

IDAHO COMMUNITY TREES

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A NEWSLETTER FROM THE IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF LANDS - COMMUNITY FORESTRY PROGRAM AND IDAHO LANDS RESOURCE COORDINATING COUNCIL

Want to defend against pest losses?

Read the Coordinator's Column

Coordinator's Column

Planting Resilient Community Forests -- The 5% rule of thumb

In a column I wrote earlier this year on response planning for invasive species, I talked about the tremendous loss of forests – both urban and rural – caused by chestnut blight, Dutch elm disease (DED) and now, emerald ash borer (EAB). DED is well established in Idaho and, while EAB has not yet arrived, it will in time. One of the reasons losses from these tree pests were and are so great, especially with elm and ash, is because we planted so many of the same tree species. However, there are also other reasons.

In a presentation last year at the International Society of Arboriculture annual conference, South Dakota State University Forestry Professor Dr. John Ball pointed out a common thread with each of these devastating tree pests. Each of the trees involved – chestnut, elm and ash – are in genera with many species found across the three northern temperate continents. The genus *Fraxinus* (ash) for example, has more than four dozen species spread across Europe, Asia and North America. Emerald ash borer – a native of Asia – and Asian ash species evolved together in isolation from European or North American ash species. As a result, emerald ash borers are only minor pests in Asia. When the insects made their way to North America, most likely in ash wood, they found the ash trees here to be suitable hosts. However, because our ash species were unfamiliar with the pest, they lacked evolutionary defenses or natural resistance. The result is that EAB has killed tens of millions of ash trees so far and threatens to kill the entire North American ash population – nearly 9 billion trees.

Dr. Ball stated it this way “Pests often only become serious threats when they move to regions where they recognize new hosts, but these hosts do not recognize them.”

For this reason, Dr. Ball warns that we should be cautious about over-planting trees from genera that have species found on the three northern temperate continents (North America, Europe and Asia). The more species are in a genus, the greater the risk. These include ash, elm, linden, oak, maple, pine, poplar and spruce. He recommends limiting the number of trees planted within a community from this list to no more than 5% of the genera, far different from the 10% of

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Photo by : Jim Fazio

Take a Different Look at Leaves

This autumn, let's promote recycling instead of raking and bagging leaves and putting them by the curb to be removed like trash. Where there is only a light layer of leaves, they can be shredded with a lawnmower and left to naturally decompose. Like lawn clippings, decomposed leaves form water-holding humus and add nutrients to the lawn reducing fertilizer and water needs. When grass clippings or leaves become heavy enough to warrant removal, they can be composted instead of sent to the landfill. Gerry Bates, community forestry assistant for southern Idaho, calls this “doing the rot thing.”

Gerry also suggest that when doing fall pruning, home owners can rent a chipper and turn waste wood into valuable mulch that will help to retain water around their trees, reduce weed growth, and make gardens more attractive. Another idea is to have a neighborhood share the expenses of a chipper rental. Larger diameter branches can be used as firewood to reduce heating costs or be donated to help low-income families.

As long as we value home landscapes, yard waste will be generated. But with a little planning and the will to make changes, leaves and prunings can be turned into assets instead of landfill fillers!

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any single species or 20% of any single genera rule of thumb that has been used for many years.

This means, for example, that if you add up the trees in the genus *Acer* (maple) in your city (Norway, silver, sugar, red and Freeman maples along with box elder), these together should comprise no more than 5% of the total tree population. Note that some Idaho cities have upwards of 30% maples (or poplar, spruce, etc.). While Dr. Ball acknowledges this target may be challenging, trying to get there is important. "It won't prevent pests or diseases from happening, but if they do arrive, the negative impact will be limited." That is, losing 5% of your tree population is much different than losing a third of it. Not only are they costly to remove, but the loss of value to improved air quality, lower stormwater runoff, greater energy conservation and higher property values can be huge and take decades to restore.

