FOREST HEALTH: EMERALD ASH BORER

IDENTIFYING ASH TREES

Ridged Bark:

On mature trees (left), bark is tight and displays patterns of diamond shaped ridges. On young trees (right), bark is relatively smooth.

Compound 'Opposite' Leaves:

Leaves have 5 to 11 leaflets with smooth or toothed margins (tips). Leaflets are positioned opposite with one at the top.

'Opposite' Branches:

Branches and buds are directly across from each other rather than staggered.

WHAT IS THE EMERALD ASH BORER?

The Emerald Ash Borer is a metallic green wood-boring beetle of about 1 to 1.5 cm in length that attacks all native species of ash trees, typically killing them in 2 to 3 years. Its larva bore tunnels inside the tree, feeding to the inner bark until the tree dies. Native to north-eastern Asia, the pest was first discovered in Ontario in the Windsor area in 2002.

RECOGNIZING INFESTED ASH TREES

INFESTED ASH TREES OFTEN EXHIBIT THE FOLLOWING SYMPTOMS

Crown Dieback:

Severely attacked trees may exhibit crown dieback as the canopy dies from the top down. Leaves may wilt or turn yellow during the growing season.

Bark Cracks:

Vertical splits of 7 - 10 cm are often present over larval galleries.

Tunnels:

Winding S-shaped larval tunnels snake under the bark where larvae bore channels. Removing the bark exposes larvae and sawdust-filled galleries.

Exit Holes:

Fully mature beetles emerge through exit holes they chew through the bark. These holes are distinctly D shaped and are 3.5 o 4 mm across.

Woodpeckers:

Woodpeckers feed on the larvae under the bark. Look for increased Woodpecker feedings or signs of their probing in the bark.

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) is a very destructive insect and potentially poses a safety risk to persons and property once the affected ASH trees succumb to this insect.

To report a finding of EAB or for more information please do not hesitate to contact the Norfolk County Forest Conservation Service at 519-426-5999 ext. 2224.

Individuals interested in learning more about forestry are encouraged to join the Norfolk Woodlot Owners Association. For more information please visit www.norfolkwoodlots.com.

Photos and information courtesy of Michigan State University, Forestry Images (www.forestryimages.org).