



CHRISTENSEN'S PLANT CENTER

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The OLD Funk

No not James Brown but Rose Rosette Disease (officially known as RRD). RRD has gotten a lot of press lately but has been around for a long time. You have seen it before but probably did not realize it. In the past, it was typically only seen on "Wild Roses" but now we are starting to see it affect all roses. Below is the hit list:

- It is a virus, spread by a mite. The mite doesn't fly and has to crawl from rose to rose. Good spacing will help keep it contained.
- Symptoms: (careful here! The symptoms are highly variable depending on species and cultivars)
 - New shoots can show stem elongation.
 - "Witches Brooms" clustering of small branches at the end of a stem
 - Leaves show a conspicuous red coloration. Some roses have red new growth but the plants flush out of it. With RRD the red growth stays all year.
 - Leaves can be distorted and or stunted
 - Flowers can be distorted, speckled and off color. Buds may abort.
 - True indicator: Excessive growth of soft thorns (red or green). Some of the above symptoms can be cause by environmental factors or chemicals. The thorns issue is only caused by the virus.

Once the disease strikes it can take up to 2 years for the plant to die and there is no chemical control. You can apply a miticide as a preventive measure. This is not a soil borne disease so replanting



is not an issue, but remember the mites can only crawl from plant to plant so good spacing is mandatory.

Happy Spring!

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Photo courtesy of the Missouri Botanical Garden



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ROSE ROSETTE DISEASE
PREVENTION GUIDE

SYMPTOMS:

- Stem Elongation:** Plants that had for less than a month will typically display one or two shoots with red and elongated stem growth (see Figure 1), sometimes with excessive thorniness and unopened flower buds (see Figure 2).
- Leaf Symptoms:** Plants that have been infested for several months or longer will show multiple distorted shoots often bearing distorted flowers (see Figure 3) and very dense, "witches broom" (see Figure 4). New shoots of new and older plants.
- Once a plant is infested there is no cure for RRD but infection may be prevented from spreading to healthy plants by removing the infested plants and using a combination of cultural and chemical practices described in this document.**
- Cultivar Susceptibility:** RRD can affect many cultivars similar to RRD. Cultivars are listed in a separate article located under a large section of the report. It generally does not result in increased thorns or increased numbers of thorns. See Table 1 for more information.
- DNA Tests for RRD:** The causal agent of RRD is now believed to be an RNA virus. Although we do not yet have definitive proof that the virus is the true causal agent, it is now strongly associated with RRD symptoms. The "Roses and Plants" section of the report discusses. However, any symptoms for this virus, and can now perform tests for proven for a minimum charge. Contact Kim Roth and Phyllis Conrad for the more details.

Table 1

Rose Rosette Disease (RRD) Susceptibility

Table 2

Rose Rosette Disease (RRD) Susceptibility

ROSE WAREHOUSE AFFECTED: All hybrid roses are susceptible to RRD. Only a few native US species were investigated to date.

SEVERITY: RRD is spread by the rose mite, *Phylloxera* (Phylloxera). Infested roses are heavily infested by the mite and will be more easily seen with a 20X hand lens. The mite is found on the infested rose and it is most likely a virus. RRD can affect hybrid roses and many species roses such as Rose mollis.

SPREAD: The RRD virus is mostly spread long distance by the mite, by grafting stems and transplanting buds.

DISTRIBUTION IN USA: RRD has been reported at the Mid-West, North & South (CA) and most recently in Texas. There are few reports of RRD West of the Rockies where the main host dog rose is a plant.

Source: [http://www.roseindustry.com](#)

Click the image above for a PDF from Conard Pyle with more information about this disease.