

Elm Pocket Gall By Toso Bozic

Galls are a very abnormal tissue growth that can happen on leaves, branches and trunks. There are well over 1500 species that produce galls but the majority are from insects and mites. Mites are either feeding or laying eggs in leaves, branch or bark. There are many other galls formed as a response to infections by several kinds of fungi, bacteria, and viruses. There are many outwardly looking galls caused by very small mites from genus Eriophyes. The fingerlike Elm pocket gall is produced by a mite called *Aceria ulmi*. Most of the galls that affect trees are very seldom if ever a serious problem. The deformation can be very unsightly but it is very little damaging to trees.



Photo by: Janice Boden - MD of Bonnyville

Diagnosis of this fingerlike looking **green to reddish colour galls** is relatively easy. Gall growth is perpendicular to the surface of the elm leaf and can be very abundant. Minute mites overwinter under the deep and furrow elm bark crevices as fertilized females. In spring time they crawl to leaves to create gall. The female mite injects saliva into new elm

leaves and little mite crawls into galls through open pores on the underside of the leaf. As the majority of mites reproduce very fast there are several generations' cycles that are completed during the summer while the last generation is when the leaves harden just prior to the fall.

Despite the negative visual impact, **there is no need** for management intervention for the elm pocket gall. The unattractive appearance and abundance are usually regulated by natural enemies of the mites.