



TREE, SHRUB & LAWN CARE

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Arbor Notes

FALL/WINTER 2018



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- Spotted Lanternfly & Boxwood Blight
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Registration #'s: WC-16727-H05 CT-B1068 NYC-1331916
NJ Home Improvement #13VH06221500

Fall/Winter Checklist

Fall Planting

Fall can be an ideal planting time for trees and shrubs. Plants focus their energy on root establishment now, rather than on top growth in the spring. Unless already dug, we advise against planting trees categorized as being a "fall hazard" and these particular species should be avoided.

Fall & Winter Pruning

Bare trees allow arborists to clearly see the entire branch structure of your trees, making for easier identification of defects and potential hazards. Let us help with the health, appearance and safety of your trees by pruning them now.



Antidesiccant Treatment

Leaves and needles often lose a detrimental amount of moisture during the winter. Prevent damage to your evergreens with an antidesiccant treatment — especially new plantings that have not yet had an opportunity to establish.

Fall Fertilization

Call your arborist — there's still time to provide slow release soil nutrients and amendments that will benefit trees and shrubs.



Places to Visit: Devil's Den Preserve

Devil's Den Nature Conservancy Preserve stretches through Weston and Redding, Connecticut. It is part of the extended Saugatuck Valley Trails System and is comprised of 20 miles of contiguous forests and watershed lands. At 1,756 acres, Devil's Den is the Nature Conservancy's largest continuous preserve in CT. The name, Devil's Den, is derived from local lore that a hoof-like mark made in a boulder was the footprint of the Devil.



The park was founded by the late Katharine Ordway, who bought 1,100 acres from the Bridgeport Hydraulic Company in 1966 and added more land to the original purchase from 1966 to 1968. The preserve's trail system winds past dramatic rocky crests, outcroppings, and cliffs. It features more than 500 types of trees and wildflowers, including the beautiful pink lady's slipper, cardinal flower, and Indian Pipe. It is home to the red fox, bobcat, coyote, Eastern copperhead, wood duck, ruffed grouse, pileated woodpecker, and more than 140 other bird species.

Devil's Den is also of historical significance: archaeological evidence indicates human use of the area, mostly for hunting, as long as 5,000 years ago; in 1777, residents of Redding and Weston were thought to have taken refuge in the Devil's Den to escape harassment by a column of British troops marching north from Long Island Sound to destroy a military supply depot in Danbury; and, the remnants of an old sawmill from the 19th century can still be found on the preserve.

Activities available at the preserve today include hiking, birding, nature study and cross-country skiing. The New Canaan Nature Center (that Almstead is involved with) runs several programs and hikes in the preserve. Pets are not allowed in the preserve.

Please visit the WestonHistoricalSociety.org for more information.

Almstead Around Town

Wave Hill Gardeners' Party

For the 6th consecutive year, Almstead sponsored the Gardeners' Party at Wave Hill Public Garden and Cultural Center in the Bronx. The annual benefit raises funds to support Wave Hill's renowned gardens and horticulture program.



Tree-Soil Relationship Course

Michael Almstead (arborist and VP of Almstead) co-lectured a class on Tree-Soil Relationship with Tom Rathier (Emeritus Soil Scientist, Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station) for Connecticut Tree Protective Association's (CTPA) Arboriculture 101, a 13-week course offered by the CTPA to prepare students for the Connecticut Arborist Exam. Michael's lecture focused on soil science in the field including the Soil Food Web, compost, microorganisms, soil testing, and air-spading. Image: Michael Almstead's Arbor101 class.



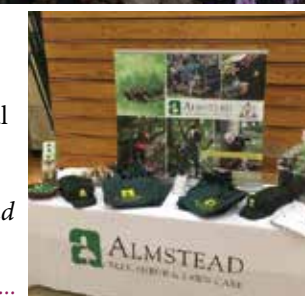
Environmental Excellence Award

Almstead received an Award for Environmental Excellence at the 10th Annual Sustainability Dinner benefiting Teaneck Creek Conservancy. Ryan Duff (NJ Branch Manager) and Michael Almstead (VP) accepted the award. Image: TCC President Adam Strobel (left) with Ryan Duff and Michael Almstead and Alexa Marques (right), Executive Director of Teaneck Creek Conservancy.



