



WHAT'S WRONG WITH MY BOXWOOD?

COMMON ISSUES & SOLUTIONS

By: Melanie Fuhrmann and Caitlin Splawski

Winter Damage *Environmental Damage*



- Browning of foliage
- Spring leaf drop
- Caused by cold, wind, sun, salt
- Severe or repeated damage can kill plants

Management Tips

- Plant hardy cultivars
- Avoid late-summer pruning
- Use burlap screens or windbreaks for protection



Photos: Caitlin Splawski, MSU Extension

Box Tree Moth *Invasive Caterpillar*



- Chewed leaves & webbing
- Defoliated - Skeletonized branches
- Quick onset of damage
- Can lead to plant death
- Green caterpillars with black stripes, white spots & a shiny black head

Management Tips

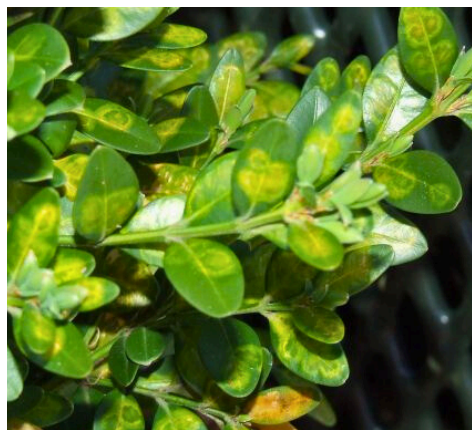
- Hand-pick larvae for small infestations
- Keep plants healthy with proper pruning & watering
- Double bag dead plants and clippings for disposal in trash
- Visit <https://www.canr.msu.edu/tag/box-tree-moth> for other treatment options

Read More:



Photos: Hannah Nadel, USDA & Mafalda Weldon, USDA

Boxwood Leafminer *Native Fly Larva*



- Blistered, yellowed leaves
- Yellow-orange discoloration
- Clicking sound when shaken
- Cosmetic damage, may weaken plants over time

Management Tips

- Prune after adult fly season (late Spring)
- Plant resistant cultivars
- Chemical control can be difficult



Photos: Rebecca Finneran, MSU Extension & Sarah Hughson, MSU Extension

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This work is supported by the Crop Protection and Pest Management Program [grant no 2024-70006-43569] from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture. Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.



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Boxwood Blight *Fungal Disease*



- Brown leaf spots
- Rapid leaf drop and bare branches
- Black lesions on stems
- Highly infectious
- Can kill entire plants quickly

Management Tips

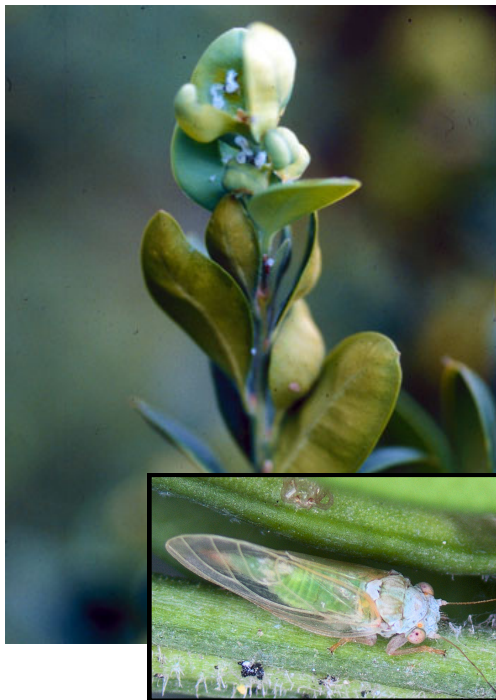
- Use resistant cultivars
- Remove infected plants & debris, double bag and dispose in trash
- Sanitize tools and equipment

Read More:



Photos: Sharon M. Douglas, University of Connecticut,
Peter W. Trenchard, University of Connecticut

Boxwood Psyllid *Sap-Sucking Insect*



- Cupped or puckered new leaves
- White waxy/cottony filament
- Distorts growth but damage is cosmetic

Management Tips

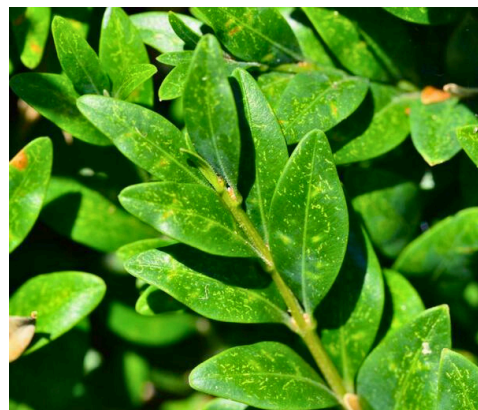
- Prune out damaged tips in early summer
- Chemical treatment is not recommended, but horticultural oil or insecticidal soap can be applied early spring

Read More:



Photo: Daniel Herms, The Ohio State University, Bugwood.org
& Sarah Hughson, MSU Extension

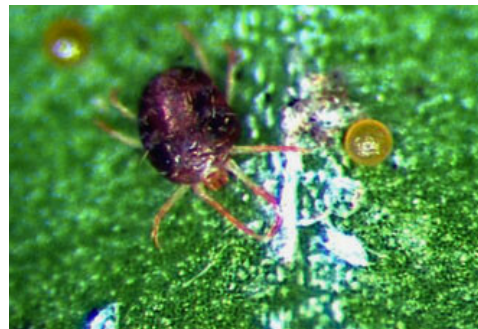
Boxwood Mites *Tiny Spider Mite*



- Leaf stippled (tiny pale white or yellow dots)
- Dull or bronzed leaf appearance
- Heavy infestations will weaken plants over time

Management Tips

- Monitor for stippling and discoloration
- Plan to treat spring into early summer
- Horticultural oil or insecticidal soap are effective treatment options



Photos: David L. Clement, University of Maryland, Rayanne Lehman, Pennsylvania Dept. of Agriculture, Bugwood.org