



# 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:

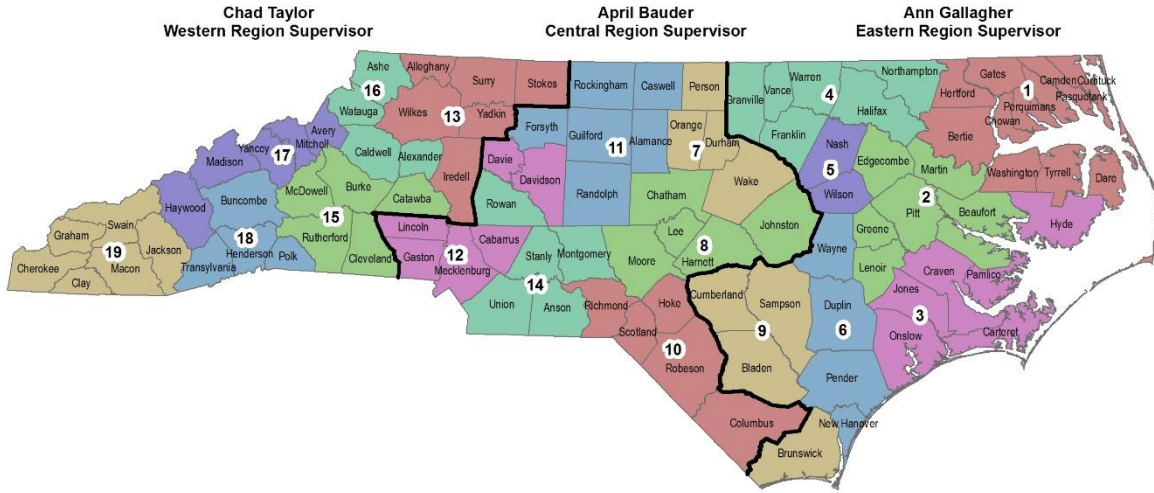
**Know the Law:** Currants and gooseberries spread white pine blister rust. All wild and cultivated currant and gooseberry plants can spread the disease through NC landscapes and forests, and are therefore prohibited in North Carolina.

(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, Pasquotank, Perquimans, Tyrrell, Washington | Joe Davenport    | (919) 608-0635 |
| Area 2:  | Beaufort, Edgecombe, Greene, Lenoir, Martin, Pitt   | Bonnie Faulkner  | (252) 521-3180 |
| Area 3:  | Carteret, Craven, Hyde, Jones, Onslow, Pamlico  | David Pearce     | (252) 670-1742 |
| Area 4:  | Franklin, Granville, Halifax, Northampton, Vance, Warren  | Derreck Long     | (252) 567-1247 |
| Area 5:  | Nash, Wilson  | Ann Gallagher    | (919) 218-1765 |
| Area 6:  | Duplin, New Hanover, Pender, Wayne  | 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, 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, Madison, Mitchell, Yancey  | Tim Hartley      | (828) 260-0588 |
| Area 18: | Buncombe, Henderson, Polk, Transylvania   | Sue Dial         | (828) 577-0915 |
| Area 19: | Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, 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!