Dr. Ball does note some exceptions; trees we can likely plant above the 5% genera limit. These are genera that are limited to a single continent, or which comprise only a few species. Ginkgo is a great example. Ginkgo biloba is the only species within its genus and family, and this is likely a



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What? A Better Mouse Trap?

Just when you think there is no more innovation to be found in the world of trees, along comes Tree Book Tree. Someone in Argentina came up with the idea and has published an educational children's book about how trees are needed to make paper and how paper products impact the environment. The book is made using acid-free paper and eco-ink. But the innovative part is that seeds of the jacaranda tree are embedded in the paper. When you've finished with the book, you plant it! That is, the entire book! The seeds sprout – conceptually, at least – replacing the wood used. For a demonstration, visit: <http://mentalfloss.com/article/64851/plant-book-when-youre-done-reading-and-it-grows-tree>.

key reason it has so few pest problems. Kentucky coffeetree is another example of being in a genus (*Gynnocladus*) with relatively few other species that have very limited continental distribution.

As Dr. Ball also explains, expanding the number of tree genera in our communities requires a commitment from everyone in the green industry, but this is important if we are to create community forests resilient to the next epidemic tree pest. For more information, visit www.amerinursery.com/american-nurseryman/the-5-percent-rule.

- David Stephenson
Community Forestry Coordinator

Main Street Tree Conflict in Cambridge

The City of Cambridge in southwestern Idaho has been awarded a grant to replace aging sidewalks, curbing and trees along Highway 95 which serves as their "Main Street." The project includes a one block downtown area on which trees were planted over 30 years ago. The trees are small maturing trees like flowering cherries, plums, etc. but they have been topped and not well maintained.

A town hall meeting was called in September to discuss the project and the fate of the existing trees in the project area. About 40 of the town's 317 residents attended the meeting and all expressed interest in saving the trees. Community Forestry Assistant Gerry Bates was asked to evaluate the trees and make a recommendation as to how best to save them. Even business owners, who are sometimes ambivalent about having trees that can potentially block visibility of their location from passing traffic, were supportive of keeping the trees.

Gerry consulted with city foresters in other towns who had completed similar projects and found that it wasn't financially feasible to retain the trees while performing construction tasks such as demolition, excavation, fill and compaction. In addition, his inspection of the trees in the project area concluded that most were lifting the sidewalks and adjacent asphalt that had been laid to widen the sidewalk. It was evident that the root systems of the trees were near the surface and massively invasive throughout the project area.

Therefore, Gerry's recommendation to Cambridge was to remove the trees and replace them with more desirable species as part of the reconstruction. He had seen the preliminary drawings of the new project and found that the spacing and species selection is in line with current standards and will result in an attractive and long-lived project, both for hardscape and the trees within it. It was recommended that adequate rooting space below the new sidewalks be provided in order to avoid future concrete heaving and to provide an environment that allows for proper root growth and healthier, long-lived trees. The species selected will require between 1,000 and 1,200 cubic feet of rooting space each. This can be accomplished while still attaining proper compaction for the sidewalk and curb. It just takes planning and forethought.

Need Continuing Education Units?

ISA Certified Arborists need 30 continuing education units (CEU) in the 3-year period between recertifications. Otherwise, the exam must be successfully re-taken to once again become certified. Two of the best ways to earn CEU's are to:

☐ Attend workshops or conferences where awarding CEU's has been approved in advance by the International Society of Arboriculture. The annual National Partners in Urban Forestry Conference is a good example, with one CEU offered for each session at the conference that is attended.

☐ Read Arborist News that is published monthly by ISA and take the quiz associated with the continuing education article in each issue. The quizzes can be completed and mailed in, or taken online. Each is worth one CEU and they are available and valid for any issue published in the past year, so you can complete up to 12/year if you wish.

