

Plant Health Care Recommendations for Honeylocust

Honeylocust, *Gleditsia triacanthos*, is a deciduous hardwood commonly planted in cities as a street tree. Honeylocust is native to the east central United States, where it grows in rich, moist soils along streams. Honeylocust has many pest problems, which has limited its use in recent years.

When Dutch elm disease killed most of the elms lining American streets, honeylocust was often used as a replacement. Readily transplanted, this species withstands a wide range of conditions, including poor soils and drought. Honeylocust is tolerant of deicing salt in the soil, a common problem along highways.

A desirable characteristic of honeylocust when used in the landscape is the light, textured shade provided by the lacelike pattern of small leaflets. The foliage of honeylocust emerges from the buds later in the spring than most trees, which also helps when growing turf, flowers or shrubs beneath this tree.

Many cultivars of honeylocust have been developed, primarily thornless forms. The better cultivars, such as ‘Shademaster’ and ‘Moraine’ also produce few seed pods.

The most common problems of honeylocust in the landscape include the following:

1. Mimosa webworm - This caterpillar frequently consumes all the foliage and covers honeylocusts with webbing. With two generations per year, several inspection/treatments per year are recommended.
2. Plantbugs, leafhoppers and treehoppers - The worst damage from this group occurs in mid spring, as the honeylocust leaves are developing.
3. Honeylocust pod gall midge - This small fly causes leaf deformation. Repeated attacks cause death of small branches.
4. Spider mites - The honeylocust spider mite causes the foliage to turn yellow and drop off the trees.
5. Cankers - Opportunistic fungi, such as *Thyronectria*, invade honeylocusts stressed by drought and heat. Cankers cause branch dieback and may kill trees.



Recommended Monitoring for Honeylocust

Timing	Treatment
Early Spring	Sample soil for nutrient and pH levels especially if deficiency symptoms are evident. If plants exhibit decline, sample branches. Excavate mulch from root collars. Add additional mulch to root zone as needed. Apply fertilizers and soil treatments to adjust pH as needed based on soil test results.
Mid Spring	Monitor and treat* for mimosa webworm, plantbugs, leafhoppers, treehoppers, and mites. Treat for pod gall midge on trees with a history of this pest.
Late Spring	Monitor and treat* for mimosa webworm, plantbugs, leafhoppers, treehoppers, and mites. Inspect irrigation and soil moisture levels to reduce moisture stress and prevent root disease. Inspect mulch levels and adjust as necessary.
Early Summer	Monitor and treat* for mimosa webworm, plantbugs, leafhoppers, treehoppers, and mites. Inspect irrigation and soil moisture levels to reduce moisture stress and prevent root disease. Inspect mulch levels and adjust as necessary.
Mid Summer	Monitor and treat* for mimosa webworm, plantbugs, leafhoppers, treehoppers, and mites. Inspect irrigation and soil moisture levels to reduce moisture stress and prevent root disease. Inspect mulch levels and adjust as necessary.
Late Summer	Monitor and treat* for mimosa webworm, plantbugs, leafhoppers, treehoppers, and mites. Inspect irrigation and soil moisture levels to reduce moisture stress and prevent root disease. Inspect mulch levels and adjust as necessary.
Fall	Monitor and treat* for mimosa webworm, plantbugs, leafhoppers, treehoppers, and mites. Ensure adequate soil moisture levels prior to onset of winter to minimize injury. Remove any mulch from stems to reduce risk of disease and rodent injury. Make soil applied insecticide treatment to reduce next year's pest problems. Prune out any injured or cankered branches.

* Apply treatments only when inspection has established that they are warranted.