

Oriental Chestnut Gall Wasp

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Identification, Biology & Management

The oriental chestnut gall wasp (OCGW) (*Dryocosmus kuriphilus*) is a notifiable pest of sweet chestnut trees and other trees in the chestnut (*Castanea*) genus. The adult wasp is 2.5-3 mm in length and the female cause's damage to chestnut trees by laying eggs in the buds of twigs. Galls form on the buds, leaves, and petioles as the larvae feeds, this can weaken the tree leaving it vulnerable to other diseases.

Symptoms

The buds, leaves, petioles, and twigs should be inspected in May-June when galls are visible. No other organism is known to form galls on sweet chestnut trees so its presence on the tree is a reliable symptom of OCGW.

Galls can be green, rose pink, or red in colour and become brown and woody after emerging as adults after an average of 50 days in June-July.

Control

At the time of writing this pest is notifiable therefore if found this pest should be reported immediately by sending clear well lit photograph to either:

UK: Tree Alert

<https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/tools-and-resources/tree-alert/>

IRE: Tree Check

<https://www.treecheck.net/>


Normally, when reporting to these organisations no physical sample is required. Contact the Bartlett Lab for assistance if required.

Other galls on chestnut (*Castanea*) are not notifiable so ensure that the infected tree is sweet chestnut before reporting.

Control of this pest is limited. Infected tissue can be removed and burnt to prevent the spread of the pest if the galls are identified prior to adult emergence. Good PHC practises and phosphite sprays and/or soil drenches to stimulate tree vitality as part of a fertiliser programme may reduce the impact of photosynthetic loss and help protect against other diseases.



Figure 1: Oriental chestnut gall wasp gall on a leaf.



Established in 1994, The Bartlett Tree Research Laboratories at the University of Reading is the research wing of Bartlett Tree Experts in the UK. Scientists here develop guidelines for all of the Company's services. The Lab also houses a state-of-the-art plant diagnostic clinic and provides vital technical support to Bartlett arborists and field staff for the benefit of our clients.