

New unknown disease in *Aesculus hippocastaneum*

The Hague is known as the green city by the sea, partly of our large population of Horse Chestnut *Aesculus hippocastaneum*.

This summer we discovered a new deadly and rapid spreading disease in our Horse Chestnuts. We have learned that also in some other Dutch, German and Belgium cities the disease is found.

Throughout the Netherlands hundreds of Chestnut trees died the last few weeks.

The disease has the following characteristics:

- In old and young trees
- Scattered over the trunk / bark of the tree rust-coloured spots
- Spots spreading rapidly over the trunk to the branches
- From the rust-coloured spots, drops of dark red syrup like fluids are dropping spot wise
- In late summer the spots dry and turn into rough black crusts
- In the same year or in the spring of the following year the bark between the spots dies
- When the bark round the tree dies, the tree dies
- For obvious reasons this will occur sooner with younger sapling trees than with the older thicker trees

As yet the disease has not a name and as far as we know there is no cure against it.

The first to symptoms look similar to two known fungi diseases known as „Phytopthora“ and „Verticillium“. In contrast to this new disease these two known diseases have only limited effect on chestnuts. Chestnuts can grow old with it.

Attempts have been made to isolate the disease, but so far the attempts have failed. Also no traces of „Phytopthora“ and „Verticillium“ could be found. It is possible that the disease is helped by a complex of factors.

In the Netherlands scientist gather on the 10th of December to discuss the disease and possible actions.

Seeing the nature of the disease we would advise you to take a close look at you chestnut trees and if symptoms as described are found, please do check also on „Phytopthora“ and „Verticillium“ to be sure what you are dealing with.

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