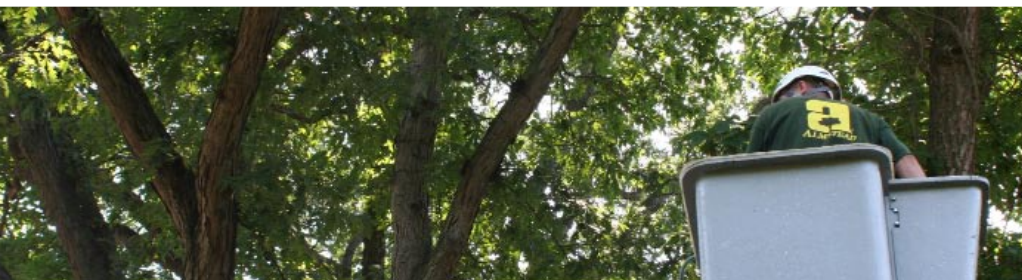


Arbor Notes

Fall/Winter 2009



Request a Consultation

- Please contact me to schedule a **complimentary on-site consultation** with a professionally certified Arborist.

I'm also interested in:

- Arbor Care** Customized pruning, mature tree preservation, tree and stump removal...
- Plant Health Care** Fertilization, disease and pest control, monitoring programs...
- Organic Care** Compost teas, organic pest controls, natural soil and root care...
- Consulting** Hazardous tree evaluation, mature tree preservation, construction protection...
- Lawn Care** Fertilization, weed control, seeding, core aeration, organic options...

Name _____
Phone _____
Email _____
Address _____
City _____
State/Zip _____

Almstead Takes a Trip to the Zoo!

A unique volunteer project brought one of Almstead's tree crews to Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo in Bridgeport late this summer. Our team removed three hazardous trees from an eagle exhibit that will be unveiled to the public later this year. Formerly just an overgrown section of the zoo, the new exhibit will feature a viewing gazebo as well as furniture installations designed by Jeff Liscove, a member of Boy Scout Troop 68 in Trumbull, CT.

As part of his work to earn Eagle Scout rank the highest advancement rank in Scouting, Mr. Liscove has also been donating his time and efforts to furthering the zoo's commitment to "acquainting a diverse public to the delicate balance that exists between living things and their environment," as noted in their mission statement.

The only accredited zoo in the state, Connecticut's Beardsley Zoo is an important piece of state history. The zoo was developed in Beardsley Park, a 180-acre rural park designed by Frederick Law Olmstead, most famous for creating New York City's Central Park and founder of American landscape architecture. With its winding roads, paths through woodlands, and picturesque views of the Pequonock River, it's no

wonder that Phineas T. Barnum, the most notable resident of Bridgeport, was often seen exercising his circus animals through these grounds. He even donated animals he retired from the Barnum & Bailey Circus for the zoo's initial collection.

Much of the zoo's historical character still remains, greatly due to the research and conservation efforts made by employees, volunteers and supporters. In addition to the multiple educational programs offered throughout the year for both children and adults, the zoo also hosts yearly urban ecology conferences that cover different topics designed to protect and preserve natural resources.

As crisp, cool weather fast approaches, plan a day trip to the Beardsley Zoo and enjoy all this beautiful place has to offer. From the trees, to one of the largest greenhouses in Connecticut, to the historical buildings, and of course the animals, there's something for everyone to enjoy here.

Beardsley Zoo Information
Address: 1875 Noble Avenue, Bridgeport, CT 06610
Telephone: (203) 394-6565
Hours of Operation: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Admission: \$11 and under

Helping Clean Up Central Park

As many of you know (and may have seen first hand) a severe storm hit Central Park on Aug. 18 that left more than 400 trees fallen and damaged hundreds of others. At the request of the Central Park Conservancy, Almstead responded to the crisis with emergency crews the next morning.

"We've worked on various trees in Central Park for years, so this is really disappointing to see. The mood around the park has been fittingly somber. However, there are still many beautiful trees standing to be grateful for, and I'm proud that our company played a lead role in the well-organized operation to make the park safe again so quickly," says CEO Ken Almstead.

