



Nora Catlin  
nora.catlin@cornell.edu

Volume 10 Number 37 November 2021

## Unusual Leaf Spot on Poinsettia

A sample of poinsettia with conspicuous leaf spots was received by the Cornell Long Island Horticultural Research and Extension Center (LIHREC) Diagnostic Lab, sent from a greenhouse located in another region. The leaf spots resembled scab, caused by the fungus *Sphaceloma poinsettiae*, however sporulation of the fungus *Corynespora cassiicola* was found. *C. cassiicola* is not a common problem on poinsettia, particularly for us in the northeast; fungal leaf spots caused by *Alternaria*, *Colletotrichum*, and *Botrytis* are more usually seen. *C. cassiicola* can cause brown leaf spots on leaves and bracts in conditions of high moisture and high humidity.

*C. cassiicola* listed as occurring on a very wide host range of over 500 plants from more than 350 genera including various ornamental plants as well as numerous vegetable, fruit, herb, and field crops. Ornamental plant hosts include poinsettia, hydrangea, begonia, African violet, salvia, annual vinca, and lipstick vine. Cucurbit crops, eggplant, pepper, tomato, and basil are a few of the edible crops affected.

*C. cassiicola* causes irregular, often large, brown lesions on leaves and bracts, often seen at the tips or edges. Leaf spots are usually very difficult to discern from one another and assistance of a diagnostic lab is necessary.

Infested plant material or debris can harbor inoculum of *C. cassiicola*, and good sanitation practices will help prevent the spread of this leaf spot disease. Reducing leaf wetness and humidity will also help to manage. Regular applications of a labeled fungicide may be needed if an outbreak occurs.

### 2021 Sponsors



Funding Generations of Progress  
Through Research and Scholarships



P.L. LIGHT SYSTEMS  
THE LIGHTING KNOWLEDGE COMPANY

Reprint with permission from the author(s) of this e-GRO Alert.

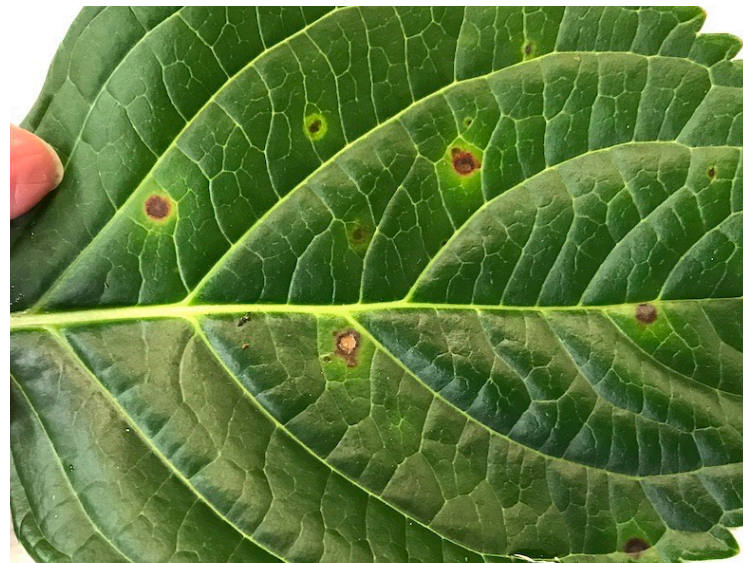
[www.e-gro.org](http://www.e-gro.org)





In the poinsettia sample seen this fall, spots looked very similar to scab caused by the fungus *Sphaceloma poinsettiae*, however no sporulation of *S. poinsettiae* were found and spores of *Corynespora cassiicola* were identified. When the sample was diagnosed it was wondered if the light-colored spots were early symptoms of *C. cassiicola* infection or if the leaf was infected by both *C. cassiicola* and *S. poinsettiae* and spores of *S. poinsettiae* were not present. (Photo courtesy of Margery Daughtrey)

Poinsettia scab leaf spots, caused by the fungus *Sphaceloma poinsettiae*. Symptoms of poinsettia scab are raised or puckered leaf spots, light in color, with purple margins and often a yellow halo. (Photo courtesy of Margery Daughtrey)



