



POPLAR YELLOW LEAF BLISTER

Fig. 1. Blister development on poplar leaves. The blisters are convex on the upper side of the leaf and concave on the lower side.



Several kinds of poplar and cottonwood can be affected by yellow leaf blister, a disease caused by the fungi *Taphrina populi-salicis* and *T. populina*. Lombardy poplar growing in western Washington often shows symptoms of this disease.

The symptoms of the disease are quite noticeable. Blisters develop on the leaves, usually in late spring or early summer (Fig. 1). The blisters are convex on the upper side of the leaf, but concave on the lower side. The concave surface on the underside of the leaf is usually bright yellow to orange because of the masses of spores produced by the fungus. The underside of a young blister is green before the spore layer develops. Late in the season the old spore layer may become brown. The convex area on the upper leaf surface remains the green color of the leaf.

Occasionally the disease may result in a certain amount of leaf fall, but there is usually little if any lasting damage to the tree. Cool, moist weather favors the development of the disease.

Management

Cultural. This fungus can saprophytically multiply and then survive for extended periods of time on the surface of twigs and buds; thus, raking and destroying infected leaves will not help in limiting disease development.

Chemical. Since there is usually no actual damage associated with the disease, there may be no need to attempt to control it with fungicide applications. However, since the disease may make the foliage of the tree unsightly, application of a fungicide may be desirable, especially on valuable specimens.

An application of a registered fungicide should be made in early spring just as buds are beginning to swell. Delayed applications after leaves and shoots have started to grow are thought to be ineffective.

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