

Tree News

Spring 2015

A Newsletter from Connecticut Arborists, Inc.

Goodbye To Our Ash Trees?



It was just one year ago that we wrote in this column that the spread of emerald ash borer in Connecticut was continuing. It is now found in all counties in Connecticut and is

spreading fast. Our native ash population is quickly being wiped out.

In my neighborhood I started seeing ash in trouble as I drove around last summer. In areas where ash is the main tree species, it looks like a battlefield with so many dead trees.

The picture here shows the trunk of an infested ash, with the bark coming off in telltale blonde flecking. On my own property, two years ago I started treating three ash which I don't want to lose. I used the bark spray approach with a specific systemic material. It seems to be working fine as those trees show little sign of the insects, while others just a couple hundred feet away are heavily infested. The pressure in my area is so heavy that I'll use another method this year, a type of trunk injection. I really want to save these trees.

If you have any ash which are important to you and you want to save them, please let us know. We can use the method I used or another approach if needed, to control emerald ash borer.



Seasonal Tip



We certainly went through a challenging winter! As we write this the snow is melting quickly—not soon enough for me! We expect to see a good bit of winter damage this spring, with leaves falling off hollies and brown needles on many evergreens, especially hemlocks.

Now, what do we focus on in the spring? As trees and shrubs come out of their winter dormancy we want to manage any troublesome insect and disease issues. These treatments keep that stress away from the plants.

Next, make sure any pruning is scheduled to put trees into their best health. It might be deadwood trimming of large trees for safety and appearance. With ornamental and young trees we prune for good health and to train into good form and habit.

Feel free to contact us if you have questions or concerns on anything related to your trees and shrubs.

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COPY BY
DON PARROTT

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ARBORISTS,
INC.
MONROE, CT

DEP # B-1333
TEL 459-0737
FAX 459-8137



Species Spotlight



With the reality that most of our ash will be dying, perhaps it makes sense to consider some choices as replacements. I have always favored sugar maple so we have that, but you might also consider an oak. For a native one you can't do better than white oak—it's Connecticut's charter oak after all!

For other choices look into English oak, pic to the left. It has a good strong growth habit, handsome foliage and is easy to grow. For a hot, dry spot you might try willow oak. It's usually been grown as a southern tree but I see it more and more in commercial sites and it appears to do well in Connecticut. The leaves are unusual for an oak, they are slender and narrow that resemble the leaves of a willow.

Did You Know?

Lately I've been talking a lot about maple syrup which got me to thinking about other tree related food products, particularly beverages. From trees in the USA we have root beer, originally made from the roots of sassafras. It was sometimes called sarsaparilla.

How about coconut water, made from coconut palms? That's been pretty popular for awhile now. Many of us know about birch beer, made from parts of sweet birch. It's still around in Connecticut if you look for it.

Did you know that maple water is starting to show up in stores. It seems to be the sap of sugar maples, not yet boiled down and reduced to maple syrup. Sort of a New England version of coconut water I think.

Don't forget the old staples of apple cider, orange juice, pear juice, too.