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# Office of the State Forester

## Arizona State Forestry



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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Sycamore Anthracnose Detected in Oak Creek Canyon

**20 May 2016** – The Arizona sycamore (*Platanus wrightii*) is a tree many enjoy along Oak Creek Canyon, near Sedona. It is iconic and very visible to tourists and locals alike. Due in large part to this year's cool spring weather, sycamore anthracnose (*Apiognomonia veneta*), a native foliar disease, has been causing discoloration and defoliation of sycamores along riparian corridors in Oak Creek Canyon. This is the second year in a row the disease has been widespread in the Canyon. However, it does not crop-up regularly. In fact, the last widespread occurrence of this disease was in 2004-2005.

Sycamore anthracnose discolors leaves, and causes leaf and twig mortality. Leaves often fall early in the season due to anthracnose. Although this may look unsightly, trees, especially mature trees, usually respond with a new flush of growth in summer.

Generally, no control is recommended, since this disease occurs infrequently and does not result in tree death. But raking and disposing of leaves around the tree in fall can reduce exposure to fungal spores. Spores are produced on the fallen leaves that re-infect trees in spring. The winter rains and snows may have also provided conditions suitable for the production of many spores. Pruning dead branches and canker tissue at appropriate times can also reduce the potential of disease spread. But either practice may not be practical with large, infected trees or groves.

Generally, no control is recommended, since this disease occurs infrequently, and does not result in tree death. But, some remedies do exist. For further information, please check out the following publications:

US Forest Service Field Guide to Insects and Diseases of Arizona and New Mexico Forests:

<http://www.fs.fed.us/r3/resources/health/field-guide/fd/sycamore.shtml>

Colorado State University Extension:

<http://extension.colostate.edu/docs/pubs/garden/02930.pdf>

University of Arizona Yavapai County Extension:

<http://cals.arizona.edu/yavapai/anr/hort/byg/archive/sycamoreanthracnose.html>

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For further information about this disease or other forest and woodland health concerns in the affected areas, contact: Bob Celaya, Forest Health Specialist, Office of the State Forester at (602) 771-1415 [bobcelaya@azsf.gov](mailto:bobcelaya@azsf.gov). Arizona State Forestry's Northern District Office in Flagstaff can be reached at (928) 774-1425.

– PHOTOS –



Wilting leaves infected with sycamore anthracnose in Oak Creek Canyon, near Indian Gardens.



A tree that experienced early leaf drop due to sycamore anthracnose infection in Oak Creek Canyon.



Defoliated sycamores scattered along Oak Creek. Cottonwoods, sugar sumac and cypress trees are those with full canopies.

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