



NEW YORK STATE URBAN AND COMMUNITY FORESTRY COUNCIL

TAKING ROOT

A Newsletter for the New York State Urban and Community Forestry Council

Tree City U.S.A.: Recognition Luncheon

Make your reservations now.

This year's recognition luncheon will be held on March 26 from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Holiday Inn Express in downtown Albany.

All Tree City Representatives are invited to the Annual Recognition Ceremony! This is a free, educational and inspiring event! Come hear about innovated programs in cities across the state!

To make a reservation, call Mary Kramarchyk or Carol Pawelek at 518-402-9425.

For a map and directions to the Holiday Inn Express website at: www.hiealbanydowntown.com.



John Plummer (above) talks about activities in the Town of Greece and applying for growth awards at a previous recognition luncheon.

Taking Root Is Now Electronic

In the interest of "going green", Taking Root is now available on-line only. For easy access, you can bookmark the Council's website at www.nysurbanforestrycouncil.com.

Postcards will be mailed notifying you of new issues.

Warwick Tree Memory Project

In 2006 the Village of Warwick lost one of its oldest and most impressive trees, the Elm on Cherry Street, to Dutch Elm Disease. In November of 2008 the Village conducted a special event in which sections of the elm tree were milled into boards for a community project. In addition, poems, songs and essays about the elm and other trees were collected along with the history of the Elm on Cherry Street. This collection, known as the Warwick Tree Memory Project is accessible on the web at: www.albertwisnerlibrary.org/tree.

The poem *The Yellow Tree* (right) is a sample from this project.

In this issue...

Tree City U.S.A. Luncheon	1
Warwick Mem. Tree Project.....	1
Annual Conference.....	1
Message From the President	2
Carpenter Ants	3
Membership Form.....	5
New Urban Forestry Books.....	6

Save The Date

This year's New York State Urban and Community Forestry Council Annual Conference will be held:

July 16 - 18, 2009
Pratt Institute
Brooklyn, NY

Sponsored by the NYS Urban and Community Forestry Council, Region 2 ReLeaf, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and USDA Forest Service.

This is the best opportunity all year for 3 days of amazingly informative workshops, indispensable networking, and a very enjoyable time with other tree care professionals, municipal staff, and community volunteers.

For more information contact Betty Shimo at 315-826-5743, www.nysurbanforestrycouncil.com

The Yellow Tree

*A little boy came to me
And said, O sing of the yellow tree.
I sang, The Yellow Tree is Autumn's
Song.
Sung by the wind all day long.
A trunk so lean with branches bare
And all the leaves of his golden hair
On the ground
On the ground.*

(continued on page 5)

New York State's Urban and Community Forestry Program is a partnership of public, private and volunteer organizations and individuals that fosters comprehensive planning, management and education throughout New York to create a healthy urban and community forest and enhance quality of life.

Council Officers and Board

Officers:

Patricia Tobin, President
Brian Skinner, Vice-President
Christian Mercurio, Treasurer
Brenda Cagle, Secretary
Dr. Nina Bassuk, Member-at-Large
Stephanie Mallozzi, Member-at-Large
John Schwartz, Member-at-Large

Board of Directors:

Sharon Austin	Fran Lawlor
Jerry Bond	Brian Liberti
Paul Bray	John Mancini
Lori Brockelbank	Dr. Douglas Morrison
Tim Chick	Nancy Needham
Sharon DiLorenzo	Greg Owens
Tim Fulton	Peter Pasnik
Susan Gooberman	Joe Pasquini
J. Rebecca Hargrave	Robert Patrick
Phil Healey	Chuck Schmitt
Andrew Hillman	David Short
Adriana Jacykewycz	Shawn Spencer
Eli Joseph-Hunter	Peggy Stephenson
Paul Kerzner	Art Traver
Alix V. Krueger	Fiona Watt

Ex Officio:

Mary Kramarchyk
John Parry
Jack Stevens

Staff:

Betty Shimo Executive Secretary

Taking Root is published three times each year for supporters of the New York State Urban and Community Forestry Program by the New York State Urban and Community Forestry Council.

For newsletter and submission information, contact Gloria Van Duyne, Editor, at globug111@hotmail.com. Taking Root is made possible by a generous grant from the USDA Forest Service through the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

Message from the President

As we start 2009, I am pleased to introduce several new important Council items. To begin with, please notice our Council logo. This updated logo with the traditional New York State maple leaf has been designed to provide in greater detail what we believe Urban Forestry should represent to the public--the important relationship between municipalities and their surrounding tree population.

Next, after a great deal of discussion and analysis of other not-for-profit organizations, a revised, membership donation fee structure has been initiated beginning with the current year. This new structure can be reviewed in the membership form on page 5. We are very encouraged to report that our membership numbers keep increasing as we continually try to include new individual members, businesses and organizations with similar interests in urban forestry.

