

THE PURDUE LANDSCAPE REPORT

Taphrina Leaf Curl on Ornamental Flowering Peaches and Nectarines

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To effectively control *Taphrina* leaf curl fungicides must be applied before bud swell.

If you remember seeing red, curled, distorted, leaves on *Prunus* spp. last year (Figs 1,2) and wondered what might have caused this symptom, the answer is most likely *Taphrina* leaf curl. *Taphrina* is a **fungal disease** that survives in bark and bud scales and infects peaches and nectarines as well as other ornamental flowering species of *Prunus*.

The symptoms of *Taphrina* leaf curl disease are very distinctive (Figure 1) and definitely noticeable when present in *Prunus* spp. Infected leaves are severely puckered, distorted, thickened and reddish-to purple in color. (Figure 2) Premature leaf drop may also occur.



Figure 1. Symptoms of *Taphrina* leaf curl on peach tree leaves in early Spring



Figure 2. Distinctive leaf distortion and pink color caused by *Taphrina* leaf curl

A single, thorough, **preventative fungicide application is recommended during dormancy**. Best control is achieved by applying fungicides in late autumn at leaf fall. If you failed to protect trees with a fall application, you may also control this fungal disease by applying protective fungicides **prior to bud swell in early spring before green leaf tips are first visible**.

Several fungicides are recommended for dormant applications. Check the [Midwest Fruit Pest Management Guide](#) for the most recent recommendations. Read and follow all label instructions to insure safety and maximum effectiveness.

If temperatures in your area have been such that visible bud swell has already occurred in *Prunus* spp., making it too late for a dormant application of fungicide then the recommended management for this year is to promote tree vitality through pruning, fertilization and watering.

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