

Slime mold, *fuligo septica*, in the Garden

Stephen H. Brown
Lee County Horticulture Agent
and
Dr. Jim Kimbrough, Mycologist,
University of Florida

Photographs by Stephen H. Brown



Slime Mold in the Garden

- Slime molds are typically found in damp shady areas with abundant organic matter
- *Fuligo septica* does not feed on living plants
- It is a saprobic organism that uses the microbes in the mulch and on leaves and other surfaces as its nutrient



F. Septica growing on Indian Hawthorn. Growth began on the mulch around the plant



F. septica on stem
of Indian Hawthorn



It starts as yellowish, slimy mass



The yellow mass becomes
incrusted to form a large
sporangium



Within which are masses of dark
spores



Stripping away layers of *F. septica* reveals the undamaged Indian Hawthorn twig



The incrustated fruiting body has black spores underneath. These spores will settle on other microbe rich surfaces



Removing the fruiting body reveals an undamaged twig

What to Do

- Leave it alone as it will disappear as it gets dry
- Reducing or eliminating overhead irrigation will help some
- Remove and replace the affected mulch
- Washing the plant down with water from a hose, is a temporary fix. It could also disperse the blackened spores