

Tree News

Spring 2016

A Newsletter from Connecticut Arborists, Inc.

Emerald Ash Borer



It's been very interesting for us, as arborists, to experience the advance of emerald ash borer in Connecticut. Once it becomes established in one location it methodically and steadily advances in all directions. We first found it in the Prospect/Bethany area and now almost all ash in those areas are dead. In Fairfield County it is advancing from the east and is now killing ash in Newtown, Monroe, Trumbull and Bridgeport; it's a steady westward march.

The pic above shows the tunnels that the larvae make as they feed just under the bark. This sample is from a tree in Monroe that died in 2015.

If you have any ash which are important to keep healthy, let us know right away. There are some methods that we can use to manage EAB. The two main methods for controlling EAB are bark sprays and soil injections of specialized pesticides. Both methods are effective, safe and easy to implement. Please let us know right away.

Seasonal Tip



This spring has already shown us, once again, that Mother nature is the boss. After a winter which was as mild as any I remember, spring started to come very early. Some cherries flowered in February and my lawn started greening up in March. Yet, we had a cold blast in late March that really ruined early blooming saucer magnolias. That's a pic above of the flowers that were damaged.

Still, on average, we think spring is about 10-14 days early this year. We found gypsy moth caterpillars on April 23 which is very early.



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Species Spotlight



For wonderful blooms in the spring you can't do much better than the group called yak rhododendron, *rhododendron yakushmanum*. This group is a smaller growing variety of rhody with leaves that are usually fuzzy on the underside. Yaks tend to want some shade here and there and certainly prefer not to have full sun.

From a maintenance perspective they're fairly easy. They have no difficulty with unusual insects or diseases and prefer a general loamy soil with adequate moisture.

I have a few of these yaks at home and the pink blooming ones are fantastic. See pic to the left. How you say anything but "wow"!

Thoughts...

I realize that I'm starting to have a fairly long view on the recent past of arboriculture; after all it's been over forty years for me. There have been some very good advancements in many aspects. For example, when I started we used to treat for insects by spraying everything on a property, rather than the targeted small treatments that we use today. Back in the day we painted all pruning cuts, then we figured out it was a waste of time and money. Same thing with filling cavities; used to but not anymore.

I get the biggest kick out of the change in climbing gear. Today we use very small diameter ropes, hitches and carabiners. When I tell the young guys what the gear was when I started out all those years ago, I really feel old!