

Pest Alert: *Dryocosmus kuriphilus*



Fig. 1. (Far left) multiple galls on chestnut. **Fig. 2.** (Middle left) Rose coloured gall. **Fig. 3.** (Middle right) Early-stage galling. **Fig. 4.** Late-stage woody gall
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- In June 2015 the first finding of *Dryocosmus kuriphilus* (**Oriental chestnut gall wasp**) was confirmed in the UK, in a Kent woodland. The wasp is native to Asia, and has been introduced to continental Europe. Shortly after the findings in Kent it was also found in a group of trees in St Albans. It has since been found at several other sites, most of them in and around London and South-East England.
- It affects **chestnut trees (*Castanea* sp)** including **sweet chestnut**, causing **galling on leaves, twigs and petioles**. This inhibits leaf function, which can weaken the tree, **reducing nut production and making it more susceptible to disease**. Some initial reports suggest that the galls could provide an entry point for the fungus causing chestnut blight (*Cryphonectria parasitica*).
- The galls produced are distinctive: **green or rose-coloured and can be up to 4 cm in diameter** (Figs 1, 2, 3 and 4) **turning a woody brown colour in winter** (these woody galls can be retained by the trees over winter). **No other organism is known to cause galls on sweet chestnut in the UK.**
- Following extensive research, a **biological control** wasp (*Torymus sinensis*) was released at several sites across Great Britain in April 2021. ***Torymus sinensis* is a natural predator of *D. kuriphilus***, these releases aim to control the existing populations of *D. kuriphilus*. *Torymus sinensis* is already being used successfully in other parts of Europe against *D. kuriphilus*.

If you suspect the presence of the pest, please inform the relevant authority (see over for details).

For finds at garden centres, plant nurseries or private gardens in England and Wales, contact your local APHA Plant Health and Seeds Inspector, or the PHSI headquarters, in York:

Tel: 0300 1000 313 (please select option 3 when calling)

Email: planthealth.info@apha.gov.uk

Web: <https://www.gov.uk/plant-health-controls>

For Scotland, contact the Scottish Government's Horticulture and Marketing Unit:

Email: hort.marketing@gov.scot

Web: <http://www.gov.scot/Topics/farmingrural/Agriculture/plant/PlantHealth>

For Northern Ireland, contact DAERA Plant Health Inspection Branch:

Tel: 0300 200 7847

Email: planthealth@daera-ni.gov.uk

Web: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/topics/plant-and-tree-health>

For finds in the wider environment in GB:

Tree Alert: <https://treealert.forestresearch.gov.uk/>

For NI, please use TreeCheck: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/about-treecheck>

For more detailed information and pictures:

Observatree: <https://www.observatree.org.uk/pests-and-diseases/priority-pests-and-diseases/oriental-chestnut-gall-wasp/>