

## Tulip Tree

(*Liriodendron tulipifera* — also called *Yellow Poplar* or *Tuliptree*)

Tulip Tree is a **beautiful, stately tree** known for its unique tulip-shaped leaves, distinctive green-and-orange spring flowers, and straight trunk. However, it is **not well adapted to most Colorado sites** due to alkaline soils, low humidity, and heat/drought stress. Common issues include **aphids, leaf scorch, canker, verticillium wilt**, and **early decline** in poor soil conditions.



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## Seasonal Pest & Disease Calendar

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

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Active Season</u>	<u>Icons</u>
<b>Aphids (major nuisance)</b>	Insect	Spring–Fall	🌸 ☀️ 🍂
<b>Scale insects</b>	Insect	Spring crawlers; visible year-round	🌸 ❄️
<b>Leaf scorch (heat/drought)</b>	Abiotic	Summer–Fall	☀️ 🍂

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Active Season</u>	<u>Icons</u>
<b>Verticillium wilt (high concern)</b>	Fungus	Spring–Fall	
<b>Canker diseases</b>	Fungus	Spring–Fall	
<b>Leaf spot / anthracnose</b>	Fungus	Spring–Summer	
<b>Environmental decline (alkaline soils)</b>	Abiotic	Year-round	

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

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Common Symptoms</u>	<u>Treatment &amp; Management</u>
<b>Aphids (Very Common)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sticky honeydew dripping from canopy</li> <li>• Sooty mold on leaves/car surfaces</li> <li>• Leaf curling or distortion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hose-rinse foliage</li> <li>• Encourage lady beetles &amp; lacewings</li> <li>• Systemic treatment if severe</li> </ul>
<b>Scale Insects</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hard bumps or cottony masses on bark</li> <li>• Leaf yellowing</li> <li>• Honeydew &amp; sooty mold</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat crawler stage in late spring</li> <li>• Horticultural oil in late winter</li> <li>• Prune heavily infested twigs</li> </ul>
<b>Leaf Scorch (Common in CO)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Browning on leaf edges</li> <li>• Crispy tips</li> <li>• Early leaf drop</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deep watering every 2–3 weeks</li> <li>• Maintain 2–4" mulch ring</li> <li>• Avoid hot, windy, and reflective heat areas</li> </ul>

<u>Problem</u>	<u>Common Symptoms</u>	<u>Treatment &amp; Management</u>
<b>Verticillium Wilt</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sudden wilting on one branch or one side</li> <li>• Brown/green streaks in sapwood</li> <li>• Progressive dieback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No cure—manage stress</li> <li>• Prune affected limbs</li> <li>• Mulch and deep water to slow progression</li> </ul>
<b>Canker Diseases</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sunken bark patches</li> <li>• Cracked bark</li> <li>• Branch dieback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove infected limbs back to collar</li> <li>• Sanitize pruning tools</li> <li>• Improve vigor—no chemical cure</li> </ul>
<b>Leaf Spot / Anthracnose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Brown or black blotches</li> <li>• Early leaf drop in wet springs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rake/remove infected leaves</li> <li>• Improve airflow</li> <li>• Fungicide rarely needed</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental Decline (Alkaline Soil Sensitivity)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yellowing leaves</li> <li>• Slow growth</li> <li>• Thinning canopy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soil amendments to improve acidity (limited success)</li> <li>• Deep watering</li> <li>• Consider replacing if decline becomes severe</li> </ul>

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

#### ● When to Worry (action recommended)

- One-sided wilting or rapid dieback (possible **Verticillium wilt**)
- Heavy aphid/scale infestations causing leaf drop
- Repeated severe scorch each summer
- Multiple expanding cankers
- Progressive thinning year over year
- Decline in poorly drained or highly alkaline soil (common in CO Front Range)

Tulip Trees are **high-risk in Colorado** unless planted in irrigated, protected, and moderately acidic soils.

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● **Mostly Cosmetic (monitor only)**

- Light leaf spotting
- Occasional scorch in hot summers
- Minor aphid activity with limited honeydew
- Early fall color during drought
- Small twig dieback

These typically resolve with **proper watering and cooler seasonal weather**.