

# Pest Alert

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**Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Division of Plant Industry**  
**Charles H. Bronson, Commissioner of Agriculture**

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## Japanese zelkova eriophyid mite *Aceria zelkoviana*

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**INTRODUCTION:** A Japanese zelkova bonsai (*Zelkova serrata* Makino) (Ulmaceae), imported from China, was recently found to be infested with an eriophyid mite, *Aceria zelkoviana* Kim (Acari: Eriophyidae), in a Homestead, Florida nursery.

**APPEARANCE:** The tiny (0.15 mm) pale yellow mites were found in reddish pouch leaf galls and in erineae on the undersides of the leaves. *Aceria zelkoviana* is known only from Korea, but is probably widespread in eastern China and Japan where *Z. serrata* occurs. This is the first record of this mite in the USA.

**DAMAGE:** Mite feeding damage appears as yellow spots on the upper leaf surface. As mite feeding continues, the yellow areas increase in size and turn reddish. The pouch galls form from the lower leaf surface through to the upper leaf surface and are usually reddish in color. Erineae may be present around feeding sites on the lower leaf surface. The leaves with galls are usually distorted.

In addition to bonsai, the Japanese zelkova is grown as an ornamental tree in USDA plant hardiness zones 5 to 8 where it can reach 50-80 feet high. There is no native *Zelkova* sp. in Florida, but it is unknown if this mite could become a pest of native Ulmaceae. If this mite becomes established, it could be a pest of ornamental *Zelkova* sp. and possibly other non-native Ulmaceae in the United States.



Upper leaf surface of *Z. serrata* with  
*A. zelkoviana* damage  
Photo credit: Jeffrey Lotz, FDACS/DPI



Lower leaf surface of *Z. serrata* with  
*A. zelkoviana* damage  
Photo credit: Jeffrey Lotz, FDACS/DPI



Upper leaf surface of *Z. serrata* with  
*A. zelkoviana* gall  
Photo credit: Jeffrey Lotz, FDACS/DPI



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**Adam H. Putnam, Commissioner**