

# Bacterial Gall on oleander

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FIG. 1

**Disease Pathogen Name:** *Pseudomonas syringae* pv. *savastanoi*

**Pathogen Type:** Bacterium

**Period of Primary Occurrence:** after spring rains & cool weather

- The bacterium must have a wound site to enter the plant, and cold weather injury in early spring after a rain is a common circumstance under which infection takes place
- Most common after a cool wet spring

## Description / Symptoms

- The bacterium is systemic in the plant, and causes galls to form on flowers and stems
- Leaves also become galled
- Twigs and branches can die back, but overall plant health is usually not seriously threatened
- Gall bacteria reproduce in fissured or galled bark and are spread by contaminated water, implements, or hands
- Healthy tissue is infected through fresh wounds during wet weather



FIG. 2



FIG. 3



FIG. 4

## Best Management Practices (BMP)

### NON-CHEMICAL CONTROL

- Bacterial gall normally will not kill the plant
- Infected plant parts can be pruned, but care should be taken not to disseminate the bacterium on pruning tools
- Prune infected tissue well below the infection site, at least a foot if possible, and disinfect pruners between cuts by dipping them in a 10% bleach solution (common household bleach at 1:10 dilution) for a few seconds
- Be sure to rinse the bleach off tools when you are finished and apply an oil lubricant to avoid corrosion of the metal

## CHEMICAL CONTROL

- Severe infections can be controlled by applying Bordeaux mixture or a copper fungicide beginning in the fall and periodically spraying through the spring as new growth appears
- Bordeaux mixture (originated in France) as a 4-4-50 ratio. For a small amount of mixture, the ingredients are:
  - 3 1/3 tablespoons of copper sulfate and 3 tablespoons of hydrated lime, mixed in one gallon of water
  - The mixture will turn the tree blue; however, the color will eventually disappear. Caution must be taken NOT to store a mixture of Bordeaux
  - The ingredients must be kept separate and custom-mixed as a fresh spray

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Use pesticides only according to the directions on the label. Individuals who use chemicals are responsible for ensuring that the intended use complies with current regulations and conforms to the product label. If the information does not agree with current labeling, follow the label instructions. The label is the law.

Always remember to read and heed six of the most important words on the label: "KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN"

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