

## Mulberry

(*Morus spp.*) — White, Red, Hybrid & Fruitless Mulberries

Mulberries are tough, drought-tolerant shade trees known for **fast growth, dense canopies**, and (on fruiting types) **heavy berry production**. In Colorado, they are generally durable but can experience **bacterial blight, leaf spot, mildew, scale, webworms, bronzing from mites**, and **environmental stress**.



## Seasonal Pest & Disease Calendar

Icons:  Spring |  Summer |  Fall |  Winter

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Active Season</u>	<u>Icons</u>
Bacterial blight ( <i>Pseudomonas</i> )	Bacteria	Spring–Early Summer	 
Leaf spot	Fungus	Spring–Summer	 
Powdery mildew	Fungus	Summer–Fall	 
Scale insects	Insect	Spring crawlers; visible year-round	 

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Active Season</u>	<u>Icons</u>
Spider mites	Mite	Summer–Fall	
Fall webworm	Insect	Late Summer–Fall	
Aphids	Insect	Spring–Fall	
Environmental heat/drought stress	Abiotic	Summer–Fall	

### Pest & Disease Guide (Homeowner-Friendly)

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Common Symptoms</u>	<u>Treatment &amp; Management</u>
Bacterial Blight (Common in Wet Springs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Black, water-soaked leaf edges</li> <li>Blighted new shoots</li> <li>Leaves may curl or drop early</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prune out affected shoots (dry weather)</li> <li>Sanitize tools</li> <li>Avoid overhead irrigation</li> <li>No chemical cure—usually seasonal</li> </ul>
Leaf Spot (Fungal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brown or black circular spots</li> <li>Scattered leaf drop</li> <li>Often cosmetic</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rake leaves</li> <li>Improve airflow</li> <li>Rarely needs fungicide</li> </ul>
Powdery Mildew	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>White powdery coating</li> <li>Distorted new growth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase sunlight and airflow</li> <li>Fungicide only if severe</li> </ul>

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Common Symptoms</u>	<u>Treatment &amp; Management</u>
<b>Scale Insects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hard bumps on twigs</li> <li>• Honeydew and black sooty mold</li> <li>• Thinning canopy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dormant oil in winter</li> <li>• Treat crawler stage in late spring</li> <li>• Prune infested twigs</li> </ul>
<b>Spider Mites (Bronzing)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stippled, dusty leaf surface</li> <li>• Overall bronzing</li> <li>• Fine webbing occasionally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rinse with strong water spray</li> <li>• Increase humidity (light watering under canopy)</li> <li>• Miticide treatment if severe</li> </ul>
<b>Fall Webworm</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Webbed nests on branches</li> <li>• Foliage eaten inside webs</li> <li>• Aesthetic damage late season</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove or break open nests early</li> <li>• Pro treatment if widespread</li> </ul>
<b>Aphids</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Honeydew</li> <li>• Sooty mold</li> <li>• Leaf curling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hose off foliage</li> <li>• Encourage natural predators</li> <li>• Systemic insecticide if severe</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental Stress (Common in Hot, Dry Areas)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early yellowing</li> <li>• Sparse canopy on exposed sites</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deep water every 2–3 weeks</li> <li>• Mulch 2–3" deep</li> <li>• Avoid planting against reflective heat</li> </ul>

## When to Worry vs. When It's Cosmetic

### ● When to Worry (action recommended)

- Severe leaf blight each spring causing major defoliation
- Heavy scale infestations producing black sooty mold
- Whole branches dying back (possible canker or borer involvement)
- Intense mite bronzing causing thinning canopy

- Large webworm nests defoliating major sections
- Tree declining in compacted or drought-stressed sites

Mulberries are tough, but **chronic blight or scale**, or **site stress**, can cause long-term decline.

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### **Mostly Cosmetic (monitor only)**

- Light leaf spot or powdery mildew
- Small webworm nests removed early
- Minor mite stippling
- Slight early yellowing in late summer
- Occasional aphid honeydew

Most issues are **aesthetic only** and don't threaten tree health.