September 2015
Volume 6, Issue 9

Alamance Gardener

Alamance County Cooperative Extension Horticulture Department

Coming Events

Thurs., Sept. 3rd, 10:00a
Scree Gardens

Wed, Sept 16, 9a-6p
MASTER GARDENER PLANT SALE

Thurs., Sept. 24th, 10:00a
Planting Trees and Shrubs

Thurs., Oct. 8th, 10:00a
Plants with Fall & Winter Interest

Fri., October 16
DEADLINE to apply for the Master Gardener Class of 2016 *(See p.5)*

Thurs., Oct. 22rd, 10:00a
Planting Asparagus

Contact us :

Alamance County Cooperative Extension Service

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Chris Stecker
Christine.stecker@alamance-nc.com

Follow us on Facebook!

Just click here:

Master Gardener Plant Sale

5th Annual Master Gardener Fall Plant Sale

For information:
Phone 336.570.6740
E-mail: christine.stecker@alamance-nc.com

ONE DAY ONLY!

Wednesday, September 16, 9:00 AM - 6:00 PM

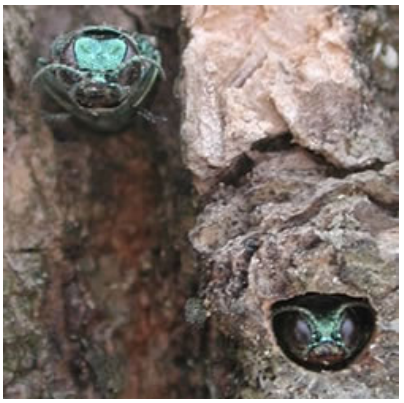
Agriculture Building
209 N Graham-Hopedale Rd.
Burlington, NC

- **Flowering perennials and luxurious ferns grown by Master Gardeners, all priced at $5 or less!**
- **One-day-only specials on Atlas gardening gloves and The Garden Plate cookbook.**
- **Enter to win a 2-hour private landscape consultation with Rett Davis.**

All proceeds go toward the care and improvement of Arbor Gate Teaching Garden, a public demonstration garden maintained exclusively by Alamance County Master Gardener Volunteers.

Extension Master Gardener
NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

Emerald Ash Borer Update

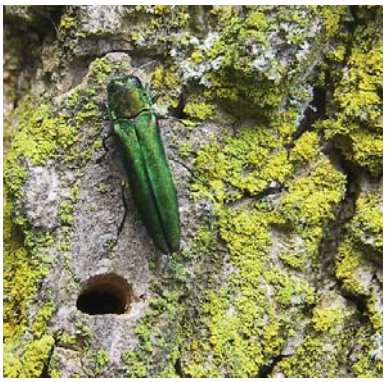


Last year I reported on the Emerald Ash Borer and it is time for an update. Orange County has recently joined Granville, Person, Vance, and Warren counties in the EAB quarantine area. This means no part of an ash tree can be moved from the quarantined area into an area outside the quarantine. While the EAB has not yet been reported in Alamance County, it is almost certainly present in the eastern part of the county. I expect to see EAB reported in Burlington in a year or two. While it will take a few years to happen, the effects on the ash trees in our landscape will be significant.

The Emerald Ash Borer is an imported pest of ash trees that was first reported in Michigan in 2002. It is now found in 22 states and has killed millions of ash trees. The EAB adult beetles lay eggs on the bark of ash trees. When the eggs hatch, the larva bore into the trunk and feed under the bark disrupting the tree's ability to transport water and nutrients. The first symptoms of damage are thinning and die-back of the crown of the tree. Most trees will die 2-3 years after the symptoms begin.

EAB - The Undoing of the Mighty Ash?

There are a number of factors you need to consider before beginning an EAB treatment program. First and most importantly is the ash tree worth treating? This is a complicated issue and a treatment decision should not be taken lightly. There are many ash trees that probably should not be treated. The cost of the treatment and the possible harm to pollinators might outweigh the value/benefit of the tree.



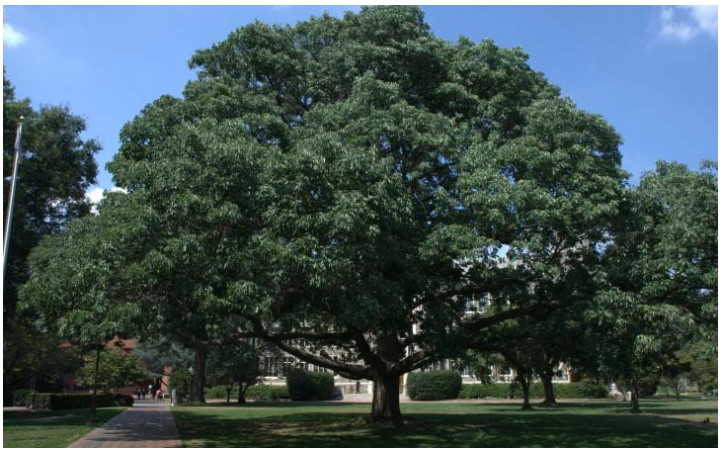
Dinotefuran (Safari) and imidacloprid are two of the recommended systemic products that can be used for EAB treatments. These can be used by homeowners as a soil application and are absorbed by plant roots. My main concern with using these systemic products is the harmful effect they might have on our pollinators. The article linked below states that ash flowers are wind-pollinated and not a nectar source for honey bees. However, other plants in the treated root zone area will also absorb the insecticide and those plants may be attractive to bees. Clover in the lawn surrounding the ash tree might be one example.

