ALMSTEAD
TREE, SHRUB & LAWN CARE

58 Beechwood Avenue
New Rochelle, NY 10801, **(914) 636-TREE**
www.almstead.com

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Inside This Issue:

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Beech Leaf Disease

Beach Leaf Disease (BLD) is a relatively new disease *(discovered in 2012)* that affects American beech *(Fagus grandifolia)*, European beech *(Fagus sylvatica)* as well as Oriental beech *(Fagus orientalis)*. An otherwise healthy-looking tree first develops deep green patches between the veins of its leaves. In a later stage, the leaves become thick and leathery and eventually crinkle up. The buds on these branches also die and stop producing leaves. It is believed that nematodes are the carrier but research is still being done to determine the ultimate cause and potential controls. The frequent rains and mild temperatures this year were probably extremely favorable to the development of the disease in our region.

BLD has been confirmed in several places in Westchester County, NY as well as in Greenwich, New Canaan and Stamford, CT. If you see this banding effect in your leaves, please call us to inspect, verify and report.

Antidesiccant Treatment

If there are evergreen trees and shrubs on your property, have them assessed for an **anti-desiccant treatment** *(winter protection)* as soon as possible.Common trees and shrubs susceptible to desiccation in our area include: hemlocks, rhododendrons, evergreen azaleas, andromeda, laurels, arborvitae, leland cypress, ilex, and boxwood.

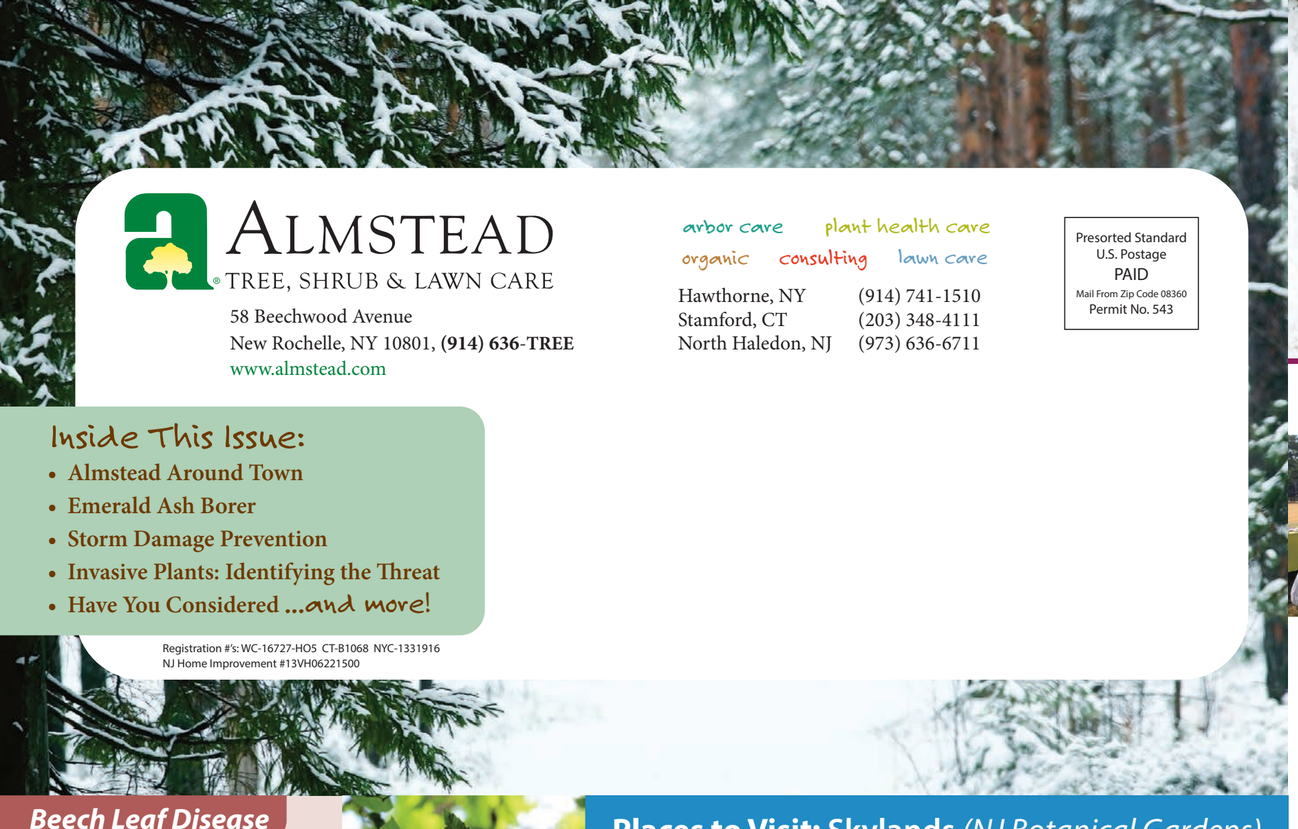
Places to Visit: Skylands *(NJ Botanical Gardens)*

New Jersey's Botanical Garden (NJBG) is also known as **Skylands**. It is a part of the Ringwood State Park and includes 96 acres of specialty gardens surrounded by 1000 acres of woodlands. The property was acquired in the early 1900s by Francis Lynde Stetson, a prominent New York lawyer. It was sold in 1922 to Clarence McKenzie Lewis, an investment banker who set out to make it a botanical showplace.