Paul Smith's College Career Fair

Marc Viggiano from Almstead met with current students and alumni, and raffled a gift basket at the Paul Smith's College Fall Career Fair. If you are interested in a career at Almstead or our 2019 Internship program, please write to jobs@almstead.com. Image: The Almstead table at the Paul Smith's College Career Fair.



Continued on the following page...

Should You Inoculate Your Trees Against Emerald Ash Borer?

Now that Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) has been found in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut, every property owner in our region with ash trees needs to think about a management plan. We recommend that you discuss it with your arborist and consider treatment options — as well as the possibility of tree removal. When a tree gets severely infested, the borers eventually devour the entire cambium -- which can make the tree brittle, unpredictable, and unsafe to climb. Several accidents have been reported by tree care providers throughout the country because of this and we need to take additional care when removing trees infested with EAB.



Images: (top) The metallic-gree Emerald Ash Borer beetle (bottom-left) S-shaped galleries in bark and (bottom-right) D-shaped holes are visible signs of EAB.

Emerald Ash Borer (*Agrilus planipennis*) is a tiny, half-inch long, invasive insect that infests and kills native North American ash species, including green, white, black and blue ash. The female beetle lays its eggs in cracks or crevices in the bark of the tree. Upon hatching, the EAB larvae feeds on the layer under it — which causes disruption of life-sustaining sugar, water and nutrients through the tree. Most trees die within 2-4

years of being infected with EAB.

Almstead is currently inoculating hundreds of ash trees against EAB for city, state, commercial and residential customers. We've been at the forefront of the fight against EAB in our region. We have the experience, training and state-of-the-art equipment required

to perform successful treatments. In 2016, Almstead partnered with ArborJet to inoculate ash trees at the Grove of Remembrance at Liberty State Park in New Jersey. Since then, we have been treating (and removing) ash trees in several locations, including many through New York City Parks Department which has committed resources towards inoculating and preserving selected ash bordering infestation areas.

If you haven't yet identified and qualified the ash trees that are worthy of preservation on your property, please do not delay any longer. The best option is to inoculate your trees before EAB is detected. Treating trees once EAB is found may slow its spread and save healthy trees nearby. However, many studies have shown that if more than 50% of the canopy has been compromised by EAB it is probably too late to save the tree.

The first step to take would be to call your Almstead arborist to examine the trees on your property. You can also look for signs of EAB, including:

- The presence of the small, metallic green insect (see image on left).

Image: Almstead Plant Health Care technicians Leo Ibarra and Luis Torres injecting an ash tree for EAB in Queens, NY.



- Tiny D-shaped holes in the bark.
- S-shaped galleries and splitting bark.
- Thinning crown of the tree – due to lack and water and nutrients.
- Excessive sprouting — new growth at the base of the trunk or on the main branches of the tree.
- Woodpecker damage — EAB are often sought out and attacked by woodpeckers.

If EAB is discovered on your property, your arborist will work with you to determine a management plan. It may include treatment or tree removal based on the severity of the infection, the tree's condition, and contribution benefits to the landscape. Treatment has been shown to be more cost effective than removal over the pest presence in the area, which could be 7-10 years.

For additional resources, please visit our EAB page at almstead.com/eab.

See more Insect & Diseases inside

Contact Us:

Visit us at www.almstead.com or scan the QR code on the right with your mobile device.



A Letter from the CEO



One of the things we are proud of at Almstead is the long tenure of our staff. Each year, when I hand out our service awards at our company picnic, I am gratified and humbled by the number of employees who have been with us for ten, fifteen, twenty, twenty-five and more years. This year, one of our longest serving arborists from our New Rochelle branch, **Michael Marks**, retired after 23 years of exemplary service to the company. He will be missed by the entire Almstead family of arborists, office staff and field crew. We celebrated Michael at a couple of events over the summer and I wish him only the best as he begins his well-deserved retirement.

I can't believe it's Fall already as I write this. All our arborists are performing our annual **seasonal inspections** now. It's a valuable, complimentary service we offer our clients. Your arborist or administrative staff may have reached out to you already. If you haven't scheduled a consultation yet, please do so at your earliest. It is also an excellent time to assess on-going plant health care and lawn care programs to make any required adjustments for 2019.

