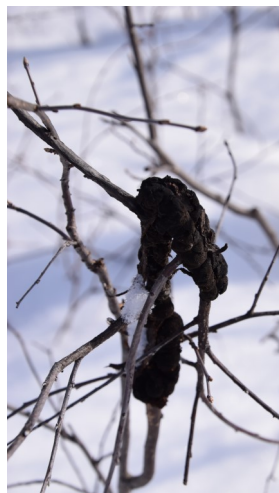# BLACK KNOT FUNGUS

IDENTIFICATION

- Black knot is identifiable by abnormal swellings of growth in bark and wood tissues.

- Black knot fungus usually infects the youngest growths on the plant.

- It can be found on twigs, branches, fruit spurs, and occasionally trunks.

WHAT IS IT?

Black knot is caused by the fungus *Apopsporina morbosa*.

It can affect any tree within the genus Prunus, including plum, cherry, chokecherry, and mayday trees.

Ocassionally, it can infect rose bushes that are growing near an infected tree.

WHY CONTROL IT?

Black knot is not only an eyesore, but it also deteriorates the health of trees. Black knot can kill off whole branches, and if left long enough, even whole trees.

Edmonton & Area Land Trust

BLACK KNOT FUNGUS

PRUNING & DISPOSAL

- Infected branches should be removed to at least 6-8 inches below the knot. If the middle of the stem is dark, the fungus is still present inside the stem and should be pruned further.

- Pruning an infected area further back to the start of the branch is preferable to leaving a stump.

- Cutting blades should be disinfected with a 10% bleach spray after each cut.

- Diseased branches can still release spores for up to 4 months after they have been removed so it is important to bag them.

- Bagged black knot must be disposed of as garbage or burned.

Thank you for helping to keep our forests and neighbourhoods beautiful and healthy!

DISPERSAL & LIFECYCLE

The fungus is spread through spore by rain, wind, birds, and insects that have had contact with infected trees.

In the spring, spores are released and infect other plants. The following summer, the infection creates small green swellings near the leaf axis. In the following years, these swellings begin to blacken and enlarge.

PREVENTION & CONTROL

Regular monitoring and early removal are the most important aspects of black knot control.

Black knot should be removed during late fall, winter, or very early spring since spores are not released in cold weather. Dry and cold conditions (no snow or rain the days previous) are preferred for removal.