

Hawthorn

(*Crataegus spp.* — includes Washington Hawthorn, Toba Hawthorn, Crusader, Thornless Cockspur, and native species)

Hawthorns are hardy ornamental trees known for their **spring flowers**, **bright red berries**, and **tolerance of drought and poor soils**. In Colorado they perform fairly well but are particularly prone to **leaf spot diseases**, **rust**, **aphids**, **borers**, and occasional **fire blight**.



Seasonal Pest & Disease Calendar

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

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Active Season</u>	<u>Icons</u>
Leaf spot / <i>Entomosporium</i> leaf blight	Fungus	Spring–Summer	🌸 ☀️
Rust (cedar-hawthorn rust)	Fungus	Spring–Summer	🌸 ☀️
Aphids	Insect	Spring–Fall	🌸 ☀️ 🍂

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Active Season</u>	<u>Icons</u>
Scale insects	Insect	Spring crawlers; visible year-round	 
Borers (especially roundheaded borers)	Insect/borer	Summer	
Fire blight	Bacteria	Spring–Early Summer	 
Leaf scorch / drought stress	Abiotic	Summer–Fall	 

Pest & Disease Guide (Homeowner-Friendly)

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Common Symptoms</u>	<u>Treatment & Management</u>
Leaf Spot / Entomosporium (Very Common)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Red/purple or brown spots Yellowing leaves Early leaf drop Worse in wet springs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rake fallen leaves Increase airflow and sunlight Fungicide sprays only if severe and repeated
Rust (Cedar–Hawthorn / Cedar–Apple Rust)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bright orange/yellow leaf spots Gelatinous orange galls on junipers nearby Premature leaf drop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remove nearby juniper galls if possible Rake leaves Fungicide sometimes needed in heavy-pressure years
Aphids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sticky honeydew Sooty mold Leaf curling or distorted growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hose-rinse foliage Encourage lady beetles Systemic treatment if large colonies

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Common Symptoms</u>	<u>Treatment & Management</u>
Scale Insects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard bumps on twigs • Honeydew & black mold • Thinning canopy if severe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treat crawler stage late spring • Horticultural oil in late winter • Prune heavily infested twigs
Borers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exit holes • Sawdust-like frass • Branch dieback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep tree vigorous—borers target stressed trees • Mulch and deep water • Preventive pro sprays if confirmed locally
Fire Blight	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blackened, wilted “shepherd’s crook” shoots • Cankers oozing sap • Sudden dieback 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prune 8–12" below infected wood • Sanitize tools • Remove heavily infected trees • Professional antibiotic sprays during bloom only
Leaf Scorch / Drought Stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brown leaf edges • Early browning or leaf drop • Sparse canopy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deep water every 2–3 weeks • Mulch to conserve moisture • Avoid planting in hottest, driest sites

When to Worry vs. When It's Cosmetic

● When to Worry (action recommended)

- Severe leaf spot causing major defoliation year after year
- Widespread rust lesions with heavy early leaf drop
- Fire blight symptoms (crooked black shoots, oozing cankers)
- Borer exit holes combined with thinning canopy
- Rapid decline during hot, dry summers

- Large branch dieback or canker expansion

These may require **professional treatment or removal** depending on severity.

Mostly Cosmetic (monitor only)

- Light rust spotting
- Minor leaf spot during wet springs
- Small aphid colonies
- Slight scorch in heat waves
- Early fall color in drought

These issues typically improve with **seasonal weather changes and proper watering**.