

Austrian Pine

(Pinus nigra)








A hardy, widely planted ornamental pine in Colorado known for long dark-green needles and strong wind tolerance. Austrian Pine performs well in alkaline soils but is highly susceptible to **Dothistroma needle blight**, **Zimmerman pine moth**, **needle scale**, and drought-related decline.



Seasonal Pest & Disease Calendar

Icons: 🌸 Spring | ☀️ Summer | 🍂 Fall | ❄️ Winter

Problem	Type	Active Season	Icons
Zimmerman pine moth	Insect/borer	Late Summer–Fall (eggs), Spring (larvae active)	☀️🍂🌸
Pine needle scale	Insect/scale	Crawler hatch in Spring; visible year-round	🌸❄️

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Active Season</u>	<u>Icons</u>
Pine sawfly	Insect/defoliator	Spring	
Dothistroma needle blight	Fungus	Spring infection; symptoms Summer–Fall	  
Sphaeropsis (Diplodia) tip blight	Fungus	Infects new shoots in Spring	
Environmental drought stress	Abiotic	Summer–Fall	 

Pest & Disease Guide (Homeowner-Friendly)

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Common Symptoms</u>	<u>Treatment & Management</u>
Zimmerman Pine Moth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Branch tips die back • Resin masses (“pitch masses”) on trunk or branch whorls • Larvae tunnel under bark 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timed insecticide in <i>early spring</i> (pros) • Remove heavily infested branches • Reduce stress with deep watering
Pine Needle Scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • White, elongated scale on needles • Yellowing and thinning foliage • Reduced vigor over time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horticultural oil late winter/early spring • Treat crawler stage (spring) with targeted insecticide • Improve vigor with watering and mulch
Pine Sawfly	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Larvae strip needles (especially lower branches) • Clusters of caterpillar-like larvae • Defoliation noticeable in spring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hand-remove small groups • Professional spray for heavy infestations • Encourage beneficial insects

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Common Symptoms</u>	<u>Treatment & Management</u>
Dothistroma Needle Blight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Red bands on needles with brown tips • Lower branches thin first • Needles drop prematurely 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fungicide in spring (two applications recommended) • Improve airflow: space trees or prune surroundings • Avoid overhead irrigation
Sphaeropsis (Diplodia) Tip Blight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New candle shoots die back • Resin droplets on cones • Browning from tips inward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fungicide applications in spring (pros) • Remove infected cones/branches • Reduce stress through watering and mulch
Environmental Drought Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needle tip browning • Sparse canopy • Premature needle shed during hot summers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep water every 3–4 weeks in summer • Maintain 2–4" mulch ring • Avoid soil compaction and root injury

When to Worry vs. When It's Cosmetic

● When to Worry (action recommended)

- Branch tips die back with **pitch masses** (likely Zimmerman moth)
- Rapid thinning and browning of lower branches
- Red-banded needles throughout canopy (Dothistroma)
- Widespread needle yellowing and dieback
- Heavy needle scale infestation

These indicate fungal disease or internal boring pests requiring timely intervention.

● Mostly Cosmetic (monitor only)

- Natural shedding of older, inner needles
- Minor needle browning during drought
- Light scale presence on limited branches
- Small patches of Dothistroma in wet years

These usually improve with proper watering and airflow.