

ASH FLOWER GALL MITES ON ASH TREES

Homeowners often become quite alarmed when they observe that their Autumn Purple Ash is infected with an abnormal growth that could be described as a tumor-like structure that resembles a cluster of green broccoli. As the summer and fall near, the clusters turn dark brown to black, but they do not drop. In extremely rare cases, the weight of the galls can weigh branches down. The galls can be unsightly, and slight nuisance to clean, but otherwise the galls are not harmful to the vitality of the tree.

The white ash tree produces a single flower so tiny it isn't visible except under close observation. These gall-like clusters are the result of Eriophyid mites that "sting" the male flower of a white ash. The mites spend the winter as an egg on the stems and under the buds of the ash leaf. Control can be difficult due to the mite's ability to enter the single male flower structure on the ash before the flower fully opens. This can take place as early as mid-late April before most homeowners begin to think about pest management.

The chemical sprays to control the mites can be made before they flower in the spring, but aren't necessary unless the tree branches are weighed down to a dangerous height.



Treatment:

(March) Horticultural Oil or Dormant Spray: This is a natural option that will suffocate many overwintered eggs with one thorough application before the buds develop.

In extreme infestations:

(Mid April) Bonide Systemic Insect Control as the buds are swelling, then again *right before* the buds open up

