



## RHS Box Summit:

### **‘What is the current state of play with pests and diseases on Buxus?’**

**26 April 2012**

**Lawrence Hall and Conference Centre (Rooms 22 & 23), Greycoat Street, London, SW1P 2QD**

Box (*Buxus* spp) is a popular shrub as shown by its long history in cultivation but also by the variety of taxa grown in domestic and public gardens. The success of growing box has been recently hampered by the arrival of new pests and diseases that have not only decreased its value as an ornamental plant but also threaten native box trees growing in the wild.

*Cylindrocladium buxicola* is a major fungal disease that causes leaf spot, defoliation and dieback on many different box species. The disease has been spreading rapidly in Europe (and New Zealand) since it was first recorded in 1994 in the UK. To make matters worse, the disease has recently been reported in several states in the USA as well as British Columbia, where severe epidemics have been observed. There are many signs indicating that the disease is now established there.

To add to the problem of box blight, a new pest on box has established in Europe, including the UK. The box tree caterpillar (*Cydalima perspectalis*) is native to East Asia (China, Japan, Korea) but it became established in mainland Europe in 2007. Although adult moths were first found in the UK in light traps in 2008, it was not until 2011 that larvae were reported in private gardens. This caterpillar feeds within webbing and can completely defoliate box plants. It has been reported as causing significant damage to native box trees and ornamental box plants in Germany and Switzerland.

#### **Objectives**

The objective of this seminar is three fold: 1) to draw together a shared understanding of what we currently know about pests and diseases on box (*Buxus* spp) and their management for dissemination to scientists, growers and gardeners; 2) to identify and prioritise further work needed, especially research requirements; 3) to facilitate collaboration between stakeholders with an interest in box.

Recent work covering the epidemiology of the important pests and pathogens of box, pesticide treatments, resistance to pesticides and appropriate disease management practices will be presented by a panel of international experts and practitioners. The event will culminate in a discussion on what should be the next steps to tackle the main pests and diseases occurring on this important and well-loved plant.

## Event programme

9:30 *Coffee and registration*

10:00 Welcome by RHS Head of Science, Dr Roger Williams

10:10 Overview on box blight, Dr Béatrice Henricot (RHS)

10:30 Population studies of *C. buxicola*, Dr Kurt Heungens (Institute for Agricultural and Fisheries Research, Belgium)

11:00 The current P&D situation on boxwood in the United States, Dr Kelly Ivors (NC State University, USA)

11:30 *Coffee break*

12:00 General pests on box, Andrew Halstead (RHS)

12:15 Box tree moth, Anastasia Korycinska (Fera, York)

12:30 *Lunch*

### 13:30 **Industry perspectives**

- A grower's perspective: Managing box blight in nurseries, Russell Coates (Langley Nursery, UK)
- A gardener/collector's perspective – speaker to be confirmed
- A sprayer's perspective: Trialling in nurseries, Karel Goossens (Buxuskwekerij Goossens, Belgium)
- A consultant's perspective – speaker to be confirmed

14.30 Discussion groups (research, nurseries, gardens)

15:30 Feedback from each group

15:50 The way forward (Discussion concerning research plans for the future)

16:15 *Finish with coffee for those who want to stay and talk more*

**The workshop is sponsored by the British Society for Plant Pathology**

