

Red Birch Felt-mite Gall

Acalitus longisetosus



Identification:

This gall, induced by mites, forms an extensive, slightly swollen, bright pinky-red patch on the upper surface of birch leaves. The appearance is of a severe and painful case of shingles. All the identified hosts in our area have been Downy Birch *Betula pubescens*, but that is a small sample and Silver Birch *B. pendula* should also be checked.

Distribution:

The few records from Highland (and Scotland) on NBN Gateway are from 2010-11. It is almost certainly more widespread than the map shows.

When to look for it:

The galled leaves are most vivid in June and July.

Similar Species:

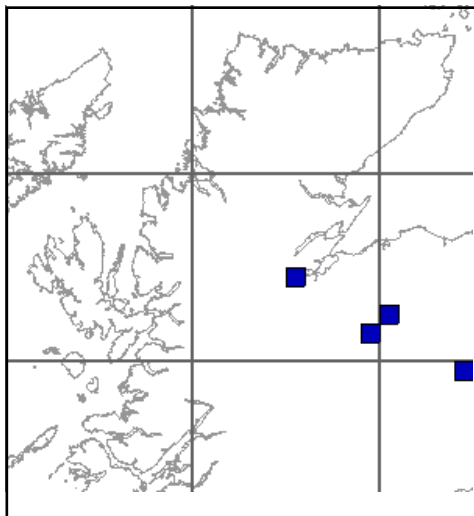
There is nothing else quite like this on birch leaves.

Notes:

It would be helpful to record the host as well. The two birches may be distinguished most easily (though they do hybridise) by their leaves and growth form. Downy Birch (usually on acid soil or at altitude) has rounder leaves with smaller and more uniform teeth, and from a distance the outer twigs do not droop. Silver Birch (a more lowland species) has more diamond-shaped leaves with small teeth between the larger ones, and clearly drooping foliage.



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The National Biodiversity Network records are shown on the map (see terms and conditions at <http://data.nbn.org.uk>). Data providers and the NBN Trust bear no responsibility for any further analysis or interpretation of the information in the map.