

Ash Dieback

What is it?

What are the main ash-dieback symptoms to look for?

When an ash tree is infected with the fungus *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus* the main symptoms of dieback are visible on the new shoots and leaves.

The key symptoms to look for are:



1 Loss of leaves from the crown (the top) of the tree.

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2 New growth is wilted.

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3 The presence of diamond shaped dark areas of bark where the new shoot meets the main tree.

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4 The wood underneath these areas will be darkly stained.

Photo courtesy of Thomas Kirisits, Institute of Forest Entomology, Austria

What else can you look for?

In summer (June - October) the fungus produces fruiting bodies on the dead leaf litter which fell to the ground during the previous autumn. These fruiting bodies are very small (3-5mm) creamy coloured and mushroom-like, and create huge quantities of spores which are blown by the wind and spread the disease to other ash trees.



Photo courtesy of Andrin Gross, Institut Integrative Biologie, Zurich, Switzerland

What can YOU do to help?

1. Have you seen an ash tree that has any of the symptoms mentioned?

and/or

2. Is it June-October, and you have seen fruiting bodies on ash leaf litter lying on the ground that look like those shown above?

Is it definitely an ash tree?

- Characteristic black “hoof-shaped” buds on the end of the twigs;
- A smooth and grey bark with fissures that appear as it grows older;
- Large bunches of winged seeds hanging on the tree from autumn to spring;
- Clusters of small purple flowers appearing usually in April before the leaves are produced in May;
- Leaves are composed of several “leaflets”. These are lance shaped with slightly toothed edges and arranged in pairs with an odd one at the end.



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For further tips on identifying ash trees look at this website:
<http://www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/inf-d-8zsjbc>

If the answer to **either** of these questions is **yes** then:

- i) Take a close-up photograph of the diseased part of the tree **OR** the fruiting bodies (if you can);
- ii) Record the exact location of where the diseased trees or fruiting bodies are (if you have GPS on your phone use this reference);
- iii) Record how many ash trees look infected;
- iv) Report your findings by phoning **0300 200 7847** or email details to **planthealth@daera-ni.gov.uk** giving your name and **contact details**.

You will be asked to send your information in and an inspector may come out to assess the site.



If you have a smart phone you can use TreeCheck to report suspect findings. Go to www.treecheck.net and complete the form.