leaf. Note the streaks where hail skidded across the leaf. Even branches can be bruised. Plants will recover. (Photo: Philomena Kedzierski).



**European chafer larvae** may still be found in lawns but also among roots of landscape, garden and vegetable plants, where they feed on roots. Look for damage by crows and raccoons and other insectivores in the lawn. <http://gardening.wsu.edu/european-chafer/>  
<https://pnwhandbooks.org/insect/emergin-g-pacific-northwest-ornamentals>



**European chafers adults** are brown and are most noticeable as they cluster and fly around the canopy of trees or shrubs. Many scarabs are attracted to porch lights. Excellent publication by Todd Murray that gives info on how to distinguish from other turf pests. <https://s3.wp.wsu.edu/uploads/sites/2070/2013/12/European-Chafer.pdf>  
(Photo by Michael Reding, USDA Agricultural Research Service, Bugwood.org)

