

SILKY THREADBLIGHT OF PITTOSPORUM

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Silky threadblight, caused by the fungus *Rhizoctonia ramicola* Weber and Roberts, was first reported on Japanese pittosporum, *Pittosporum tobira* Ait., in 1951 (W & R). Natural infections were found to occur on silverthorn, *Elaeagnus pungens* Thunb., Japanese holly, *Ilex crenata* Thunb., Eastern coral tree, *Erythrina herbacea* L., crape myrtle, *Lagerstroemia indica* L., and pineapple guava, *Feijoa sellowiana* Berg (1). The disease is common in Florida and frequently serious in localized areas.

SYMPTOMS. Small necrotic spots characterized by tan necrotic centers, purplish-brown margins, and brittle texture may be found on the leaves (Fig. 1). Dead leaves may be matted together or held dangling from the twigs and green



Fig. 1. Silky threadblight of Pittosporum.

leaves by the fungus threads which form mats on the leafspots (Fig. 2). The fungus is first observed during warm and humid weather as gray to olivaceous strands of mycelium on tender twigs, petioles, and leaf blades.

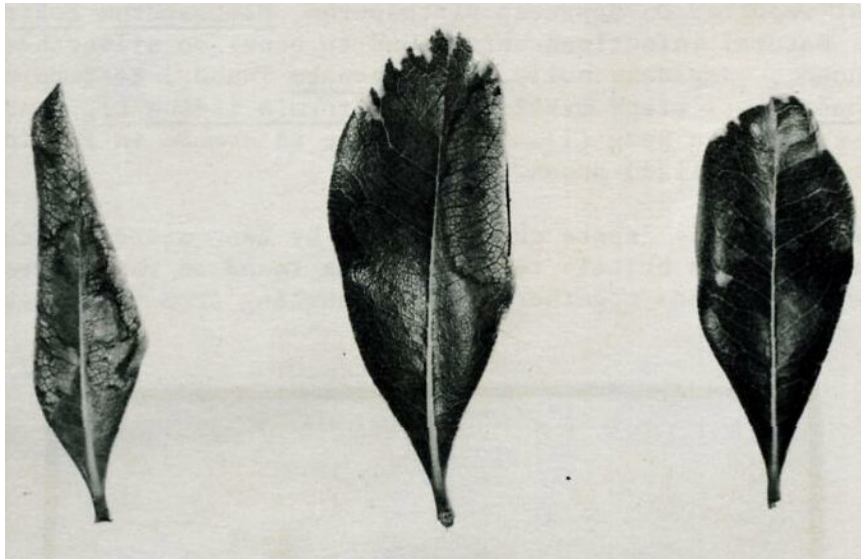


Fig. 2. Silky threadblight of *Pittosporum* showing progressive stages of leafspot development.

CONTROL. One or more summer applications of P.C.N.B. (Terraclor) applied at the rate of 28 oz per 100 gals (phytotoxicity possibly prevailing when applied at intervals of less than 7 days) and made on diseased and adjacent plants is recommended for control of the fungus in plantings where it is already established. The removal and destruction of infected plants or plant parts will aid in preventing the distribution of the pathogen in a nursery planting.

Literature Cited

1. Weber, G. F. and D. A. Roberts. 1951. Silky threadblight of *Elaeagnus pungens* caused by *Rhizoctonia ramicola* n. sp. *Phytopathology* 41:615-621.