Xylella fastidiosa

HOST: PLANE (*Platanus* species)

BRIGIT

What is *Xylella fastidiosa* and why is it so serious?

- A dangerous bacterium threatening hundreds of species of plants in the UK
- It is spreading across southern Europe from its origins in the Americas
- Can be transported by sap-feeding insects such as spittlebugs
- Causes plant death by blocking water transporting vessels (xylem)
- Currently no cure

Platanus spp.

- Large deciduous tree (up to 35m)
- Simple, lobed alternate leaves which are leathery and thick
- Multicoloured bark which flakes off in patches, leaving a camouflaged pattern on the stem and branches
- Produces clusters of ball-shaped flowers and fruits set on long hanging stalks

What is BRIGIT?

A collaborative project aimed at reducing the risk of a *Xylella* introduction into the UK and mitigating the risks in the event of an outbreak. Please turn over to find out more.

What to look out for

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- Leaf scorch, usually occurring at leaf margins first; tissues die, leaves curl inwards. Often no yellow boundary between diseased / healthy tissue as in other hosts 1
- Main veins remain green with remainder of leaf dying and turning brown 2
- Diseased leaves in crown appear scorched, brown and curl inwards 3
- Discoloration / death of foliage and dieback of twigs / branches in crown. These symptoms typically develop at base of crown before moving upwards and outwards as disease progresses 4

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Where is the plant from?

- Plants sourced from infected countries are at a much higher risk of carrying the disease-causing bacterium

How long have you had the plant?

- Imports from the last couple of years pose the highest risk

Do not panic!

There are other reasons for disease symptoms to appear. Consider if the plant is under stress from:

- Root or stem damage
- Drought
- Hot weather
- Frost
- Nutrient imbalance

How to report *Xylella fastidiosa*

Collect together all available details including the host plant name, symptoms, origin, and import history and report your suspicions on TreeAlert at: bit.ly/2I0rwfq

Please DO NOT send plant samples to the RHS.

More information on BRIGIT and *Xylella* can be found at: bit.ly/2UZCV1E

Information on the government's response to *Xylella* and other pests and diseases can be found on the UK Plant Health Information Portal at: planthealthportal.defra.gov.uk