



Nursery News

September 2006 - Research & Development
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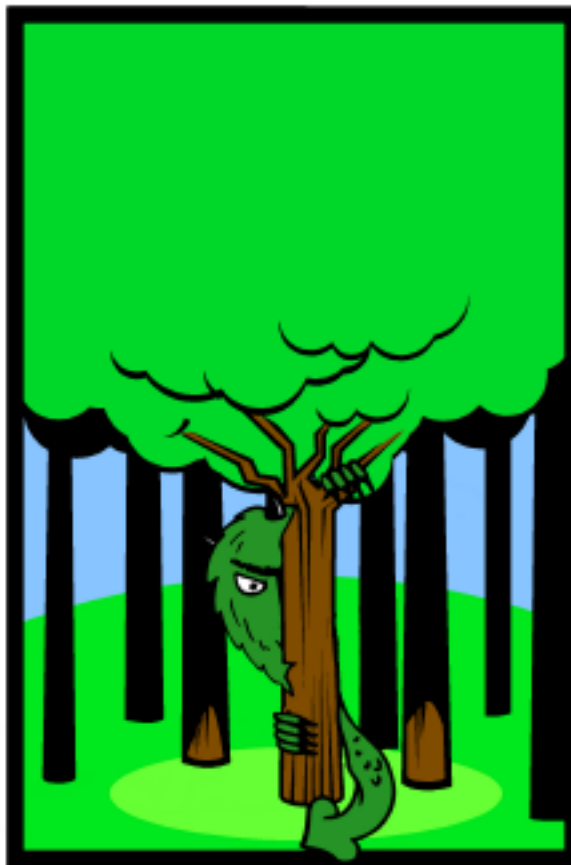


A Fallen Tree

When you spend your time as a City Forester planning, planting, watering, pruning, fertilizing, mulching and guarding trees from 1 to 200 years old—it's a rather unpleasant thought to have to destroy mature healthy trees in your city neighborhoods. This is the position Mark Younger, Evanston Forester, found himself in this summer with the arrival of what he calls...the "Green Menace", an indiscriminate Ash-boring monster that is not even as big as a dime. It has no species preference, no size preference and the health of an ash tree seems not to matter one bit.

The discovery of the Emerald Ash Borer in Illinois this year was a stark and unpleasant reality. The first EAB quarantine was announced in northern Illinois in June 2006. We are in the good but unfortunate company of Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Maryland and Ontario.

Evanston City Forester Mark Younger and his staff have been monitoring their Ash population over the last year, on the look out for any sign of stress to the trees. After this quarantine was announced, he asked their Parks and Forestry staff to look for symptomatic trees with suckers, split bark in trunks and woodpecker holes. When they came back with suspicious signs in one of their parks, they immediately called the Department of Agriculture. The menace was confirmed and has since shown up in two other places in Evanston. Their plan now is to be proactive, and they are working with the IDOA to spot survey the rest of the public ash trees throughout Evanston before the end of September.



The EAB is able to fly $\frac{1}{2}$ mile, and has only one generation per year, so it was thought that delimiting surveys could determine the extent of an infestation. When they sized up the locations in which the EAB was found this summer, they were able to estimate it has been in the area for 4 years. Now, it is believed that in a wind tunnel or storm, the EAB may be able to travel greater distances.

By the time an Ash tree begins to show the signs of stress and telltale symptoms, it is too late. To add to the difficulty of locating it, the ash bark is often deeply grooved and makes it very hard to see the D-shaped exit holes left by the emerging adult. The only successful method of searching an area for the EAB is a destructive survey. In this method one can tell if a tree is infested before symptomatic signs appear by peeling the bark down to the cambium in search of the larval galleries, killing the tree in the process. The theory is -if the larvae is found, the tree is a lost cause, so its removal will at least prevent the possibility of spread from that tree.

Meanwhile, the Evanston's Forestry staff has a quick response if a resident calls in with a concern. The City will have someone there and make recommendations shortly thereafter.

Mark said that in their destructive surveys to date, they have found a few different stages of instars within one tree, suggesting that this one-year pest can sometimes over winter 2 years. The adult stage lays its eggs and dies, but the adults can be active all summer.

Michigan DOA tried to eradicate this pest by destroying all the ash trees within $\frac{1}{2}$ mile of any location on which it was found. This proved ineffective and unsuccessful, so Illinois is looking for a different approach to address EAB suppression.



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The ILDOA has determined that any ash wood must be processed before it can be moved. It must be either incinerated or ground to a chip size no larger than one inch as well as the stumps needing to be ground out eight inches below ground. Logs can be processed for lumber if they are debarked, but no ash firewood or any part of a destroyed tree may be transported.



The Foresters in Evanston are determined to reduce the spread of this devastating pest. This is no small challenge. Being an unintentional import from China, there are no natural predators to keep it in balance. No treatments have proven successful, however, residents who want to treat trees can. There is no guarantee that it will be successful and no record of it making any difference. Even if it is successful that year, Michigan trials proved that the tree eventually succumbs to the pest if it has been in the area. The only thing similar to the impact of the EAB is the Horsechestnut blight and Dutch Elm Disease, from which some cities are still recovering.

Being nearly impossible to find by typical scouting methods, and no known treatments, the best defense any City has right now is information and education of their residents.

And the City of Evanston is doing just that by putting up poster boards in all the city centers to increase awareness. (see cityofevanston.org)

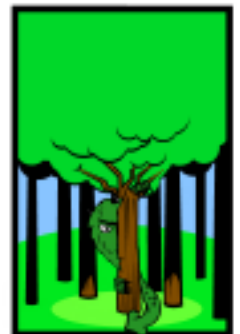
The cost of this pest is going to be with us for a while. Not only is there the cost of removal and processing, but also the replacement of trees, which will be problematic for many cities. How do you replace 20 million trees? A question Michigan is facing. The economic, political, scientific and environmental impacts are only beginning to unfold.

Lessons we can learn? You bet. Many villages, such as the City of Evanston, do not plant a species if their forest inventory is greater than ten percent in that species. They are also continually trying to site plants better and look into a more diverse selection in their city plantings---searching for plants with greater drought tolerance, cold resistance, street tree performance (salt tolerance). In addition, some genera of trees that over the years were planted in excess are now restricted and no longer planted. That is where Ash will now fall. Twelve percent of Evanston's public urban forest canopy is Ash, and if the EAB has anything to do with it, most of that will fall.

The City of Evanston has more than 33,000 trees to care for on their parks and parkways. They want these city forests to be as healthy and diverse as possible. They avoid planting monocultures and even within a street planting, they will mix up the varieties. They will be keeping residents posted through their website and trying to get information out to the communities, meanwhile trying to stop the movement of 'the Green Menace'.

Resources for the EAB:

- o [Its Here – The Emerald Ash Borer in Illinois, The Morton Arboretum Feature Article 2006 #9](#)
[<http://www.mortonarb.org/plantinfo/plantclinic/EAB.pdf>]
- o [EAB - www.emeraldashborer.info/](http://www.emeraldashborer.info/)
- o www.cityofevanston.org - click on recreation department, click on forestry
- o Alternative to Ash Trees: Commercially Available Species and Cultivars (Dr. Laura G. Jull, University of Wisconsin)
- o [USDA information: www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/ep/eab/index.html](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/ep/eab/index.html)
- o [Ohio information: www.ohioagriculture.gov/eab/](http://www.ohioagriculture.gov/eab/)



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