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# BOXWOOD BLIGHT



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## Boxwood Blight

March 12, 2013  
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### Boxwood Blight shown to be Pathogenic on Allegheny Spurge

Posted by:  
[Joe Bischoff](#),

The pathogen Boxwood Blight (*Calonectria pseudonaviculata*) has shown an ability to infect every species of the family Buxaceae that has been evaluated, thus far. A recently published article includes the native Allegheny spurge (*Pachysandra procumbens*), which is found in isolated pockets from Florida to Pennsylvania, as a potential host. Although not as commonly planted as Japanese spurge (*Pachysandra terminalis*), it too is used regularly as an ornamental ground cover plant.

Last week, Plant Health Progress published an article, by lead author Dr. Jim LaMondia of the Connecticut Agriculture Experimental Station (CAES), describing the ability of Boxwood Blight to infect native Pachysandra under lab conditions. The same lab had conducted similar work last year showing the susceptibility of Japanese spurge to the pathogen. Subsequently, over twenty infections of Japanese spurge have been found in landscapes in Connecticut.

Adding to the concern is the study's conclusion that the infections on Allegheny spurge appear to be more aggressive than what was found on Japanese spurge. In the case of our native Pachysandra, necrotic lesions occurred on the stems and leaves. Stems are eventually girdled causing shoot and/or plant death. Furthermore, sporulation of Boxwood Blight was greater on Allegheny spurge than its Japanese counterpart.

Japanese and Allegheny spurge are commonly planted along with Boxwood in the same landscapes. The fact that all are potential hosts of Boxwood

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Blight further complicates the ability to control the pathogen's spread. In addition, this disease could threaten Allegheny spurge in its native habitat. This is especially troubling in Indiana and Florida where the plant is considered threatened according to the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service.

For more information or a copy of the manuscript please contact Dr. Jim LaMondia at [James.Lamondia@ct.gov](mailto:James.Lamondia@ct.gov).

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*Industry Recommended Best Management Practices for the prevention and eradication of Boxwood Blight within a nursery*

#### About the Authors

##### Joe Bischoff

Dr. Joe Bischoff is AmericanHort's Director of Government Relations. Focused on legislative and regulatory issues connected to pest and disease management, Joe also works in collaboration with the Horticultural Research Institute (HRI), the research arm of AmericanHort's, to develop and implement strategies for responding to new pest and disease challenges facing the industry. He was recently appointed to the Federal Invasive Species Advisory Committee (ISAC), serves on the Tier 2 Commodity Committee for the National Clean Plant Network – Fruit Trees, and is on the Research Committee of the National Ornamentals Research Site at Dominican University of California. Before joining the AmericanHort's, Dr. Bischoff was National Mycologist with the Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) of the USDA.



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