The homeowner approved products probably won't work for trees over a 15" trunk diameter. If your ash tree is larger than that you will have to hire a professional to get an effective treatment. I don't know what a treatment will cost, but most likely won't be cheap. Once you begin the treatments you can never stop. The EAB population will start slowly, but will increase rapidly as more trees are infested. Even after most of the ash trees are gone, there will still be a lingering population of EAB requiring continual treatment.

To make a long story short, it looks like our ash trees are going away. If you have a very valuable ash, you may make to decision to try to protect it. I don't have enough space in this article to fully discuss all the treatment options for the EAB so I am including the link to an excellent publication:

http://www.emeraldashborer.info/files/multistate_EAB_Insecticide_Fact_Sheet.pdf

If you have any questions about ash tree pests or any other gardening topic, please give me or Chris a call.



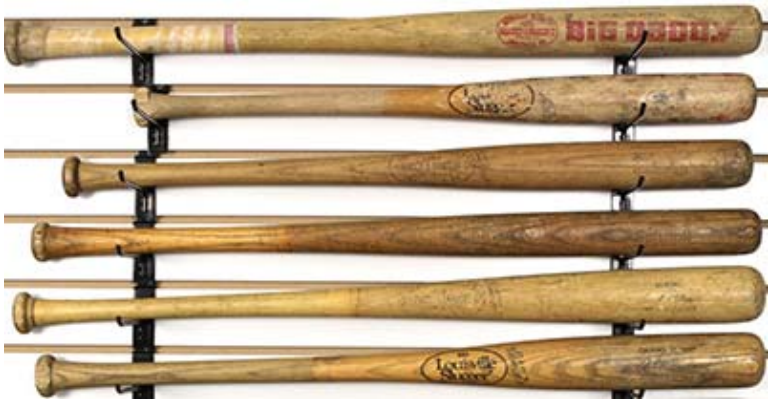
http://www.extension.umn.edu/garden/insects/find/emerald-ash-borer/docs/potential-side-effects-of-systemic-insecticides-used-to-control-eab.pdf

Is America's Pastime In Jeopardy?

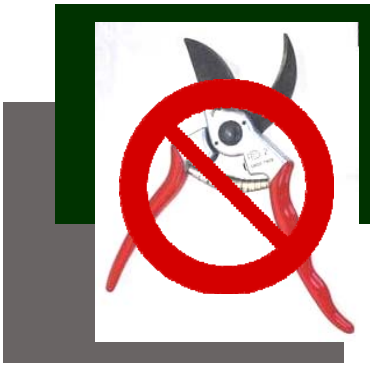
Traditionally, ash trees from Pennsylvania and upstate New York are used to make baseball bats. The ash is valued for its strength, flexibility, and light weight. The best trees are those that grow in dense clusters where they are protected from the wind and forced to grow straight up towards the sunlight. Forty to fifty years of growth is required to bring an ash tree to the preferred trunk diameter of 14-16 inches (36-41 cm). Each tree yields approximately 60 bats.

Modern baseball rules limit bat lengths to 42 inches and the diameter to 2.75 inches. There are no weight restrictions, but the bats must be made of wood. Fortunately, there is no restriction on the type of wood to be used for bats, and there are proponents for bats made of maple, hickory, and yellow birch, any of which might be used to replace the traditional Northern White Ash.

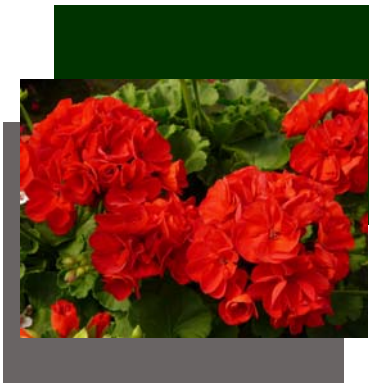
Sadly, none of these has baseball bat-shaped seeds.



September Garden Tips



Put your pruning tools away now. Except for removing damaged or dead wood, which may be done at any time, it's best to leave major pruning chores until next year. Spring-blooming plants such as azaleas have already set their blossoms for next spring, so pruning now will remove those flower buds. Plants that bloom on new wood, such as crape myrtles, will be encouraged to put out new leaves if pruned now. These new leaves won't have a chance to harden off before cold weather sets in and there could be winter damage that, at the very least, will necessitate even more pruning next spring to remove the damaged limbs and frost-burned leaves.



