

Silver leaf

Chondrostereum purpureum

Silver leaf mainly occurs on blueberries in Chile, but has been sighted in North Carolina.



Andres France, INIA, Chile

Silvery appearance of leaves.



Andres France, INIA, Chile

Brown discolored heartwood.

Symptoms. The first symptoms are leaf surfaces appearing silver-colored in summer. Small pieces of leaf epidermis flake off and underlying areas may later turn dark-red or brown due to sunburn. Symptoms start on one or two branches, which decline and finally die. New branches continue to develop symptoms until the whole plant is affected. Infected plants may die after two or three seasons.

Another distinctive symptom is browning of the heartwood. Basidiocarps on dead wood are small (1-25 mm in diameter), purple to pink with a hairy surface and up-turned edges. Brigitta, Bluecrop, and Duke are susceptible.



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Disease cycle. Basidiospores are released from basidiocarps during rains in fall and winter. Spores can be dispersed several kilometers by wind. The fungus only colonizes fresh wounds. Spores germinate under moist conditions, invade the xylem, and grow into the wood towards the plant crown. The disease may also spread via cuttings from diseased plants.

Management. Use disease-free planting material; prune out and destroy diseased canes as soon as possible; disinfest pruning shears; apply fungicides or *Trichoderma*-based biocontrol agents to pruning wounds.