

Forest Pests Continued

By David Falkenham, UNHCE Grafton County Forester

Last month I wrote about the Asian Longhorned Beetle, the damage it can cause to our northern hardwood forests, the common beetles mistaken for ALB, and how to properly identify the Asian Longhorned Beetle. Recently another common harmless beetle known as the Northeastern Sawyer Beetle has crossed my desk as an imposter to ALB. This beetle is the same size as the ALB and the common White Spotted Sawyer Beetle however the color and markings are very different. The Northeastern Sawyer Beetle is a mottled grey-green color with small black and white spots and a faint white spot at the base of its neck, while the dreaded ALB is jet black with very distinct white spots and no white spot at the base of its neck. On Thursday, September 24 there will be an Asian Longhorned Beetle public information session held from 7:00 – 9:00 pm in the UNH Cooperative Extension conference room at the Grafton County Administration building in North Haverhill. All are welcome to attend this meeting which is intended to inform the public about this forest pest and answer any questions that people may have.

Another forest pest that is close to the NH border is the Emerald Ash Borer. This beetle is $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of an inch long and its entire body is a brilliant metallic emerald green. The EAB is responsible for the mortality of millions of acres of Ash trees in the upper mid west and into New York State. Unlike ALB the Emerald Ash Borer is a good flyer and spreads relatively quickly thus increasing the probability that it might arrive in Grafton County soon. Emerald Ash Borer only attacks ash trees and has not received the attention that ALB has, mostly because the ash tree is not as critical a component to our forest based economy as the beloved maple is (you have never had “ash syrup” on your pancakes). However if you suspect that you have the Emerald Ash Borer on your property please do not hesitate to contact Grafton County, UNH Cooperative Extension.

Emerald Ash Borer is much more difficult to detect than ALB; it is smaller and more elusive, however there are two ways to detect the possible presence of EAB. If the ash trees on your land suddenly have unusual sprouts of leaves on the trunk of the tree that were not there last year or the year before, EAB may be suspected. There are many things that could cause this sprouting including crown damage from ice storms, however, if something looks suddenly strange about your ash trees there may be cause for concern. These new sprouts, if caused by EAB, will be accompanied by very small D-shaped exit holes in the bark that are about $\frac{1}{8}$ th of an inch in size.

Another method for EAB detection is the presence of dead Emerald Ash Borers near the holes of ground nesting wasps on your lawns (strange but true). Many of us have lawns that are on dry, poor soils where grass has a hard time growing and is very thin. This is prime habitat for a species of parasitic wasp that preys on beetles including Emerald Ash Borer. Don't worry these wasps are pretty harmless to humans, in fact if you have them in your lawn you have probably been mowing over them for years. The wasp colonies will include many pencil sized holes over a large area on your lawn; generally there is one wasp per hole. If you suspect you have such a colony look near the holes for the presence of dead beetles, in particular Emerald Ash Borer, but any beetle will do. If you do find this situation on your lawn please contact Grafton County, UNH Cooperative Extension. The presence of this parasitic wasp is of particular interest to state forest health specialists. The wasps EAB detection skill far surpass any comparable human technology and the wasp colonies can be used to monitor for the presence of EAB in New Hampshire, a technique known as “Bio-monitoring”.

If you have questions or concerns about ALB, EAB or the presence of parasitic wasp colonies on your property please contact UNH Cooperative Extension Grafton County at 787-6944 or dave.falkenham@unh.edu.

Look for next week's column from Kathleen Jablonski, Extension Educator, 4-H Youth Development.

The University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension is an equal opportunity educator and employer. University of New Hampshire, U.S. Department of Agriculture and N.H. counties cooperating.