



A MESSAGE FROM SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

PEAR RUST

1. Have you got a pear tree whose leaves looked like this last summer?



2. Have you got a juniper shrub in your garden with orange growths like this under the foliage?



3. An answer "Yes" to either of these questions indicates that a fungal infection, European Pear Rust, has reached your garden. If you have an infected pear tree all you can do is remove and burn infected leaves; not a practical proposition in most cases. If you have an infected juniper, removal of the growths should clear the infection from both plants. For further details, please see page 2.

Dear Neighbour,

On Sunnyside allotments our pear trees have regularly been infected in the summer with European Pear Rust, a disease caused by a fungus *gymnosporangium sabiniae* which has been spreading from continental Europe for some years. Fungal spores released from the leaves in autumn are spread on the wind and rely on juniper as their host during the winter. There is no chemical treatment for the infected pear trees that allows the fruit to be subsequently eaten. Leaf fall every autumn clears disease from the pear tree, but new spores are released from the juniper in the spring and early summer to repeat the cycle.

The fungus forms orange gelatinous masses on junipers, and infected shrubs develop cankers on their stems and branches. From May onwards, particularly following periods of high humidity, spores are released from the orange growths on the juniper, to be carried by the wind for distances of 200 metres or more. The photo of an infected juniper on page 1 was taken in Ivy House Lane last June, while signs of an old infection was found on a shrub on Sunnyside Old Allotments site. Both were destroyed but infection persisted during summer 2021.

Our worst affected area is the north west corner of Sunnyside Old allotments; Sunnyside New allotments on the east side of Ivy House Lane is less severely affected. Since there is no effective treatment for the pear trees other than removing all infected leaves by hand, we have turned our attention to the primary host: the juniper. To this end we have prepared these notes which we are circulating to all the houses within approximately 200 metres of the boundaries of Sunnyside Old Allotments, namely: Grantham Mews, Ivy House Lane and parts of Millfield, Gilpin's Ride and Meadway.

We would be very grateful if you would check any junipers on your property for infection and treat them if necessary. Treatment would involve removing cankers and infected branches and burning them; further treatment with a suitable fungicide may be effective and you can seek further advice using the website of the Royal Horticultural Society (www.rhs.org.uk/disease/pear-rust).

Sunnyside Allotment Society
www.sunnysideallotments.org.uk