



NEWS AND INFORMATION
Helping You Put Knowledge to Work

Master Gardeners at
Cook County/North Suburban Unit
(847) 818-2901 or (847) 437-6449
www.extension.uiuc.edu/cooknorth/mg



Eriophyes spp. Mite Gall on Silver Maple

Ask A Master Gardener Q & A

Maple Gall

- Q. My maple tree leaves are loaded with little bumps. What are they and will they cause problems for my tree and other plants?
- A. The bumps you see on maple leaves are called “Galls” and are caused by mites that are too small to be seen by the naked eye. There are several types that attack maples. The Bladder Gall Mite (*Vesates quadripedes*) grows on silver maples and is round in shape. The Spindle Gall (*V. aceriscrumena*) is found on sugar maples and has a spindle-shape or is long in shape. The leaves closest to the trunk and large branches are affected most often.

The galls are yellowish green at the beginning; turn pinkish to red and then black. The leaves can become deformed and drop off but the tree will produce enough new leaves to make up for those lost. As the leaf buds open in the spring each mite makes a hole and enters the leaf injecting a growth substance that causes abnormal growth. A gall is formed around the mites with a hole remaining on the underside.

The mites feed and the females lay many eggs inside the galls. The eggs hatch and young mites leave the gall to infest new leaves. In July the mites migrate to the bark of the tree to spend the winter. Other than the unsightly appearance produced, the galls cause no serious injury to the tree.

Galls occur on several other trees (cherry, linden, beech, poplar etc.) but are caused by different mites.

For more home, yard, garden and insect related information, visit our website at www.extension.uiuc.edu/cooknorth/mg or call the Cook County/North Suburban Extension Master Gardeners at (847) 818-2901 or (847) 298-3502. Office Hours are reduced during the fall and winter months.