

Bur Oak

(Quercus macrocarpa)

Bur Oak is one of the toughest and most adaptable oaks for Colorado. It tolerates drought, alkaline soils, pollution, and harsh winters better than most other oak species. While generally resilient, it can experience issues with **Kermes scale**, **gall wasps**, **two-lined chestnut borer**, **oak wilt (rare)**, and **chlorosis** in extreme soil conditions.



Seasonal Pest & Disease Calendar

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

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Active Season</u>	<u>Icons</u>
Kermes scale	Insect/scale	Spring crawlers; visible year-round	🌸 ❄️
Gall wasps (various)	Insect	Spring–Summer	🌸 ☀️

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Active Season</u>	<u>Icons</u>
Two-lined chestnut borer	Insect/borer	Summer	
Oak lace bug (less common)	Insect	Summer	
Anthracnose / leaf spot	Fungus	Spring–Summer	 
Oak wilt (rare in Colorado)	Fungus	Spring–Summer	 
Chlorosis (nutrient stress)	Abiotic	Spring–Summer	 
Environmental drought stress	Abiotic	Summer–Fall	 

Pest & Disease Guide (Homeowner-Friendly)

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Common Symptoms</u>	<u>Treatment & Management</u>
Kermes Scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sticky honeydew & sooty mold • Yellowing foliage • Round brown scale bumps on twigs • Twig dieback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat crawlers in late spring (pros) • Horticultural oil in late winter • Prune out heavily infested twigs
Gall Wasps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round, spiny, or irregular galls on leaves or stems • Leaves may distort or drop early • Usually cosmetic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not treat unless extremely severe • Rake and remove fallen leaves

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Common Symptoms</u>	<u>Treatment & Management</u>
Two-Lined Chestnut Borer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thinning canopy • D-shaped exit holes • Branches die back from top downward 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote tree vigor through watering & mulch • Water deeply during drought • Reduce stress (borers attack weakened trees) • Preventive trunk sprays during outbreak years
Oak Lace Bug	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Speckled, stippled leaves • Tiny insects on undersides of leaves • Premature browning in late summer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hose-rinse leaves • Encourage natural predators • Pro treatment for severe cases
Anthracnose / Leaf Spot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown patches along veins • Distorted or curled leaves • Early defoliation during wet springs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually cosmetic • Clean up fallen leaves • Improve airflow; avoid overhead irrigation
Oak Wilt (Rare in CO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sudden leaf wilt • Brown margins moving inward • Dieback progresses over weeks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate professional evaluation • Preventive fungicide injections may help • Avoid pruning April–July
Chlorosis (Iron Deficiency)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yellow leaves with green veins • Poor growth • Sparse canopy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soil iron treatments or trunk injections • Reduce overwatering & improve aeration • Mulch to protect feeder roots

Problem

Common Symptoms

Treatment & Management

Environmental Drought Stress

- Leaf scorch
- Early fall color
- Tip dieback

- Deep watering every 3–4 weeks in summer
- Maintain mulch ring
- Avoid compacting soil above roots

When to Worry vs. When It's Cosmetic

When to Worry (action recommended)

- D-shaped exit holes or top-down dieback (possible **borer**)
- Heavy scale infestation causing twig death
- Rapid leaf wilt in mid-summer (possible oak wilt; rare but serious)
- Severe chlorosis leading to branch decline
- Repeated early leaf drop year after year

These issues call for **professional evaluation and timely intervention**.

Mostly Cosmetic (monitor only)

- Light gall formation (very common and usually harmless)
- Mild anthracnose in wet springs
- Minor stippling from lace bugs
- Occasional scorch during drought
- Slight yellowing in early summer that resolves with watering

These typically resolve with **seasonal changes and proper watering.**