

September Hiker Activity

Apple Picking and Investigation



Instructions:

1. Gather the hikers around one of Hilton's 5 apple trees (2 in Habitat, 3 by school).
2. Each hiker takes a turn carefully climbing the ladder and picking an apple. Ripe apples will separate easily at the top of the stem with a little twist. If apples aren't in reach, hike leaders can attempt to gently shake some out of the tree.
3. Use the attached information to study apple markings and identify what caused them.
4. Use a trowel to cut one apple open and look at the seeds. If seeds are fully formed and dark, the apples are ripe.
5. Use squirt bottle and paper towel to wipe off an apple with sooty blotch.
6. Apples with severe insect damage should not be composted. Toss them in the trash. Gently place all edible apples in the basket & take them home. These should be washed and sliced before eating. Trees are not treated with pesticides and even perfect looking apples can have interior insect damage. Ideally, the apples would be shared with the class at a later date - they make great applesauce!

Supplies:

Ladder
Trowel
Paper towel
Squirt bottle filled with water
Clean basket/bucket

Please feel free to offer suggestions for improving this activity.

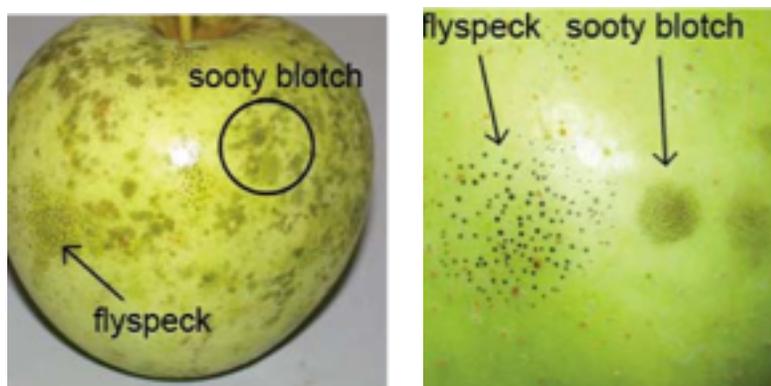
Common Apple Diseases

Apple scab



Apple scab is common and is caused by a fungus. The good parts of the apple are safe to eat. Fight this disease by removing dead wood, infected apples and infected leaves from the tree and surrounding area.

Flyspeck and sooty blotch



Flyspeck and sooty blotch are caused by various types of fungi. Many of the spots can be washed off. The fruit is safe to eat. The name “flyspeck” has nothing to do with flies or other insects. *Photos by Patty McManus.*

Common Apple Insects

Plum curculio



Adult plum curculio (pronounced ker-cue-lee-oh) females lay eggs in stone fruit (like plums) and apples, leaving a moon-shaped wound. Luckily for apples, the eggs and larvae do not survive in them. The wound heals and leaves a scar. The apple is safe to eat.



Late in the growing season, adult plum curculios chew round holes in apples, often near the stem end of the fruit. These holes are attractive to other insects such as yellowjackets and Asian lady beetles. The good parts of the apple are safe to eat.

Codling moth



This is the proverbial “worm in the apple.” The eggs are laid outside and the larvae tunnel into the apple core - usually starting at the blossom end (the end opposite the stem). Most of the damage is to the core and seeds. Codling (pronounced like “coddling”) moth waste material (frass) may accumulate at the surface of the fruit, often at the flower end. The good parts of the apple are safe to eat.

Apple maggot



This insect is also called railroad worm because of the brown tracks made through the fruit. Eggs are laid in tiny holes and the area around them may look sunken and dark. The good parts of the apple are safe to eat.

Leafrollers, fruitworms and other caterpillars



Apples can be damaged by caterpillars early in the growing season. The apple usually heals and a scar is visible. The good parts of the apple are safe to eat.

Tarnished plant bug



Tarnished plant bug is a small insect that punctures the apple skin and sucks out moisture and nutrients. This leaves cone-shaped pits as the apple grows. The good parts of the apple are safe to eat. *Bug photo from Wikipedia.*