Lastly, some of you may remember that in 2004, the Council conducted a manual survey to reveal the nature and depth of municipal tree management activities statewide. This survey provided valuable information and statistics which have been very meaningful especially when

we discuss forestry programs and funding needs with various municipalities as well as local and state legislators.



The Council is planning to re-survey our state municipalities to obtain an up-to-date picture of the state of municipal forestry. In addition to providing information for the council for advocacy purposes, we will be able to obtain some meaningful statistics for use by our partners, the Department of Environmental Conservation, the ReLeaf regions, SUNY ESF and the various municipalities. This year, we will be using online resources for communication and statistical analysis purposes. This simplified processing will allow us to obtain more information for less money and much more efficiently than our original effort.

Plans are well underway for our next New York ReLeaf conference which is being held July 16 -18 in Region 2 at the historic Pratt Institute in Brooklyn. Please save the dates and join us if you can!

Pat Tobin, President



Contact Us

Council website: www.nysurbanforestrycouncil.com
Council email: treeinfo@nysurbanforestrycouncil.com

Myth Busters: Carpenter Ants in Urban Trees

Dr. Chris Luley and Dr. Laurel Hansen

Carpenter ants are very common in urban trees, as are the myths surrounding these relatively secretive insects. Fowler and Parrish (1982) reported that over 75% of the shade trees surveyed in New Jersey and Central Park, New York City were infested!

Carpenter ants occur naturally in forests. There are fewer nesting sites in urban areas due to lower tree densities compared to forested locations. Consequently, carpenter ants choose available trees, houses, and utility poles as alternative nesting sites. Despite their frequent presence in urban trees, numerous misconceptions about the biology and management of carpenter ants abound.

This article discusses what is known about carpenter ants relative to many common myths about this insect.

Myth 1: Carpenter ants are big black ants

Most arborists are familiar with the large black soldiers or majors of *Camponotus pennsylvanicus*, the black carpenter ant. However, carpenter ants exhibit considerable diversity in size and appearance.

There are over 900 species of carpenter ants worldwide and they offer a wide range of colors and sizes other than the well known large, black carpenter ant majors we often think of as representing this species. Therefore, carpenter ants are not just large black ants.

Myth 2: Carpenter ants only nest in decayed or moist wood

This is only partially true because carpenter ants can and do nest in sound wood both in living trees and wood in use.

A carpenter ant colony forms two types of nests. The brood or main nest, which harbors the queen, is typically located in decayed or moist wood. The moisture is needed to maintain a suitable environment for hatching eggs.

Many carpenter ant species also form satellite nests in locations that are drier and warmer than the brood nest. The satellite nest is created by workers who move mature larvae to a location that is more favorable for them to develop. Satellite nests do not contain a queen and are therefore unable to reproduce. Satellite nests maintain contact with the parent nest during the active season of the year. Many times, satellite nests develop in foam insulation, or other less dense materials that are easy to excavate and provide similar conditions to dry wood.

Carpenter ants are also known to damage un-decayed or sound wood in living trees. Most brood nesting begins in decayed wood but the potential for expansion to un-decayed wood exists.

Myth 3: Carpenter ants in houses or other structures usually can be traced back to a water leak or other moisture problems

Satellite nests are often established in dry and warm locations within a house with no moisture problems while the brood or parent nest can usually be found near the house in a decayed tree, old stump, or in buried wood.

Ants may gain main access to houses from brood nests using tree branches that contact or overhang a house.

Carpenter ants are good tighrope walkers, and can also reach a house by walking utility lines that pass through trees.

Myth 4: Carpenter ant nests are only found near ground level in trees.

The brood nest of carpenter ants is usually established close to the ground where contact with the soil or other

source of moisture provides conditions necessary for the colony to develop. However, satellite nests can be found considerably higher in a tree as they are not dependent on moisture for the colony to thrive.

Myth 5. Only a few ants on a tree do not mean there is an infestation

Carpenter ants forage for a variety of food such as aphid honeydew and other insects. Their presence on a tree does not necessarily mean an infestation exists, as the tree may only be on the trail to a food source. However, relatively few of the ants in

a colony forage for food even though a colony can have thousands of workers. The majority remain in the nest performing other duties to maintain the colony.

Carpenter ants are fairly secretive and do the majority of their foraging at night or via a series of underground tunnels. Typically the ants will follow a network of well-traveled trails.



The size of carpenter ants can vary

Therefore, the presence of a few ants is adequate to suggest a tree is infested, or it may mean that an infestation is nearby and workers are using that tree as part of their trail network.



Wood riddled with holes from carpenter ants

Myth 6. Swarming of carpenter ants with winged forms mean that colony is moving.

