

Eriophyid Mites

Scientific Name: Family Eriophyidae

Host: Several hosts

Damage/symptoms: The damage caused from these microscopic mites rarely causes injury to the plant. The mites will pierce the leaf tissue and feed within the damaged areas. This results in either distortions or galls that can take the form of a blister, finger, hair, pouch, felt-like patch, witches' broom, or bump.



Figure 1. Finger-like galls on lilac. Photo by M. Zubrik, FRI, Slovakia, Bugwood

Life cycle: Mites typically overwinter as fertilized adult females under bud scales or other covered areas. The females will emerge following bud break, and several generations are produced throughout the growing season.



Figure 2. Erinea galls on Viburnum. Photo by Laurie Kerzicnik

Management: Galls or injuries sustained by the mites are generally cosmetic and are not known to harm the tree. If practical, galls can be pruned out and discarded. Dormant oils can be applied in early spring to control the overwintering mites if several branches and leaves are affected. A miticide labeled for the host can be used at bud break to manage emerging females.



Figure 3. Felt-like galls on river birch. Photo by S. Katovich, Bugwood

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Disclaimer: These recommendations are provided only as a guide. It is always the pesticide applicator's responsibility, by law, to read and follow all current label directions for the specific pesticide being used. Due to constantly changing labels and product registration, some of the recommendations given in this writing may no longer be legal by the time you read them. If any information in these recommendations disagrees with the label, the recommendation must be disregarded. The authors and Montana State University assume no liability resulting from the use of these recommendations.