https://napavalleyregister.com/life-entertainment/local/home-gardening/napa-county-tree-sudden-oak-death/article_973243ba-8293-11ee-a620-0747c23c4a54.html

EDITOR'S PICK

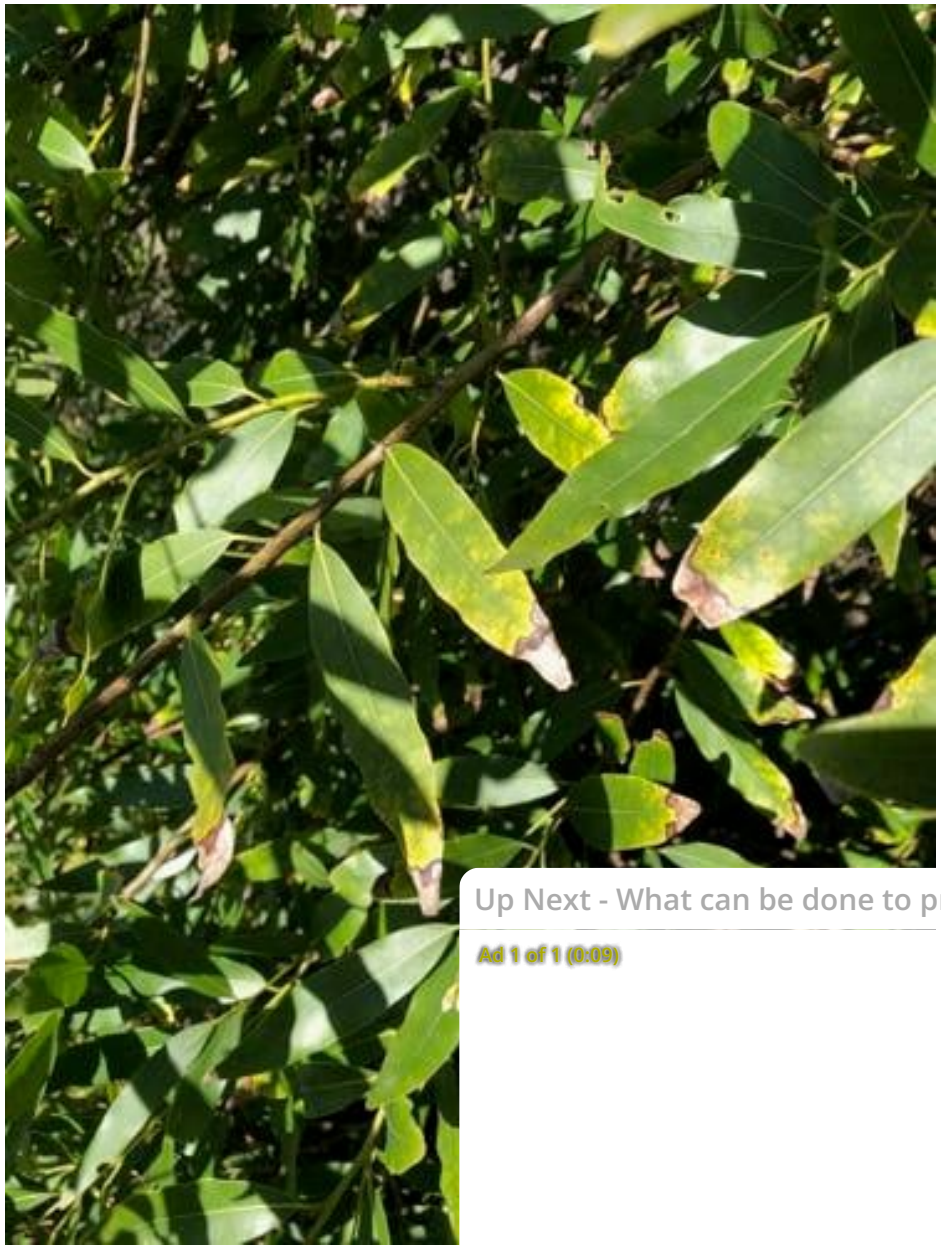
Trees and People

Bill Pramuk, Trees and People in Napa Valley: Sudden Oak Death lying low in Napa County

From the Bill Pramuk's Trees & People — Advice from a Napa Valley arborist series

