



DOVE
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Pear leaf blister mite

Pear leaf blister mite (*Phytoptus pyri*) is a widespread and often common pest on pears but can sometimes attack apples too. The female of the species is about 0.2mm in length with a long, narrow white/pale brown body.



Lifecycle

The adults of both sexes usually overwinter beneath the outer bud scales and become active in the early spring when the buds then start to swell. At this time they burrow deeper into the buds and start to feed and lay eggs at the base of the inner scales of the bud. The adults also feed on other parts of the tree including the young leaves and developing flower buds. As with most mites, populations can be found on the underside of the leaves which shelter them from sun and rain. However, as the leaves succumb to the attack some of the cells collapse under the blisters formed as a result of the feeding and they enter through these damaged areas. Small galls are formed where the mites continue to breed throughout the summer. As new mites emerge, so more blisters are formed that then develop into galls. As the days shorten, the mites then progress to the bud scales again for the winter.

Damage

The galls can be seen as early as when the leaves start to unfurl. The galls are like green pimples which can change to yellow as the season progresses. Some produce a red colouring which can be seen on the leaf surface. Usually the galls are along the main vein but can spread as populations increase. Mites can be transported easily on the wind and on clothing. Leaves severely infested can turn brown and crop off.

Use plant protection products safely. Always read the label and product information before use

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Control

Make sure plants are not water stressed. Physical removal of affected leaves by leaving the petiole on the branches can reduce pest pressure. The following products may have some effect on blister mites and can be used on pear trees (check individual labels for harvest intervals and spray timing information) but do not have specific label recommendations for the control of blister mites.

Retail products available for use on pear trees in 2019:

- Fatty acids: Bug Free and others
- Lambda-cyhalothrin: Resolva Bug Killer Concentrate or Westland Plant Rescue Fruit & Vegetable Concentrate Bug Killer

Commercial products available for use on pear trees in 2019:

- Deltamethrin: Decis
- Lambda-cyhalothrin: Hallmark WZT
- Clofentezine: Apollo 50SC

An EAMU (Extension of Authorisation for Minor Use) is required for use in ornamental plant production for ornamental Pyrus spp. for Decis, Hallmark WZT and Apollo 50SC. Download documents from <https://secure.pesticides.gov.uk/pestreg/prodsearch.asp> or contact the office. Print out each EAMU and read it carefully prior to use at your risk.

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