The big news, and of particular concern to us, as arborists, is the spread of **Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)** in our region. We've been following news of this very invasive and dangerous beetle for several years, since it first became a cause for concern. In spite of the best efforts of state and local authorities, it is slowly but surely spreading in New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. The good news is that ash trees can be inoculated and treated against EAB. Recently, another invasive pest, the **Spotted Lantern Fly (SLF)** was added to the quarantine list in New York and New Jersey. Both these destructive pests can be fatal to your trees. Please read the articles on EAB, SLF, and **Boxwood Blight** (a fungus that we're seeing more of in our area).

Visit our website at www.almstead.com for more information on insects and diseases in our region. You can also always reach out to me, or any Almstead arborist, if you have concerns about your trees, shrubs and lawn.

Have a Happy Thanksgiving and a wonderful holiday season!

Sincerely,

Ken Almstead, CEO

International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist NY0335

Storm Damage Prevention and Tree Risk Assessment

We've had quite a few bad storms in our region recently and experts predict there will be more this year. According to the Farmer's Almanac, "winter temperatures will be much above normal for the Atlantic corridor." This means there will be heavier precipitation, stronger storms and higher winds. It could result in increased storm damage to trees and property.

Now is a good time to ask your arborist to examine the trees on your property. Often times, tree weakness is not obvious and may need a trained eye and specialized equipment to diagnose. Even in cases where the danger can be easily seen, like dead or hanging branches, it is always better to call your arborist to seek an expert opinion.

For mature trees, here are some strategies your arborist may suggest that can prevent or minimize storm damage:

- Pruning to remove dead or defective branches that are more susceptible to failure during a storm, especially when a target is involved.
- Performing selective branch-end thinning to reduce drag and wind resistance, mimicking a natural retrenchment process that mature trees follow. This type of pruning can be prescribed for an entire crown or sometimes on individual branches over-extending the natural crown. It can reduce the chances of branch or entire tree failure (*uprooting*).



- Using cabling to minimize movement and provide additional structural support — especially for trees with codominant branches or trunk attachments with included bark.
- Adding a lightning protection system that will ensure lightning will conduct into the soil without harming the tree or the electrical house components. Very tall trees, especially within 15-20 feet of your home's foundation, are ideal candidates for this installation.
- Picking a location with enough soil volume to accommodate proper root growth as well as canopy size in maturity.
- Ensuring the right tree for the right place — trees that are matched to site conditions such as sun exposure, soil moisture, urban stresses (*salt*), compaction, drought and unique micro-climates.
- Choosing good quality nursery stock and checking for branch structure defects, trunk injury and girdling roots.
- Managing the site where the tree is planted until establishment which could typically take 3-5 years or more depending upon the size of the tree.

If you've used Almstead for new tree plantings, your arborist may have already put some prevention strategies in place, such as:



Tree Risk Assessment

If you would like to go beyond a standard visual inspection, one of the most valuable services we offer our clients is **Tree Risk Assessment**. All our arborists are trained to visually inspect trees when they are on site for potential issues with trunk, crown, surface root zone or trunk flare. Many of our arborists also have the additional **Tree Risk Assessment Qualification (TRAQ)**, a rigorous training program and certification from the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). In addition to basic tree information such as species, diameter, and crown spread, the TRAQ system records and evaluates other detailed information about each tree.

The process considers the history of the tree, evaluates its location and condition of health, identifies visual defects from the ground for tree's trunk flare, trunk and branches, identifies all potential

targets, usage frequency of those targets and the consequences of failure. This entire analysis provides a risk rating over a period of time. However, if mitigation is recommended it may or may not reduce this level of risk. Sometimes additional testing is recommended in order to seek better information. This can include using specialized tools such as a Resistograph or Tomography (*to better detect the degree of internal decay*), or an aerial inspection (*with a seasoned and experienced field staff*) to provide more data on crown structure and defects that cannot be seen from the ground. TRAQ is the most detailed and comprehensive option available for the complete analysis of each tree and its risk of failure.

If you feel you may have a tree that requires this additional level of assessment, please contact your local branch office to set up an appointment with a TRAQ certified Almstead arborist.

