



# NCDA&CS

## Plant Industry Division Plant Protection Section

# PEST ALERT

### Ribes species

### Mediate

### White Pine Blister Rust

*Cronartium ribicola*



White pine blister rust (WPBR) is an invasive fungal disease that kills white pine trees (*Pinus strobus*). This disease is the most destructive disease of white pines in North America.

WPBR rust must have *Ribes* spp. (currants and gooseberries) nearby to spread. The fungus cannot be transmitted from pine to pine. To safeguard North Carolina agriculture, all plants in the *Ribes* genus are prohibited in the state.



a) Rust spores on the leaf of hybrid black currant. b). Leaves of *Ribes* spp. infected by white pine blister rust. c). Hair-like spore producing structures on the lower leaf surface of *Ribes* spp. d). Blister cankers on white pine. e). Infected white pine branch with dying needles (Photo from UMass extension; Bugwood.org; UMN extension)

### HOSTS:

All North American white pines (member of subgenus *Strobus*) are susceptible. Alternate hosts include currants and gooseberries in the genus *Ribes*. Both *P. strobus* and *Ribes* spp. are required to complete its life cycle.

### SYMPTOMS:

On *Ribes* spp., symptoms such as leaf spots and premature defoliation occur. Spores produced on lower side of the leaves are the source of infection for the diseased to spread to white pine trees.

On white pine trees, symptoms are severe and include branch canker, branch die-back, top-kill, or whole tree mortality. Infected white pine trees are also weakened and subject to attack by other pests such as bark beetles and brown rot.

### WHAT TO DO:

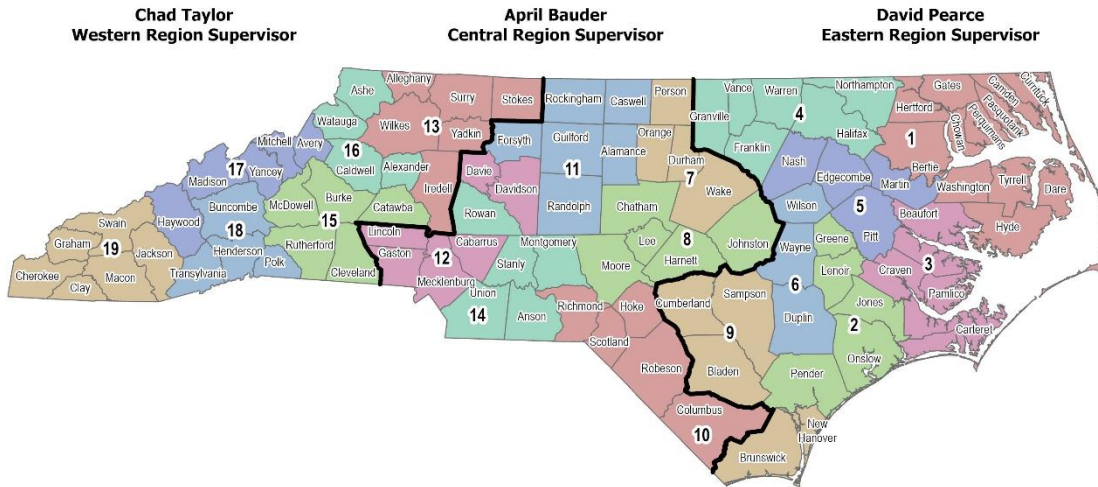
**Know the Law:** Currants and gooseberries spread white pine blister rust. All wild and cultivated currant and gooseberry plants can spread the disease through NC landscapes and forests, and are therefore prohibited in North Carolina.

(02 NCAC 48A .0401)

**Obey the Law:** If you have currants or gooseberries on your property, remove them by bagging them and sending them to the landfill or cut and burn the top and treat the stump with herbicide to prevent re-growth. Contact your local Plant Pest Specialist for other removal options.

**Report locations selling *Ribes* spp.:** Contact your local Plant Pest Specialist (see back of sheet for contact information) or HT Tseng ([ht.tseng@ncagr.gov](mailto:ht.tseng@ncagr.gov), 919-707-3754) NCDA&CS - Plant Pathologist if you see prohibited plants for sale in North Carolina.

**NC Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services**  
**Plant Industry Division – Plant Protection Section**  
**Plant Pest Specialist Work Areas**



**Specialist's Names, Contact Information and Assigned Areas**

Area 1:	Bertie, Camden, Chowan, Currituck, Dare, Gates, Hertford, Hyde, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell, Washington	Joe Davenport	(919) 608-0635
Area 2:	Greene, Jones, Lenoir, Onslow, Pender	Bonnie Faulkner	(252) 521-3180
Area 3:	Beaufort, Carteret, Craven, Pamlico	David Pearce	(252) 670-1742
Area 4:	Franklin, Granville, Halifax, Northampton, Vance, Warren	Derreck Long	(252) 567-1247
Area 5:	Edgecombe, Martin, Nash, Pitt	Juliet Whitehurst	(919) 218-1765
Area 6:	Duplin, Wayne, Wilson	Scott Cannady	(919) 270-4910
Area 7:	Durham, Orange, Person, Wake	April Bauder	(919) 777-3251
Area 8:	Chatham, Harnett, Johnston, Lee, Moore	Jensen McLamb	(910) 638-4943
Area 9:	Bladen, Brunswick, Cumberland, New Hanover, Sampson	Chris Carter	(919) 218-8654
Area 10:	Columbus, Hoke, Richmond, Robeson, Scotland	Michelle Shooter	(910) 734-3477
Area 11:	Alamance, Caswell, Forsyth, Guilford, Randolph, Rockingham	Andrew Allen	(336) 404-5873
Area 12:	Cabarrus, Davidson, Davie, Gaston, Mecklenburg, Lincoln	Heidi Humlicek	(406) 750-6432
Area 13:	Alleghany, Iredell, Stokes, Surry, Wilkes, Yadkin	Ginger Hemmings	(336) 314-9334
Area 14:	Anson, Montgomery, Rowan, Stanly, Union	Samuel Harris	(919) 604-3896
Area 15:	Burke, Catawba, Cleveland, McDowell, Rutherford	Amanda Cook	(828) 443-1289
Area 16:	Alexander, Ashe, Caldwell, Watauga	Chad Taylor	(336) 466-0478
Area 17:	Avery, Haywood, Madison, Mitchell, Yancey	Tim Hartley	(828) 260-0588
Area 18:	Buncombe, Henderson, Polk, Transylvania	Sue Dial	(828) 577-0915
Area 19:	Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Jackson, Macon, Swain	Ryan Holquist	(828) 421-5445

**Mailing Address: 1060 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-1060**

**Physical Address: 216 West Jones Street, Raleigh NC 27603**

**Phone: (919) 707-3730 | Fax: (919) 733-1041**

Please visit our website at [www.ncagr.gov/plantindustry](http://www.ncagr.gov/plantindustry) for more information!