Plant species affected

Black Knot affects *Prunus genus* plants of both fruit and ornamental varieties. Common trees affected are;

- Amur Cherry
- Mayday Tree
- Apricot
- Mongolian Cherry
- Black Cherry
- Nanking Cherry
- Chokecherry
- Pin Cherry
- Dropmore Cherry
- Cultivated Plum
- Flowering Almond
- Wild Plum
- Flowering Plum
- Prunus Hybrids
- Japanese Plum
- Sand Cherry
- Korean Cherry
- Sour Cherry





Tourism Dawson Creek



BLACK KNOT FUNGUS

Apiosporina Morbosa



What is Black Knot?

Black Knot is a fungal disease that attacks plum and cherry trees that is widespread. It is easily identified with its hard, uneven, black galls that wrap twigs and branches. If left untreated it effectively strangles new growth, encircling the branches and dooming the tree to deterioration. The galls produced by the disease provide a gateway for additional disease and insect infestation which will be detrimental to the overall health of the tree.

How to recognize Black Knot

Black knot takes a season before it is visually apparent and producing spores. In the first year the small, light-brown and/or olive green swellings do not stand out and the infected parts of the tree are covered by leaves. The tree will eventually develop a growth (gall/knot) as a result of spores landing on the tree causing the infection.

If left to grow, the infection will be complete after 2-3 years. These galls are easy to identify as they are hard, black, and 10 to 15 cm producing and releasing a lot of spores during the bloom period, increasing infections of black knot. The fungus grows internally and externally until the branch dies as the growth will prevent new healthy growth of the tree. This leaves the tree at risk of infection by insects and other diseases using the galls as a an entrance into the tree. The trick to controlling Black knot is to recognize it early.

During April to June during wet, warm weather, a few symptoms you may see are:

- A small, light brown swelling on/around former or current tree growth
- Enlarged swellings that appear as olivegreen knots

By Autumn, after the spores are released, the knots turn dark black.





Black Knot treatment

Follow these tips in disease prevention and containment:

- 1. Examine all trees annually and throughout the growing season for signs of black knot fungus.
- 2. Look for cracks, discoloration, and swelling for the first signs of infection.
- 3. Pruning should be done in the late fall, winter or early spring when the knots are both easy to see from lack of foliage and dormant.
- 4. If you spot any galls, remove the infected branches at least six (6) inches, if possible up to twelve (12) inches away from the knot. Generously pruning out the infected parts ensures that you also remove the vegetative part of the fungus that does not visually appear as infected yet but will continue to grow if left on the tree. Failure to 1.remove branches beyond the internal growth will result in re-growth of the fungus
- 5. Ensure pruning blades are sharp, clean and disinfected with either bleach, isopropyl alcohol, rubbing alcohol or Pine-Sol.
- 6. Sanitize your tools between cuts and afterwards to prevent reinfection.
- 7. Remove diseased branches from any nearby infected trees, if possible.

- 8. Destroy the infected branches before the tree buds. Even after the knots have been removed from the tree, they can produce infective spores for up to 4 months after removal. Safely discard the infected stems and branches by putting them in a securely tied trash bag for garbage collection/ landfill or burn them. Do not compost infected stems or branches.
- 9. Prune annually until the disease is eradicated.
- 10. A severely infected tree may be best to be cut down completely. Contact an Arborist or Tree Removal company to assist.
- 11. Plant a different species that is not prone to the disease to help to eradicate black knot. Talk to your local nursery staff to see which species do best in your area.