Now is the best time to reseed, over seed and start new fescue lawns. Over seed at the rate of 3 to 4 pounds per 1,000 square feet. Sow new cool-season lawns in prepared ground at the rate of 7 pounds per 1,000 square feet.

Root geranium (*Pelargonium*) cuttings for color next summer. Take 4-inch cuttings of terminal growth, making an angled cut just below a node. Dip the cut end into rooting hormone. Use a pencil to poke a hole in moistened potting medium then insert the cutting. Water well and place the pot in a plastic bag and close the top with a twist tie. Keep out of direct sunlight until rooting occurs (in 2 to 3 weeks), then remove the pot from the bag and place it in a sunny window in a cool room (55 – 65 degrees). Pinch the young plants back for bushier growth.

Now is the time to take action against the winter annual weeds that would spoil your spring landscape. Chickweed, henbit, deadnettle, and annual bluegrass can all be controlled in shrub and perennial borders by the timely application of a pre-emergence herbicide. Keep in mind, however, that pre-emergence herbicides will kill flower seedlings just as well as weeds.

Harvest sweet potatoes in late September or early October (before first frost). Plant mustard, onion sets and radishes until the middle of the month. Sow onion seeds all month.

Order spring-flowering bulbs now for planting in late fall. Worried about voles chowing down on your bulbs? Instead of tulips, do your tiptoeing through any and all members of the genus *Narcissus,* which includes daffodils and jonquils. There are hundreds of cultivars from which to choose.

Establish new perennial flower beds. Dig, divide and replant overcrowded beds. Spread a 2 to 3-inch layer of organic matter over the area, add lime and fertilizer according to the soil test, and till in to a depth of 6 to 8 inches. Space divisions at least 1 foot apart in all directions to postpone future root competition.

Get NEW perennials at the Master Gardener Fall Plant Sale, Wednesday September 16 at the Agriculture Building, 209 North Graham-Hopedale Road, Burlington.

Master Gardener nurtured ferns and flowering perennials, including many propagated from favorites at Arbor Gate Teaching Garden, deals on gloves and cookbooks—

ONE DAY ONLY!

Arbor Gate Plant of the Month

White Wood Aster * *Eurybia divaricatus*

Dry shade can be one of the toughest landscape issues gardeners face. Competition with tree roots for water and nutrients can be a real challenge for most plants. But White Wood Aster is up to the challenge. *Eurybia divaricata* is native to the Eastern U.S. and typically grows in the wild in dry open woods. Forming loose clumps with dark, sprawling, sometimes zigzag stems up to 2.5' tall. The sprawling habit makes this plant behave like a ground cover, draping attractively over tree roots, low walls and other plants. Distinctive leaves are heart-shaped, stalked and coarsely toothed. Small flowers (to 1 inch across) have white rays and yellow to red center disks and appear in an abundance of flat-topped, terminal clusters in late summer to early fall. The effect is one of a carpet of tiny daisies that begins in late August and lights up the shade throughout September and well into October.

Attractive to bees and butterflies when in bloom and the seeds are a favorite of birds. The leaves of *Eurybia divaricatus* are a host plant for the caterpillar of the Pearl Crescent butterfly.

Read more here:
https://plants.ces.ncsu.edu/plants/all/aster-divaricatus/

*Need White Wood Aster in your garden? Good news! It's one of the plants we've propagated for the Master Gardener Fall Plant Sale (*see Page 1*)

Release Your Inner Gardener!

Extension Master Gardener
NC COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

MISSION:

Under the auspices of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service, the mission of the Extension Master Gardener Volunteers is to learn about issues related to urban horticulture that are research based, practical and environmentally sound and to educate the community on these issues.

EMGV REQUIREMENTS

New interns are required to complete:

- **50 hours of education,** including the Master Gardener Course (42 hours)
- **50 hours of volunteer service** in Alamance County

Recertifying EMGVs are required to complete:

- **10 hours continuing education**
- **40 hours of volunteer service** in Alamance County,

14-week course begins January 2016
Classes are scheduled for Wednesday mornings from 9 until 12 at the Agricultural Building auditorium, 209-C North Graham Hopedale Road, Burlington.
Instructors include Extension Horticulture Agents, Certified Arborists, Master Gardeners, and Extension Specialists.
Some topics covered in the 2016 program:
Soils and Fertilizers, Plant ID and Botany, Lawns, Pruning/Woody Plants, Small Fruit, Tree Fruit, Vegetables, Insects, Annual and Perennial flowers, Plant Diseases, Pesticides and IPM

Program Director: Mark Danieley, Horticulture Agent

Link to the Application:
http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Application.pdf

Deadline for application: October 16, 2015.
2016 fee for book and materials: $100, payable upon acceptance into the program
For further information, contact:

NC State University A&T State University COOPERATIVE EXTENSION
Empowering People · Providing Solutions

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Or e-mail: Chris Stecker, EMGV Program Coordinator: christine.stecker@alamance-nc.com