

Bird Cherry Fungal Gall

Taphrina padi



Identification:

This gall develops in the fruits of Bird Cherry *Prunus padus*. The normal black berry is distorted into a whitish, elongated, banana-shaped gall.

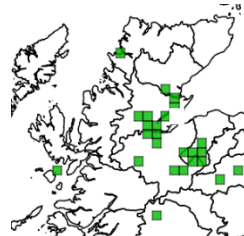


Taphrina padi galls.

Photo © Stewart Taylor.

Distribution:

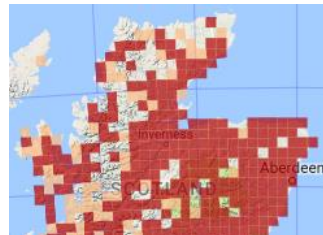
It might be expected anywhere in Highland where Bird Cherry grows. It is probably more common than the map suggests, as the Bird Cherry host is widespread (map below right is from the [BSBI website](#)).



Distribution of records of the Bird Cherry Gall in the HBRG database.

When to look for it:

The galls are easily seen in June and July. It is a good idea to locate the Bird Cherry when it is in flower during May, as once the characteristic white 'candles' drop their petals, the tree is easily missed.



Distribution of records of Bird Cherry from the BSBI.

Similar species:

A related gall, the Pocket Plum *Taphrina pruni* occurs on Sloe *Prunus spinosa*.

Notes:

Taphrina is a genus of Ascomycete fungi, several species of which are host-specific gall-causers on a variety of plants. Two very common species in Highland are *T.alni* on the cones of Alder, and *T.tosquetii* on its young fleshy leaves.