

# PLANT DISEASE CONTROL NOTES

EXTENSION DIVISION • VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY

## ORNAMENTAL AND FLOWER DISEASES

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SCAB OF CRAB APPLE AND PYRACANTHA  
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Certain varieties of the crab apples such as Almey, Hopa, Jay Darling, and Strathmore are very susceptible to scab caused by the fungus Venturia inaequalis. Foliage and fruit are often severely diseased. Pyracantha grown in the landscape and in containers is also susceptible and is damaged similarly by a closely related fungus, Fusicladium pirinum var. pyracanthae.

**SYMPTOMS:** Symptoms on flowering crab include spotting of leaves, premature defoliation, and unsightly scabby spots on the fruit. Scab first appears on the underside of new leaves as olive-green spots (Fig. 1). These spots become progressively olive, brown, and velvety in appearance and then leaves turn yellow and drop prematurely. Fruit may become infected at any time it is developing from blossom to maturity. Typical fruit lesions are distinct, almost circular, olive-green spots that later become brown or black.

Symptoms on pyracantha resemble those on crab apples. Fruit of pyracantha has scabby spots and is shriveled (Fig. 2). The leaves are covered with dark, sooty areas.

**DISEASE CYCLE:** The scab fungi overwinter in infected fallen leaves. In the spring crab apple leaves and fruit are infected by spores produced in the fallen leaves. Spores will germinate only if they are kept continuously wet over a period of time which varies according to temperature. At 46°F, which is the lowest temperature for spore germination, spores must remain wet for about 20 hours. At 70°F, the optimum temperature for germination, only 9 hours of continuous wetting is required.

### PREVENTION:

**Sanitation:** The disease can be partially prevented by raking and burning fallen leaves in the fall.

**Resistant Pyracantha and Flowering Crab Apple Varieties:** The variety of pyracantha Yunnan has been reported to be somewhat scab resistant. Under Pennsylvania conditions some crab apple varieties have shown resistance to scab; however, no specific reports are available stating varietal reactions under Virginia conditions. The following varieties are resistant:

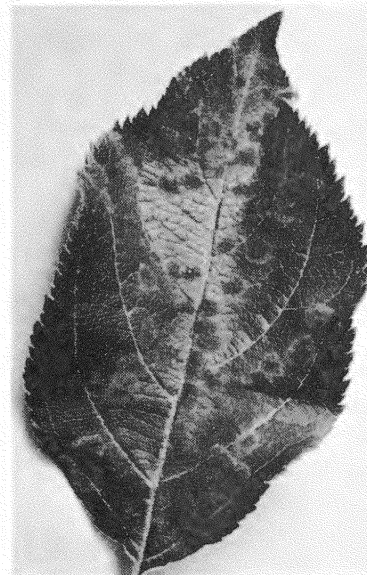


Fig. 1. Scab spots on crab apple leaf.

Malus baccata manshurica  
Malus hupehensis  
Malus sieboldii arborescens  
Malus zumi calocarpa  
'Bob White'  
'Makamik'  
'Mary Potter'  
'Snowbank'



**Fig. 2. Pyracantha**  
berries shriveled from  
scab infection.

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#### KEYS TO PROPER USE OF PESTICIDES

1. Read the label on each pesticide container before each use. Follow instructions to the letter; heed all cautions and warnings, and note precautions about residues.
2. Keep pesticides in the containers in which you bought them. Put them where children or animals cannot get to them, preferably under lock and away from food, feed, seed, or other material that may become harmful if contaminated.
3. Dispose of empty containers in the manner specified on the label.

SEE YOUR DOCTOR IF SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS OCCUR DURING OR AFTER USE OF PESTICIDES.

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