



Apple Scab

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Scab is one of the most devastating diseases of ornamental crabapples and apples. If early spring weather conditions are optimum (warm and moist), hawthorn and mountain ash may also be seriously affected.

SYMPTOMS: While the scab fungus *Venturia inaequalis*, infects the leaves, petioles, and fruit, the leaf and petiole infections are the most important to landscape trees. The initial symptoms appear as olive-green to sooty or smudgy spots on the leaf or leaf petiole (Figure 1).



Fig 1. Symptoms of apple scab on leaves
On older leaves the infected areas form definite spots, which are slightly raised, black, and velvety in appearance. The lower sides of leaves become depressed and may cause leaf cupping. As the infection develops, the leaves turn yellow and drop

prematurely. Premature defoliation makes the tree aesthetically undesirable and greatly weakens it. Infected fruit becomes deformed, scabby and usually drops before maturity.

CONTROL: Some varieties of crabapple have demonstrated resistance to apple scab. Resistant varieties, which have the desired aesthetic foliage, fruit, and flower characteristics, should be used when possible.

Fungicide sprays will effectively control apple scab if applied in Spring (April-May). Sprays should be applied at seven to ten day intervals from bud break until two weeks after petal fall. Remove fallen leaves and any mummified fruit during autumn to reduce the inoculum potential. During winter clean and/or light thin the crown to improve circulation of air through the crown.

Improve tree vitality by appropriate fertilisation, mulching and watering as needed.

Microcapsule trunk injections will provide a useful degree of control for a growing season. If scab is present at the time of injection greater benefits are generally observed the following year.

