

Tree Pest and Disease Factsheet: Sweet Chestnut (*Castanea sativa*)



What to look out for on Sweet Chestnut

1. Sweet Chestnut Blight (*Cryphonectria parasitica*)

Key facts

- Fungal disease introduced from Asia into Europe
- First identified in the UK in 2011
- Impacts sweet chestnut, not horse chestnut trees

Key symptoms

- Orange-coloured cankers (areas of dead bark) on smooth bark
- Blister-like cracks on the tree's bark as the infection progresses
- Orange fruiting bodies of the fungus on the bark
- Leaf wilting above the cankers
- New shoots are produced below the area of dead bark

What to do if you suspect chestnut blight on your site

- Report your sighting immediately to the Forestry Commission using TreeAlert (see below)
- To prevent disease spread, the movement of infected plants, bark or wood is prohibited



cankers on bark



split bark and new shoots



fruiting bodies on bark



split bark

2. Oriental Chestnut Gall Wasp (*Dryocosmus kuriphilus*)

Key facts and symptoms

- Recently introduced to the UK
- Native to China
- Causes galls (swellings) on buds, leaves, and leaf stalks that can reduce tree growth over time
- Report sightings via TreeAlert



leaf galls in summer (above) and autumn (below)

3. *Phytophthora ramorum*

Key facts and symptoms

- Fungus-like organism that affects many plant and tree species, such as rhododendron, larch and sweet chestnut
- Native to Asia
- Symptoms include bark lesions, leaf wilting/blackening, canopy dieback and tree death
- Report sightings via TreeAlert



leaf wilting

Pest and Disease Reporting

- If you spot a pest or disease, report your concerns through the Forestry Commission's online reporting tool TreeAlert at treealert.forestryresearch.gov.uk
- Make sure you clean boots and equipment before and after site visits, to remove any mud and debris that can transmit pests and diseases

