



## Elsinoe leafspot of Hardenbergia

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### The disease and symptoms

Leafspot and stem lesions on nursery stock of *Hardenbergia violacea* cv. "Happy Wanderer" is caused by the fungus *Elsinoe hardenbergiae*, and the disease has frequently been recorded on plants in nurseries in the Melbourne metropolitan area.

The disease may first appear on nursery stock during early to late autumn when the weather is cool, and outbreaks may become more frequent during the winter and through to early spring.

First symptoms are small brown leafspots that are sometimes surrounded by a yellow halo. Later the leafspots may enlarge to become angular, brown and scabby in appearance, and coalesce to form large patches up to 5 mm in diameter. Leafspots may be centred along the leaf mid-vein or be randomly scattered over the upper and undersides of leaves. On stems and petioles, reddish-brown lesions from 1 to 5 mm long may be observed (see Figure 1).

The cultivar "Happy Wanderer" is sometimes severely infected by the disease, however susceptibility of other cultivars of *Hardenbergia violacea* is not known.

Severe leaf and stem infections can cause twisting and malformation of young growth and eventually plants may defoliate. This results in non-saleable plants at flowering time.

### Control

Stem lesions on stock plants in nurseries are a source of disease, therefore prune out affected stems before taking cuttings for propagation. Discard rooted cuttings that are affected by disease.

The nursery site should be cleared of any debris remaining from previously infected plants.

At present, no chemicals are registered for use on this disease in Victoria.



*Figure 1. Elsinoe leafspot on Hardenbergia violacea, cultivar "Happy Wanderer"*

**For effective pest and disease control, correct diagnosis is essential. A commercial diagnostic service is available at the Institute for Horticultural Development. For further information, contact the Diagnostic Service. ph: (03) 9210-9222 or fax (03) 9800 3521.**

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