

Slime Flux Disease (Leaking Tree)

By Deborah Birge, Fort Bend Master Gardener

Q: Leaking tree?

Homeowners in Fort Bend County treasure their trees for their beauty, addition to property values and for protection from the Texas summer heat. Unfortunately, the beauty and health of our trees can often be threatened by environmental stress. This stress could be foot traffic during wet seasons, too much water, not enough water, mechanical injury, infectious diseases, or insects. One such disease is first noticed as a leak in tree bark.

Prevention is the key.

- Avoid wounding the tree.
- Plant trees in locations where there are no stresses from urban soil compaction, such as walking and vehicle traffic.
- Trim broken, torn branches promptly.
- Fertilize only when necessary.

There are no active measures to effectively treat the rot caused by slime flux disease. The best advice is to maintain the tree's overall health so that it can compartmentalize the spot and grow good wood around the diseased area. The use of insecticides applied in the hopes of preventing the rot from spreading within the tree has been shown to be of no use. The urge to try this treatment is because people often notice insects feeding on the rot, but it should be remembered that the insects have not caused the disease nor do they spread it. There is even some opinion that by removing the decaying wood, insects may actually help the tree. Spraying for insects in an effort to cure slime flux is a waste of money.

Resource: [Tree Health Diseases: Bacterial Wetwood.pdf](#)

