



# News Release

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Interview Opportunities:** Jim Northum, AFC Entomologist, (501) 296-1863 or Local AFC Forester. Contact information can be found at [www.arkansasforestry.org/districts/district\\_map.html](http://www.arkansasforestry.org/districts/district_map.html).

## White Oaks in Arkansas losing leaves to Jumping Oak Gall

**LITTLE ROCK, ARK.** – White Oak trees in Arkansas are being attacked by Jumping Oak Gall (scientific name *Neuroterus saltatorius*), leaving foliage covered with numerous tiny brown galls or spots. Although infestations are unsightly as leaves brown out and die, mortality is rare.

“This is not in the same category as the red oak borer outbreak of previous years.” said Arkansas Forestry Commission Entomologist Jim Northum. “One flush of leaves may be lost, but healthy trees will put on another flush of leaves and continue to grow.”

Galls that affect oak leaves rarely have a significant impact on tree health. The tiny, stingless wasps cause pinhead-size abnormal plant growths – “galls” – to form on the underside of leaves. Each gall contains a wasp larva. When galls drop from leaves in early summer, brown pockmarks remain where they had been attached. Fallen galls are sometimes observed to “jump” due to vigorous movements of larvae within, similar to moth larvae of “Mexican jumping beans.”

“The Jumping Oak Gall has experienced a population explosion this spring. This native pest is present most years in such low numbers as to be unnoticed. However, this spring conditions were right for the wasps to build tremendous numbers,” Northum said.

Trees can become stressed due to defoliation. Urban and yard trees benefit from proper care to keep them healthy – such as mulching, watering during drought and avoiding wounds due to lawnmowers and trimmers. Spraying insecticide is not helpful and may reduce the number of beneficial insects. Raking and removing fallen leaves may also help to reduce the number of overwintering gall insects.

If you think your trees may be affected, contact your local Arkansas forestry Commission County Forester for a positive identification. They can also provide you with information on proper tree care.

For more information about the Arkansas Forestry Commission, visit [www.arkansasforestry.org](http://www.arkansasforestry.org) or call (501) 296-1940.

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