

Forest Disease Management Notes

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service
Pacific Northwest
Region



Brown Crumbly Rot

Brown crumbly rot is caused by *Fomitopsis (Fomes) pinicola*, commonly called the redbelt fungus. This is the most commonly observed rotter of slash and dead trees in the Pacific Northwest. Conks are occasionally seen on dead portions of living conifers and indicate considerable decay.

Hosts: Practically all conifers.

Recognition: Hard, woody, perennial, shelf- to hoof- shaped conks (2-10 inches width); smooth, gray to black upper surface with a wide red margin; undersurface is white to yellowish. Brown cubical rot of sapwood and heartwood.

Disease Spread: Spores released from conks are carried by wind. They germinate on exposed wood. Insects spread the fungus by carrying mycelial fragments when they emerge from decayed trees.

Management: Avoid wounding of living trees; salvage living trees with conks. Trees with conks should be treated in recreation areas.

May be Confused With: White mottled rot (*G. applanatum*), red ring rot (*F. pini*), and red-brown rot (*P. schweinitzii*).



Conks of *F. pinicola*