Scholarship Opportunity to Attend Municipal Forestry Institute

The Idaho Department of Lands is offering two \$2,100 scholarships for attending the weeklong national 2016 Municipal Forestry Institute February 21-26 in Shepherdstown, West Virginia. The Institute is an intensive, high-level leadership training and education program. It helps participants build leadership skills, think and plan strategically, and increase success in working with boards, coalitions, organizations and individuals. If you are interested in applying for a scholarship, download the application form at www.idl.idaho.gov/forestry/community-forestry/index.htm. It must be returned to IDL by November 20, 2015. For more information about the Institute, visit: www.urban-forestry.com/assets/documents/mfi-2016.pdf.

Autumn/Winter 2015-16 Events Calendar

October 28
Urban Forest Connections Webinar Series. Topic: Connecting with the Community. Starts at 10 a.m. PDT, 11 a.m. MDT. For more information, visit: www.fs.fed.us/research/urban-webinars.

November 17
Society of Municipal Arborists Annual Conference, Denver, CO. Visit www.arboday.org/programs/pcf/partnering-event-sma.cfm for more information and to register.

November 18-19
National Partners in Urban Forestry Conference, Denver CO. Visit www.arboday.org/programs/pcf for more information and to register.

December 2-5
American Society of Consulting Arborists (ASCA) Annual Conference, Tucson, AZ. For more information and to register, visit www.asca-consultants.org.

December 9
Urban Forest Connections Webinar Series. Webinars are one hour starting at 10 a.m. PDT, 11 a.m. MDT. This is the next in a continuing series. Topic to be announced. For more information, visit: www.fs.fed.us/research/urban-webinars.

January 20-22, 2016
Idaho Horticulture Expo, Boise Center on the Grove, Boise. For more information and to register, visit www.inlagrow.org.

February 8-10, 2016
ISA Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ) course and exam, Oregon City, OR. Visit <http://pnwisa.org/events/category/courses-and-workshops> for more information and to register.

February 11, 2016
Defensible Tree Appraisal, Shoreline WA. Visit <http://pnwisa.org/events/category/courses-and-workshops> for more information and to register.

February 16, 2016
Soil! What it is and How it Works for Trees, Bend, OR. Visit <http://pnwisa.org/events/category/courses-and-workshops> for more information and to register.

February 18, 2016
Turf, Tree and Landscape Conference, Post Falls, ID. For more information and to register, visit www.inlagrow.org.

February 21-26, 2016
Municipal Forestry Institute, Shepherdstown, WV. For more information, download program brochure at www.urban-forestry.com/assets/documents/mfi-2016.pdf.

Upcoming Certified Arborist (CA), Certified Tree Worker (CTW), Municipal Specialist (MS) and Utility Specialist (UA) written Exams

Nov 7, 2015—Pocatello, ID (CA, UA, MS, CTW)

Nov 17, 2015—Denver, CO (CA, MS)

January 21, 2016—Boise, ID (CA, UA, MS, CTW)

For information or to register, contact visit: www.isa-arbor.com/certification/becomeCertified/index.aspx



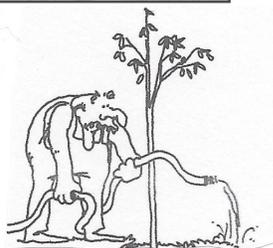
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Tree tip

Autumn Do's and Don'ts



Do Water

If it hasn't rained much, deeply water in and around young trees. Considerable root growth takes place during winter under good conditions. In very dry, warm winter weather, consider watering once a month.

Don't Move Firewood

The normal flight of an adult emerald ash borer is only about ½ to 2 miles in its lifetime. So, its spread is due more to human factors, including transporting firewood. It is illegal to move firewood into Idaho from zones where quarantines exist for emerald ash borers, gypsy moths, and fire ants. Sixteen states prohibit Idaho hardwood from entering their area due to fear of thousand cankers disease. But regulations aside, to prevent the spread of pests, it just makes good sense to burn wood in the general area where it was cut.