Swarming of carpenter ants occurs in the spring of the year after a colony has reached an adequate size to start an additional colony. The winged males and females that make up the swarm mate and a new fertilized queen seeks a new location to attempt to establish a new colony without any connection to the original nest. The original colony will continue to produce additional swarms in later years if conditions are right.

Myth 7: Treated wood will prevent carpenter ants

Since treated wood is less likely to have decay because the preservatives inhibit decay fungi, the treatments may indirectly reduce carpenter ant damage. However, carpenter ants do not eat wood, therefore various wood preservatives will not stop carpenter ant damage. Damage from carpenter ants develops as a result of their excavation of wood.



Sawdust at the base of a tree can be an indication of carpenter ants.

Carpenter Ant Identification

Carpenter ants are in the family Formicidae under the order Hymenoptera (bees, wasps). The largest genus is *Camponotus*, or carpenter ants. Worldwide there are over 900 species of *Camponotus* of which 50 are found in North America. Of the species in the United States and Canada, about 24 are commonly infest living trees.

Carpenter Ants of North America (Hansen and Klotz 2005) is a good reference guide to the species and their biology. Workers are needed to identify any ant to the species level.

Carpenter Ant Biology

Carpenter ants are social insects that develop a colony around a single queen. The colony is comprised of a range of ants of different sizes and roles to play in the maintenance and growth of the colony. Minors, medias, and majors or soldiers work to feed the queen, tend eggs and larvae, excavate wood for the nest, and forage for food.

A colony is initiated when a fertilized queen is dispersed from an established colony to a new site. The queen loses her wings, lays eggs, and produces workers that

begin to forage for food and excavate the nest. The queen's sole duty is lay eggs to expand the colony. Death of the queen means eventual death of the colony as workers do not have the ability to reproduce and sustain the nest.

The brood colony, or the main colony where eggs are laid and hatched, is usually initiated in decayed wood near the ground. Trees with butt rot or decay, old stumps, houses or structures with moisture problems, un-protected firewood piles, or buried wood make ideal locations for a brood colony. As the colony expands in size satellite colonies may develop. These colonies are formed by workers moving larvae to a new location where warmer drier conditions promote rapid development of the larvae.

Satellite colonies can be found in a wider range of locations and types of materials than brood colonies. They are often seen in foam insulation in houses, or in attics in poor quality plywood. Satellite colonies can also develop in higher in trees or in sound wood in houses. Satellite colonies are typically abandoned at the end of the season and the ants return to the brood colony.

Carpenter ants are foraging insects that feed on other insects and are well known to tend aphid colonies for their production of honeydew. Carpenter ants may show strong dedication to a known food source. This can be a barrier to the taking of baits placed out for their control.

Carpenter ants are dormant in the winter. Many people are concerned about the possibility of introducing an infestation into their homes with firewood. This is unlikely because the ants are dormant and a queen would be required to establish a colony. Using only seasoned firewood and not storing it around the house during the growing season is a sound recommendation to avoid any chance of it establishing carpenter ants in a home.

Carpenter Ant Management

Carpenter ants have a beneficial side because they can be important predators during outbreaks of defoliating caterpillars. They are also important in recycling wood in the forest as they break wood down into smaller pieces and accelerate the deterioration of dead and down trees and are a food source for birds and other animals. For example, carpenter ants are a favorite food of pileated woodpeckers and the presence of these woodpeckers excavating large, oblong holes in trees is a good symptom of a carpenter ant infestation.

There are a number of integrated management strategies for carpenter ants. Elimination of the conditions appropriate for brood colonies is the most obvious. For example, removing severely decayed trees, grinding stumps after removal, removing buried wood, or fixing leaks in structures are easy to apply examples that reduce the potential for carpenter ants infestation.

Limiting access to structures is a good means to avoid potential infestations. Clearing branches that touch houses and preventing shrubs from encroaching on foundations are also recommended.

Newer chemical treatments have made treating infestations easier and more effective. Arborists that are licensed to apply

pesticides to trees are typically not legally licensed to make treatments to houses or structures without additional pesticide application requirements. However, a number of insecticides are labeled that allow arborists to make treatments around the base and on the trunks of infested trees as a means to control carpenter ants.

Baits are often selected as a more environmentally friendly strategy to treat carpenter ant infestations. A number of very effective baits have been developed recently. The baits are typically placed near the brood colony or along a foraging trail. They are successful only if foraging workers take the bait back to the brood colony.

This article was excerpted from a workshop presented by Dr. Hansen in New York in March 2008 and from her book that was published in 2005 with Dr J. Klotz, "Carpenter Ants of North America". The workshop was sponsored by New York State Arborists, ISA Chapter, New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, and Cornell Cooperative Extension. Dr. Hansen is a professor at Spokane Falls Community College and is a frequent speaker for the structural pest control professionals. Dr. Luley is a forest pathologist and consultant with Urban Forestry LLC in Naples, NY.

