

Diplodia Shoot Blight

A common cause of tip dieback (end of branches turn brown and die) on pines is the fungal disease Diplodia (formerly Sphaeropsis) tip blight. It is most common on Austrian pine, but also damages mugo, Scots and red pine. Other conifers are sometimes affected, especially when water stressed. This disease tends to be a problem on older, well-established trees, and rarely affects trees that are under 15 years of age.

Control

- Minimize tree stress: plant properly on a good site; water deeply during dry periods; mulch.
- Prune out infected branches 6-8" below the point of infection, only when weather is dry.
- Remove pine cones which harbor spores that can cause new infections.
- Apply fungicides every 14 days from bud break until the new growth is fully expanded.
- Avoid planting susceptible tree species where the disease is prevalent.

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Additional Resources

Diplodia Shoot Blight and Canker

- UW-Extension Publication A3643, *Conifer Disorders: Sphaeropsis Shoot Blight and Canker*, at <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/Conifers-Disorders-Sphaeropsis-Shoot-Blight-and-Canker-P504.aspx>
- UW-Extension Fact Sheet XHT1010, *Diplodia Shoot Blight and Canker*, at <http://hort.uwex.edu/articles/diplodia-shoot-blight-and-canker/>

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