"Lewis stressed symmetry, color, texture, form and fragrance in his gardens. He wanted to appeal to the senses. For thirty years, Lewis collected plants from all over the world and from New Jersey roadsides. The result is one of the finest collections of plants in the state. Lewis had over 60 gardeners working in peak seasons." In 1966, the 1,117 acres of Skylands was purchased by the State of New Jersey under the Green Acres program. In March 1984, Governor Thomas Kean designated the central 96 acres surrounding the manor house as the State's official botanical garden.

Today, Skylands has 13 distinct areas of attraction including the Annual Garden, Perennial Border, Crab Apple Allée, Hosta/Rhododendron Garden, Moraine Garden, Wildflower Garden, Lilac Garden, Peony Garden, Summer Garden, Azalea Garden, Magnolia Walk, Octagonal Garden and Winter Garden. Special attractions for the holiday season include Family Woodland Hikes, a Wreath Making Workshop, and a Holiday Open House from December 5-8 at the splendidly decorated Skyland Manor.

The NJBG at Skylands is open every day from 8 am to 8 pm and admission is free. Parking is $5 for NJ plates and $7 for out of state cars. The GPS street address is 2 Morris Road, Ringwood, N.J. 07456 Please visit njbg.org for more information.



ALMSTEAD
TREE, SHRUB & LAWN CARE
The science of preserving nature since 1964

Arbor Notes

FALL/WINTER 2019

ACCREDITED TREE CARE INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION — ETHICS · QUALITY · CONFIDENCE

Almstead Around Town

North Haledon Day

New Jersey Branch Manager, **Ryan Duff**, and the Almstead team celebrated North Haledon Day (it is the hometown of our NJ branch) by discussing arboriculture with town residents and handing out free Western Red Cedar saplings. *Image: Ryan Duff at North Haledon Day.*

Wave Hill Gardners' Party

For the 7th consecutive year, Almstead sponsored the Gardners' Party at Wave Hill Public Garden and Cultural Center in the Bronx. Almstead is also a corporate sponsor of Wave Hill. The annual benefit raises crucial funds to support its renowned gardens and horticulture program. *Image: The Almstead table at the Wave Hill Gardners' Party. In attendance (L to R)* ***Laura & Ryan Duff, Johanna & Michael Almstead, Ken & Peggy Almstead, Erick Fields & Mimi Martins, Ann & Dan Dalton.***

2019 Tour de Trees

Congratulations to **Isaac Taylor** *(left)*, Almstead arborist from our Connecticut branch for completing the 2019 Tour de Trees, a 7-day, 433-mile bicycle ride through Tennessee with fellow arborists. The event raises funds for the Tree Fund which partners with the ISA and sponsors research on arboriculture. Isaac raised over $3,500 from his efforts alone.

CTPA Centennial Tree Planting

The Connecticut Tree Protective Association (CTPA) is commemorating the centennial of the Arborist Law in Connecticut by planting a tree in every town in the state. Almstead VP, **Michael Almstead** *(2nd from left in image)*, who is on the board of the CTPA, joined City officials, local companies and residents in Stamford on September 20th to plant a White Oak tree in Horan Park.

Corporate Conference

Every quarter, Almstead management, arborists and key staff spend a day together off-site discussing the Company's corporate strategy and vision for the future. Goals are created as a group and through smaller committees that focus on training & safety, recruitment, marketing, customer loyalty, fleet, information & technology, and more. *Image (below): Our September Conference group at the Residence Inn in New Rochelle, NY.*

Do you have a management plan for EAB?

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) has now been found in many parts of New York, New Jersey and Connecticut. We are recommending that every property owner in our region with ash trees discuss a management plan with their arborist. If you decide to remove your ash trees, winter is a good time to do it. If you choose to treat or inoculate your trees, it is better to wait until Spring. Either way, schedule a visit with your arborist as soon as possible. *For additional resources, please visit our EAB page at* ***almstead.com/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.

