

## Hot Summer Fungus

It's been a beautiful year, lots of sun, an early warm spring, and a basically mild winter. Excellent growing weather, even roses are looking good without putting in much of an effort. To my surprise a couple of weeks ago a lady brought me a maple leaf covered in a white fussy powder. My first thought was powdery mildew, but I didn't want to say it out loud because it seemed ridiculous to have mildew in this beautiful weather, so I went to the book. It was powdery mildew no doubt about it, but why? I didn't have an explanation. It thought that it was only an isolated incidence, so I dropped it. A few days later I found another maple tree with the same thing, then another in a different location. I started looking into it. A specialist at the Department of Agriculture told me that dramatic weather changes from wet to hot or heavy morning dew and hot days is favorable for powdery mildew. I then read that heavy pruning will make a tree more susceptible especially if it is pruned incorrectly.

Powdery mildew can be deadly on roses, but it's unlikely to kill a tree although it will set it back. If you notice you have powdery mildew on your tree or shrub and it is only on a few branches, simply remove the leaves or branch. Then clean your tools and clothes so you don't spread the fungus. Fungus spores are spread by the wind. If you feel you need to spray there are fungicides readily available.

**\* Please seal all plant samples in a clear Zip lock bag before bringing them to us for inspection. This allows us to look at the sample without spreading the problem to other plants.**