Has your community recently embarked on a major tree planting program? Developed a master plan? Please keep us posted on your community's successes and include pictures (300 dpi). You might see your project in a future issue of *Taking Root*.

The Yellow Tree (continued from page 1)

*Yellow Tree will leaf anew
In the spring, a light green leafy hue
And some tiny bird will build a nest,
Chosen tree from all the rest.
Leaves will hold tight until the fall
Then come dancing down one and all
On the ground
On the ground.*

*The boy loves the Yellow Tree
Much more, I think, than he loves me.
The Yellow Tree with branches bare,
Just right for a boy climbing there
And the golden dreams of his play
Among the tree yellowed leaves all day.
On the ground
Crunchy sound.*

--Francine de Ferc-Tyler

Second Lives for Urban Trees:

We want to hear from you.

Some community trees come down in storms or need to be removed for various reasons. Many people and communities have used the wood from these trees to make fine furniture, benches for public parks and even signs and sculpture. Tell us your story and you may see it here in *Taking Root*. Photos (300 dpi) are encouraged. Please share your story: globug111@hotmail.com.

Yes. Count me in as a Council Member!

Membership Categories*

please check one

- \$10 - Student
- \$20 - Individual
- \$75 - Not-for-Profit Organization
(4 designated representatives per membership)
- \$100 - Governmental Agency
(5 designated representatives per membership)
- \$125 - Small Business (1-49 full-time employees)
(6 designated representatives per membership)
- \$200 - Medium Business (50-99 full-time employees)
(10 designated representatives per membership)
- \$500 - Corporate (100 or more full-time employees)
(12 designated representatives per membership)

* Membership runs Jan.-Dec. Dues are not pro-rated.

Council Members receive discounts to the annual statewide conference and Council sponsored workshops. You are also supporting the dissemination of knowledge about tree care and the importance of tree programs for our health and well-being.

Individual Name or Primary Designated Representative _____

Profession/Title _____

Company or Organization Name _____

Address _____

County _____

Phone _____ Fax _____

e-mail _____

Payment Method (check one) Check Money Order Credit Card

(credit card information) VISA MasterCard

Acct# _____ expire date _____

3-Digit Security Code on Back of Card _____

Name on card _____

Signature _____

Mail coupon with your payment to NYS Urban & Community Forestry Council, C/o Elizabeth M. Shimo, PO Box 124, Cold Brook, NY 13324-0124.

In addition to my membership, I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution in the amount of \$ _____.

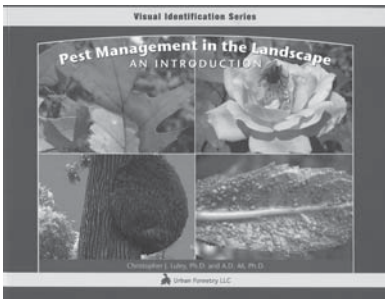
TOTAL AMOUNT \$ _____

NEW BOOK RELEASES

Pest Management in the Landscape: An Introduction

This new book by Drs. Luley and Ali from Urban Forestry LLC in the Visual Identification Series is unique in that it is not a diagnostic manual but it does have over 230 color photographs of pests and pest management.

The book is aimed at those who do not have a background or formal training in pest management, which is seemingly the majority of people in the landscape and arboricultural field. It is intended to frame the sometimes complex and technical field of pest management by looking at the common causes of problems in the landscape, symptoms of these agents, and approaches to identification and management.



You can order the book online (go to urbanforestryllc.com for links to resellers) or if you desire a discount for quantity orders of 5 or more contact Dr. Luley directly at the above website or by calling (585) 394-9460. The cost is \$29.95.

Recommended Urban Trees: Site Assessment and Tree Selection for Stress Tolerance

Revised and updated for 2009

Nina Bassuk, Deanna F. Curtis, B.Z. Marranca, Barb Neal, Urban Horticulture Institute, Cornell University.

There is no one perfect tree for any situation! The most successful approach is to select trees to match site conditions and limitations, based upon a thorough site assessment.

This book has been a necessity for communities and those who plant trees in urban and suburban areas for years.

To order hard copies contact: urbanhort@cornell.edu
Hard copies cost \$16.95 (Bulk order discounts available)

This publication is also available electronically at:
www.hort.cornell.edu/uhi/outreach/recurbtree/index.html



*Recommended Urban Trees:
Site Assessment and
Tree Selection for Stress Tolerance*

Urban Horticulture Institute
Department of Horticulture
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York

SPRING 2009 NO. 26

Coldbrook, NY 13324

PO Box 124

FORESTRY COUNCIL, INC.

NYS URBAN AND COMMUNITY