Signs of EAB on your ash trees, include:

- Tiny D-shaped holes, S-shaped galleries and splitting bark *(see image on top right).*
- The presence of the small, metallic green insect *(see image on bottom right).*
- 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.
- Look for "blonding" effect on bark on southern side of tree stem *(see image on left).*

A Letter from the CEO

This year we tried something new in the way we approached our company's strategic planning for the future. We gathered our arborists, managers and key employees and got them involved in charting the direction of our company. It was the brainchild of my brother, ***Michael Almstead*** *(VP), who also took the lead in planning, organizing and directing its execution. Our aim was to set yearly and long-term goals for our company and determine strategies for achieving them with input from our staff (see more on front page).*

As I write this, we are finishing our lawn care applications for the year as well as performing annual ***seasonal inspections****. It is a good time of season to detect various decay, fruiting bodies and structural defects in trees. If you haven't scheduled a consultation yet, please do so at your earliest. It is a complimentary benefit we offer our customers. Your arborist will also assess on-going plant health care and lawn care programs to make any required adjustments for 2020.*

As we move into winter, two important services we provide for your landscape are ***anti-desiccant applications*** *(see article on back page) and* ***winter pruning****. There are several reasons to prune your trees during winter. Storms, as well as heavy snow and ice, can put a tremendous strain on tree branches so pruning (as well as cabling, bracing, and lightning protection) can reduce the risk of branch or tree failure (see article below). Pruning and tree removal can potentially take us less time in the winter when foliage is gone, and our equipment has easier access. We can pass this winter cost savings on to you. Please visit our web page at* ***almstead.com/winterpruning*** *for more information and to request winter pruning.*

Finally, I am very pleased to say that the Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA) has renewed our accreditation for another 3 years. For customers, it is an important criterion for choosing a tree care company because it ensures an adherence to business ethics, technical competence and consumer satisfaction (see article below).

Have a wonderful holiday season!

Ken Almstead, CEO
International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist #NY0335

Invasive Plants

Identifying the Threat

In addition to invasive insects such as spotted lanternfly and EAB *(see article on the front page)* there are also a number of invasive plants that cause havoc on our landscapes and ecosystems. Invasive plants are those that are not native to a particular region and harm the environment, the economy, animal or human health. Below are some of the most common ones in our region. *If you find any of these plants on your property, please call your Almstead arborist to discuss management or removal options.*

Common Buckthorn
(Rhamnus cathartica)
Degrades the wildlife habitat and threatens native plants for nutrients, light and moisture.

Garlic Mustard
(Alliaria petiolata)
Chokes out native plants by controlling light, water and nutrient resources. May release a chemical that damages relationships between native grasses and fungi.

Giant Hogweed
(Heracleum mantegazzianum)
It is one of the most dangerous invasive species in our region due to its ability to cause permanent scarring through painful burns caused by its sap. It can also spread and grow quickly and out-compete native plants by blocking sunlight.

Honeysuckle
(Lonicera)
There are both native and invasive species of honeysuckle present in our region. Invasive varieties have hollow stems. They suppress other native species and can harm migrating animals that eat the berries.

Japanese Barberry
(Berberis thunbergii)
Because it is shade tolerant, it can threaten native species in a variety of habitats. It grows in dense stands that can inhibit forest regeneration.

Japanese Stiltgrass
(Microstegium vimineum)
Decreases biodiversity by out-competing native grasses, sedges, and herbs. Infested areas often have high occurrences of other invasive plants.

Mile-a-Minute
(Persicaria perfoliata)
A vigorous, barbed vine that grows up to six inches a day and smothers other herbaceous plants, shrubs and even trees by growing over them.

Norway Maple
(Acer platanoides)
The more desirable maple species to have on your property are red and sugar maples with their yellow, red and orange leaves in fall. The less desirable ones are the Norway maples, their leaves green well into fall creating deep shade so dark that nothing, including lawn, can grow underneath — and in forest settings shade out native under-story material. Norway Maples have served their role in our region as street trees and feature trees on landscapes but their invasive tendencies have been their downfall.

Oriental Bittersweet
(Celastrus orbiculatus)
A threat to native environments. It grows as a vine that girdles and smothers plants and uproots trees due to its weight.

Porcelain-Berry
(Ampelopsis brevipedunculata)
It looks like innocent green vines with grape-like berries, but it can invade field and field edges rapidly and climb on and over native plants smothering them.

Tree of Heaven
(Ailanthus altissima)
Displaces native vegetation and produces toxins that can prevent the establishment of other plant species. Root systems can damage sewers and foundations. Despite these issues, it is one of the few trees that can mature in extreme urban concrete areas such as the back of brownstones in Manhattan.

