

black knot (*Apiosporina morbosa*)



black, deformed galls on cherry stems

black knot

Apiosporina morbosa

Black knot is an important disease of cherry, because it degrades this wood of this valuable veneer and lumber species. Except for southern Florida and southern Louisiana, this disease is found throughout the Southeast. Many species of cherry are affected, but black cherry is the only commercially important species. The disease is rarely fatal.

Swellings on the branch of the host plant are covered with an irregular, rough, fruiting layer of fungal tissue. Spore bearing fruiting bodies form within this fruiting layer. The fruiting bodies and the spores are easily recognized by a specialist.

Black knot is a disease that causes irregular black swellings on black cherry stems, branches, and twigs. Often a white fungus is found growing over the swellings. Later, the swellings blacken and appear rough. Infection occurs during the spring, and swellings develop the following spring. These swellings are overgrown by a black irregular mass of fungal fruiting bodies.