



NEWS RELEASE

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Pine canker a growing concern in the East

A native canker is posing a growing problem for pines across New Hampshire and several other eastern states.

The *Caliciopsis* canker, or *Caliciopsis pinea*, is damaging pine trees in Grafton, Hollis and elsewhere across New Hampshire. The disease affects approximately 1,000 acres of eastern white pine in the Hollis area alone.

“Wherever towns in our state have white pine, you can find stands infested with *Caliciopsis*,” said Kyle Lombard, the New Hampshire Forest Health Program manager. “It is not uncommon to find up to 70 percent of pines in a given stand affected with the disease in parts of the Granite State, he added.”

Caliciopsis pinea can be found in dense pine stands in sandy and well-drained soils. Signs of possible *C. pinea* infection include cankerous growths and significant sapping, as well as crown thinning and decreases in crown density.

The Forest Service and New Hampshire Division of Forest and Lands will quantify *C. pinea* damage in the state during the next three years.

The *Caliciopsis* canker can also be found in Maine, Vermont, New York, Virginia, West Virginia and Georgia, as well as in Europe.

Forest health managers first detected the disease in New Hampshire in 1997.

“It was earlier confused with blister rust,” said Lombard, one of the officials who made the detection.

“When a landowner asked us what was killing his trees we looked into it. It seemed like blister rust, but on closer observation we determined it was *C. pinea* instead.”

“I don’t think there’s any question that *C. pinea* is a major contributing factor in cases where there are dead and dying eastern white pine stands,” added Lombard. “The only question is if it’s the primary or secondary cause of decline.”

Researchers investigated the *C. pinea* in the late 1930s, proving that the fungus is able to cause cankers in eastern white pine trees.

This pathogen has been receiving renewed interest of late because of its association with declining white pine health in several states including Georgia, Virginia, West Virginia and New Hampshire.

“The disease is poorly understood and requires further study,” said Isabel Munck, a US Forest Service forest pathologist in Durham, N.H.

The eastern white pine is an economically important species and is second only to the red maple as the most common tree species in New Hampshire.

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On the Net: https://www.extension.unh.edu/resources/files/Resource000999_Rep1148.pdf

Images: <https://plus.google.com/u/0/photos/111797591436986167739/albums/5753919695366897121>