Air Spading & RCX

Early coloring of leaves and thinning on the crown are often signs of tree stress caused by girdling roots. We use an Air Spade™ *(a high-pressure air compression device)* to expose the roots. This is known as **Root Collar Excavation** (RCX). Girdling roots stop the flow of nutrients to the tree and need to be pruned, along with any adventitious roots that are produced as a result of this condition and level of grade. Pruning girdling roots can extend the life of a tree significantly. An Air Spade can also be used to expose the roots while transplanting select small trees. *Images: (1) Exposing flares of large trees burrowed by change of grades & (2) Adventitious secondary root production due to change of grade. These roots cannot sustain the tree as primary ones die off; (3) & (4) Girdling roots can cut off the flow of nutrients and need to be pruned, if not too late.*

TCIA Accreditation Renewed

Almstead recently underwent an extensive review of practices and was awarded a renewal of its accreditation by the **Tree Care Industry Association (TCIA)**.

"The program is considered the gold standard in the tree care industry. It is a voluntary program that credentials companies that meet stringent criteria for professionalism, employee training, state and federal safety regulations, business ethics and customer satisfaction."

As part of the renewal process, an independent auditor examined our company for relevant licenses, proper insurance, customer service practices, operating standards, employee training, as well as adherence to safety regulation, industry standards and best business practices. The 3-day audit involved all our branch offices and included in-the-field inspections of our arborists, technicians and equipment.

We are very proud to receive our renewal of accreditation from the TCIA. It demonstrates that we have undergone a professional audit of our operations and are compliant with the best industry practices in tree care — all for the benefit of our clients. Please visit tcia.org for more information.

Storm Damage Prevention

As we head into winter, it is prudent to think about the trees on your property. Many tree weaknesses and defects are not obvious, so it is always a good idea to have an arborist perform an annual 360° visual inspection of your trees surface roots, trunk and canopy. Almstead offers complimentary seasonal inspections. If your arborist hasn't visited your property yet, please schedule an appointment with your local branch office. Here are some ways we reduce the chances of failure for trees in extreme weather.

Pruning: Removing dead and weak branches is a good way to ensure that they will not come down in a storm. Selective crown reduction through branch-end thinning can reduce wind resistance and drag, which can reduce the chances of branch failure or an entire tree uprooting. This is especially true of large species trees like oaks, maples, tulip, lindens, elms, sweetgums, etc.

Cabling and Bracing: If your tree has some structural weakness, your arborist may suggest cabling and bracing as a way to preserve the tree rather than taking it down. These cables and bracing rods provide supplemental structural support and minimize movement in high winds. Identifying codominant stems with included bark and weak branch attachments is part of our arborists inspection routine and protocol.

Lightning Protection: Mature trees are particularly susceptible to lightning strikes. We install lightning rods that are inconspicuous and safe for the tree. If a tree is hit by lightning, the copper cables channel the current away from the tree *(and any buildings and utilities)* and into the ground where it can safely dissipate. The National Fire Protection Association recommends installation of tree lightning protection systems in large mature trees that are within 10 feet of a structure — and that they be installed by a qualified arborist in compliance with ANSI Z133 standards.

Our Annual Summer Picnic

The Almstead family hosted their annual summer picnic for employees and their families at D'Onofrio Park in New Rochelle, NY. We were in the middle of a July heat wave but everyone stayed cool because of the large misting fans placed strategically all around the picnic area. *Images: (1 &2) Children having fun on the water slides; (3) Lining up for delicious food from Little Mexican Café ; (4)* ***Ken Almstead*** *with arborist* ***Michael Marks*** *(who retired last year) and foreman* ***Antonio Solorio****; (5) The Cornhole Game; (6) Enjoying the hot weather with some cold beer; Service Awards Presentation: (7)* ***Antonio Licea (15 years)*** *(8)* ***Jose Torres (10 years)*** *(9)* ***Miguel Rosa (10 years)*** *(10)* ***Kristin Loughlin (10 years)*** *(11)* ***Luis Ruiz (5 years)***

Have You Considered

Tuliptree is a fast-growing tree with bright green leaves that resemble tulip flowers in profile and turn golden yellow in fall. It has greenish-yellow flowers that are located high in the tree and its stems are aromatic. George Washington planted many in his gardens at Mount Vernon. It was also used by Daniel Boone for his famous 60' dugout canoe.

Latin Name: *Liriodendron tulipifera*

Common Name(s): Tuliptree, Tulip Poplar

Tree Type: A tall, sturdy tree growing in an oval shape.

Sun and Water Requirements: Full sun is preferred, at least six hours of direct sun, with moist, sandy, acidic, loamy, well-drained and clay soils.

Expected growth: A fast grower, its mature size reaches 70'- 90' with a spread of 40', growing as much as 2' in one year.

Foliage: Bright green tulip shaped leaves with attractive greenish-yellow flowers.

Landscape Value: Tuliptrees are both a shade tree and an ornamental tree. Its leaves are attractive with their signature shape, and the flowers extend into the canopy in spring, where they can attract hummingbirds with their nectar. The seeds, which persist into winter provide food for birds such as cardinals, finches and quail, and for squirrels and rabbits.