Almstead Around Town

Continued from front page

Four Seasons Tree ID Series

Arborist and NJ Branch Manager, **Ryan Duff**, led a nature walk and discussion at Teaneck Creek Conservancy as part of "Four Seasons Tree ID Series" with an emphasis on identifying common trees in the area and at the conservancy. *Image: Ryan (r) discussing trees with participants of the nature walk.*



North Haledon Day

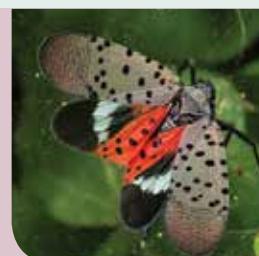
Ryan Duff, arborist **Oscar Winfrey** and the Almstead New Jersey staff participated in North Haledon Day on September 8th. They handed out free tree saplings and other Almstead goodies at the event, which also included a craft fair, car show, food, and fireworks. *Image: NJ Arborist, Oscar Winfrey, shows a young visitor how to take her sapling home safely.*



More Insects & Diseases

Spotted Lanternfly

Quarantines have been put in place in New York and some counties of New Jersey on yard waste, firewood, wooden crates, nursery stock, fruit, and produce in an effort to curb the spread of **Spotted Lantern Fly (SLF)**. It is a destructive pest that feeds on more than 70 plant species including tree-of-heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*), maples, apple trees, grapevine, and hops. SLF feedings can stress plants, making them vulnerable to disease and attacks from other insects. Although the pest hasn't been found in Connecticut yet, The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station has been setting up traps all over the state so they can become aware as soon as the insect arrives -- scientists predict it is only a matter of time.



Boxwood Blight

Boxwood Blight is a relatively new fungal disease that has only been around globally since 1994. It was first seen in the U.S. in 2011 in Connecticut and North Carolina. Since then, it has spread to several other states and Canada. Recently, this disease has become particularly widespread in Westchester landscapes. It is caused by *Calonectria pseudonaviculata*, a fungus that can be confused with similar-looking forms of dieback in boxwood. However, Boxwood Blight is much more devastating and can take out complete plantings. The spores are also transmitted through pachysandra.



Boxwood Blight cannot be eliminated with fungicides. Scientists are recommending that diseased plants and leaves be sanitarly removed and not used for composting, since the fungus can stay in dead leaves for up to 5 years. You can identify Boxwood Blight by dark or light brown spots on the leaves and dieback on stems girdled by black cankers (*see image*). Catastrophic leaf drop is also often seen. *Please contact your Almstead arborist if you suspect Boxwood Blight on your property.*

Annual Summer Picnic

The Almstead family hosted their annual summer picnic for employees and their families at D'Onofrio Park in New Rochelle, NY. The event also included service awards and a celebration of arborist **Michael Marks**, who retired from the company after 23 years of dedicated service. *Images: (1 & 2) Children having fun; (3 & 4) Tribute to Michael Marks on his retirement; (5 to 8) 20-Year Award recipients received an award and an engraved gold watch (5) Sergio Anguiano (6) Jorge Galvez (7) Jose Maria Sanchez Vargas (8) Amador Corona.*



Have You Considered...

Dawn Redwood is a deciduous conifer with supple green needles that turn reddish brown and drop off in the fall. Until 1943, when a grove was discovered in China, Dawn Redwoods were considered extinct, even though they had covered North America some 35 million years ago. Dedicated botanists worldwide have since helped to cultivate this majestic tree and reintroduce it to its former native territories.

Latin Name: *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*

Common Name(s): Dawn Redwood, Metasequoia

Tree Type: The only living species in its genus, the dawn redwood is a deciduous tree rather than an evergreen. This means that it sheds its leaves in the fall, is bare in winter and grows new leaves in the spring. It is a shade tree, featuring a spreading canopy.

Sun and Water Requirements: Thrives in wet soils.

Expected growth: 70-100 ft tall and 15-25 ft wide.

Foliage: Soft needles green then red-brown before dropping.

Flowers: Small brown or green cones in the summer.

Bark: Attractive reddish-brown, vertically fibrous, fissured.

Landscape Value: A deer-resistant, fast-growing tree that can dominate the landscape as a spectacular specimen, as part of a cavernous grove, or by lining a roadway in a majestic salute.

