

brown spot needle blight (*Mycosphaerella dearnessii*)



needle spots on longleaf pine



a specific type
of needle cast
for this test



brown spot needle blight

Mycosphaerella dearnessii

Longleaf pine is the only species in the South that is damaged by this disease. Seedlings are often heavily infected while in the grass stage and often die after repeated defoliations. Boat-shaped spores are produced in the yellow bands on the needles. Positive identification can be made by examining the spores under a microscope.

Infected needles develop grey-green spots, which later turn brown. Eventually, a yellow band develops on the needle. The affected area then increases in size, resulting in death of the needle.

Spores are released from the fruiting bodies (acervuli) on the needles throughout the year. The spores are splashed short distances by rain drops. During the winter and early spring, perithecia are produced on dead needles. Spores from these perithecia are responsible for longer distance spread of the fungus.