

Forest Disease Management Notes

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service
Pacific Northwest
Region



Brown Felt Blight

Brown felt blight is caused by two similar fungi, *Herpotrichia nigra* and *Neopeckia coulteri*. Although this disease is common in some years, it causes almost no economic loss in forests.

Hosts: *H. nigra* - conifers other than pines; *N. coulteri*- pine species.

Recognition: Common at high elevations; lower branches are covered with dense cobwebby growths of brown to black mycelium that kill foliage; small black globular fruit bodies are scattered over the mycelium; the two fungi are macroscopically identical.

Disease Spread: Fungi develop on foliage under snow; high humidity and mild temperatures (Optima are 50°F for *N. coulteri* and 59-64°F for *H. nigra*), are required for fungus growth; brown mycelium is very resistant to adverse conditions; after snowmelt, fruit bodies form on mycelium. and release spores that are windborne and infect susceptible foliage; damage is primarily growth loss.

Management: Usually none is warranted except in nurseries or on ornamentals; foliage s rays of 5% Zineb or Maneb applied before first snowfall are effective in control.

May be Confused With: Gray mold (seedlings).



N. coulteri on
lodgepole pine



H. nigra on white fir