We’re Here to Help

Collier Arbor Care is here to assist you with your tree, shrub and lawn care needs. If you would like more information on any of our services listed below, please give us a call or visit our website for valuable plant information.

- Plant Health Care Programs
- Soil Health Program
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- Pruning Trees & Shrubs
- Tree Removal & Stump Grinding
- Organic-based Lawn Care
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- Soil Treatments
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Fact Sheet #29
Rust

Crabapple Rust
Rust

Description
Rusts are fungal diseases that infect many hosts. Common rusts in our area include; Incense cedar-pear (and crabapple) rust, Western gall rust, rose rust, hollyhock rust.

Plants Affected
Birch, cottonwood, cypress, false cypress, fuchsia, hawthorn, juniper, pine, poplar, rhododendron, rose, and spruce.

Symptoms / Damage
Dry reddish, yellowish, or orange spore masses or pustules form on infected tissue, especially on the lower surface of leaves. The upper surface of heavily infected leaves turns yellow or brown and infected leaves may drop prematurely. Orange, gelatinous masses appear on some infected evergreen hosts. Some species cause tissue swellings or galls, colorful spots on plants, or cankers on bark. These can cause branch dieback and occasionally kill the entire plant. Some rusts may cause leaves and shoots to become distorted, dwarfed, and discolored, forming “witches broom”.

Life Cycle
Rusts have complicated life cycles. In trees they generally go from a coniferous host to an alternate host in the rose family to complete their life cycle. Spores are produced each spring, are windborne and infect other alternate hosts. Moist conditions stimulate spore release and favor infection. There are as many as 5 different spore types typical rust can produce. Western gall rust is an exception and only infects pines and has no alternate host.

Management

Cultural
- Avoid overhead watering, which favors spore germination
- Rake infected leaves or needles and clip and dispose of infected shoots and branches as soon as they appear
- Plant resistant varieties. There is a good list of resistant rose varieties from the Rose Society.
- Maintain healthy plants with proper watering and fertilization regimes to reduce overall plant stress making plants less palatable for insects.

Treatment
- Fungicides applied in the spring can reduce some rust diseases, but frequent applications required to provide good control are generally not warranted in landscapes.
- To control white pine blister rust, nearby alternate hosts (Ribes spp.) are sometimes removed, but the effectiveness of this is questionable.