Bill Pramuk

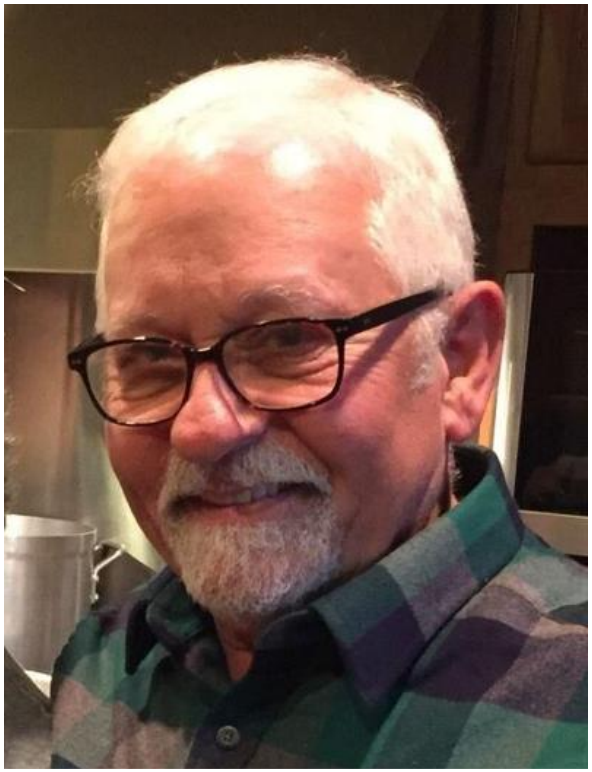
Nov 17, 2023



Bay leaves with symptoms of SOD infection.

Bill Pramuk

Bill Pramuk



One of my ongoing community involvement projects is the annual Sudden Oak Death Blitz. It is a one-weekend-per-year, combined effort by the UC Berkeley Forest Pathology and Mycology Lab, and hundreds of volunteers throughout California, to scout and map SOD, the notorious disease that continues to kill oaks. As the Napa coordinator, I have now logged 13 years with local “citizen scientist” volunteers gathering symptomatic bay laurel leaves and submitting them to the lab for analysis and mapping.

The Blitzes — 28 of them this year — are h
the spring at locations from Santa Barbar
Oregon border. The results are announce
attended the one in Santa Rosa on Nov. 1
with the UC Lab directors, Dr.’s Matteo G
results and the latest recommendations.

The good news is all samples from Napa County tested negative this year. On the other hand, Dr. Garbelotto cautioned, the Napa Blitz was held before a period of late, warm rain. The pathogen, Phytophthora ramorum, is dependent on water and mild to warm temperatures so it may have been lying low in early April. Personally, judging by the dead coastal live oaks I have spotted along the creek by Broadmoor Drive and Redwood Road near Dry Creek Road, I think homeowners and property managers should be informed and should act where valued live oaks are at risk. Now, November to December, is the time to do the bark spray or trunk injection treatments.

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Beyond the concern of a homeowner losing a prized oak, Dr. Garbelotto emphasized broader impacts of this disease: Loss of native biodiversity, potential extirpation of entire tree populations, declining and dead trees worsen fire hazards, infected trees are more likely to fall, compromise of the California Carbon Offset Program, and losses for California native peoples.

For homeowners and property managers concerned for their oaks, first consider the tree species. The susceptible species are coastal live oaks — the evergreen oaks with sharp-bristled leaves, black oaks — deciduous native oaks with bristles on the leaf lobe tips, and tanoaks, which are rare here in town. Valley oaks and blue oaks — roundish lobed leaves, no bristles — are not susceptible. The Blitzes have shown that larger oaks tend to be more susceptible than young oaks.

Next, consider the disease risk based on lo
phone app. SODMAPMobile (a free downl
disease risk at the location where you are
should get going with SOD prevention wo
and view the SOD Data to see if SOD is ne

Next, consider the most important carrier of the disease, California bay laurels, the smooth-edged, fragrant leaved, broadleaf evergreen tree closely resembling the Grecian sweet bay used in cooking. Dr. Garbelotto says that 99.9% of oak infections come from bay laurels nearby. SOD research has shown infections occur mostly in smaller bay laurels. I have found most symptomatic leaves relatively low to the ground and in the shade. They have a brownish dead patch at the tip or along the edge, with a dark, irregular margin surrounded by a yellow halo. That's what we collect for the Blitz.

The greatest risk of oak infections comes from infected bay leaves within 30-feet of an oak. To reduce the risk of infection, the Lab recommends pruning to maintain 30-feet of clearance between the infected bay and the oak's trunk or large branches.

Next, they recommend applying 3 to 5 pou
not near the trunk. The calcium in gypsun

Third, select the most highly valued oaks f
AgriFos or Reliant, plus Pentrabark. For o
they recommend trunk injection. The pho
in the tree and the penetrant helps it soak

the leaves. It takes two or three months for the material to take effect in the tree. Fall application gets the tree ready for self-defense at the height of the rainy, spring infection season. Treatments can be effective for two years, so you can safely skip a year.

A final word of caution: The disease spreads from one location to another in wet, muddy soil and tree debris. Good sanitation is critical.

Here is a link to the Blitz project:

https://nature.berkeley.edu/matteolab/?page_id=7468

In late winter I will announce the date for the 2024 SOD Blitz.