

Forest Disease Management Notes

United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest Service
Pacific Northwest
Region



White Trunk Rot Of Aspen

White trunk rot is caused by the fungus *Fomes ignarius* var *populinus*, also commonly called the false-tinder fungus. This is the most common cause of stem decay in aspen.

Hosts: Aspen, alder, other hardwoods.

Recognition: Soft yellow-white decay with zone lines in the heartwood.

Conks are hard, variable in shape, ranging from shelflike to hoof-like; upper surface gray to black and divided into irregular squares by numerous cracks; under-surface medium brown and pitted by numerous tiny pores.

Disease Spread: Spores are released from conks during periods of high relative humidity and warm temperature; spores enter branch stubs, cankers, or wounds, and the underlying wood is colonized and eventually decayed.

Management: Avoid trunk wounds, the principal infection courts of the fungus. Maintain uniform well-stocked stands and harvest at ages 80 to 100 years or earlier to reduce decay losses. Trees with conks are defective and should be treated in recreation areas. Aspen with conks have an average cull of 82% of the gross tree volume.

May be Confused With: Nothing if conks are present.

Conks of *F. ignarius*
on aspen



Decay caused by
F. ignarius on aspen