Leaf spot symptoms of poinsettia scab, caused by the fungus *Sphaceloma poinsettiae*. (Photo courtesy of Margery Daughtrey)

Leaf spot caused by *Corynespora cassiicola* on a hydrangea sample in summer 2021. (Photo courtesy of Margery Daughtrey)

**e-GRO Alert**

[www.e-gro.org](http://www.e-gro.org)

**CONTRIBUTORS**

Dr. Nora Catlin  
Floriculture Specialist  
Cornell Cooperative Extension  
Suffolk County  
[nora.cattin@cornell.edu](mailto:nora.cattin@cornell.edu)

Dr. Chris Currey  
Assistant Professor of Floriculture  
Iowa State University  
[currey@iastate.edu](mailto:currey@iastate.edu)

Dr. Ryan Dickson  
Greenhouse Horticulture and  
Controlled-Environment Agriculture  
University of Arkansas  
[rvand@uark.edu](mailto:rvand@uark.edu)

Thomas Ford  
Commercial Horticulture Educator  
Penn State Extension  
[tf2@psu.edu](mailto:tf2@psu.edu)

Dan Gilrein  
Entomology Specialist  
Cornell Cooperative Extension  
Suffolk County  
[dos1@cornell.edu](mailto:dos1@cornell.edu)

Dr. Joyce Latimer  
Floriculture Extension & Research  
Virginia Tech  
[jlatime@vt.edu](mailto:jlatime@vt.edu)

Heidi Lindberg  
Floriculture Extension Educator  
Michigan State University  
[wolleage@anr.msu.edu](mailto:wolleage@anr.msu.edu)

Dr. Roberto Lopez  
Floriculture Extension & Research  
Michigan State University  
[rlopez@msu.edu](mailto:rlopez@msu.edu)

Dr. Neil Mattson  
Greenhouse Research & Extension  
Cornell University  
[neil.mattson@cornell.edu](mailto:neil.mattson@cornell.edu)

Dr. W. Garrett Owen  
Greenhouse Extension & Research  
University of Kentucky  
[wowen@uky.edu](mailto:wowen@uky.edu)

Dr. Rosa E. Raudales  
Greenhouse Extension Specialist  
University of Connecticut  
[rosa.raudales@uconn.edu](mailto:rosa.raudales@uconn.edu)

Dr. Beth Scheckelhoff  
Extension Educator - Greenhouse Systems  
The Ohio State University  
[scheckelhoff.11@osu.edu](mailto:scheckelhoff.11@osu.edu)

Dr. Ariana Torres-Bravo  
Horticulture/ Ag. Economics  
Purdue University  
[torres2@purdue.edu](mailto:torres2@purdue.edu)

Dr. Brian Whipker  
Floriculture Extension & Research  
NC State University  
[bwhipker@ncsu.edu](mailto:bwhipker@ncsu.edu)

Dr. Jean Williams-Woodward  
Ornamental Extension Plant Pathologist  
University of Georgia  
[jwoodwar@uga.edu](mailto:jwoodwar@uga.edu)

Copyright ©2021

Where trade names, proprietary products, or specific equipment are listed, no discrimination is intended and no endorsement, guarantee or warranty is implied by the authors, universities or associations.

**Cooperating Universities**

**Cornell CALS**  
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

**Cornell Cooperative Extension  
Suffolk County**

**IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY**

**University of  
Kentucky**



**PennState Extension**

**VT VIRGINIA  
TECH**

**MICHIGAN STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

**UCONN**

**P PURDUE  
UNIVERSITY**



**College of Agricultural &  
Environmental Sciences  
UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

**NC STATE  
UNIVERSITY**



**THE OHIO STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

**U of A DIVISION OF AGRICULTURE  
RESEARCH & EXTENSION**  
University of Arkansas System

**In cooperation with our local and state greenhouse organizations**

**MAUMEE VALLEY GROWERS**  
Choose the Very Best.



Metro Detroit Flower Growers Association