The dominant contractor on site at the park, Almstead used crews and equipment from four of our five offices - with a total of nine 3-person crews and 24 pieces of equipment working on our busiest day. Organized by the Conservancy, the work was

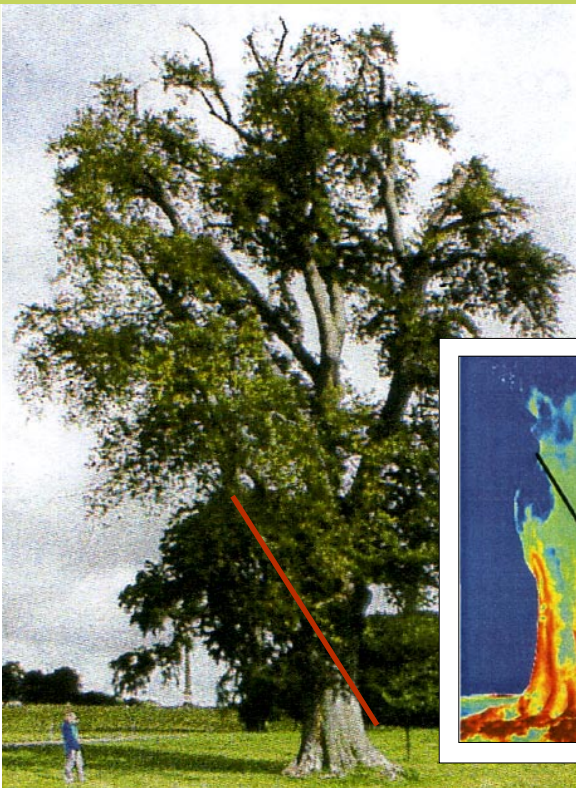
performed in phases: safety and preventing further damage, followed by completing removals and restoring the functionality of the park.

Almstead's crews were routed to many of the most difficult projects because of our expertise and extensive resources. One such site was the West 100th Street Playground. This state-of-the-art playground opened just two weeks before the storm and was custom designed around the same trees that became irreparably damaged. To preserve the surrounding structure, Almstead's team worked carefully with a crane to lift the trees from the site.

With the hazardous trees and branches now removed, the Conservancy faces a daunting amount of debris from the storm - some of it infested by the Asian Longhorn Beetle. So the work continues, and we want to thank you those of you who use the park for your continued patience and understanding.



A New Way to Look at Trees



A new field of research in arboriculture has surfaced that interprets infrared images to determine the health of the wood inside trees. This summer, some of Almstead's Arborists had the opportunity to meet with project leader Dr. Marcus Bellett-Travers to learn about this new technology. Although the interpretive software was developed in the UK and is not yet available in the United States, we are looking closely at this technology and may be incorporating it into our company in the future.

How Does it Work?

Infrared imaging is a completely noninvasive process that allow us to examine the wood inside of a tree from root to crown in a relatively short amount of time. To create an image, infrared cameras read surface heat levels and place them on a color spectrum. On the examples in this article, red is used to represent the hottest areas on the surface of each tree while blue represents the coolest areas.

The surface heat of trees radiates from the inside, where water and nutrients are moving through the wood. Sections of the tree where wood fibers are intact (called functional wood) conduct heat much faster than areas where those fibers are damaged. So the color spectrum on an infrared image of a tree is a graphic representation of the spectrum of functional wood within that tree.

What is it Used For?

The advantages of a system like this are tremendous. As Arborists, we spend a lot of time weighing the potential risks alongside the benefits of individual trees. While large, older trees are often the most valuable assets on a landscape, they require careful management and can become quite hazardous. [continued inside]



Red represents the hottest areas on the surface of the tree and blue represents the coolest areas



FLIR B400 Infrared Camera

- Looking at Trees with Thermo-imaging
- Cleaning Up Storm Damage in Central Park
- Fall Lawn Services: What's the Point?
- And more...

A Letter from the CEO




I have a lot on my plate as the CEO and a practicing arborist here, but my favorite part of the job –the part I can’t imagine giving up –is meeting with my clients. No matter how busy I get with the minutiae of the business, at the end of the day that’s what I feel makes all the work worthwhile. As we go through the process of implementing a new service, like our organic lawn care program this past spring, what keeps me motivated is knowing how excited some of my clients will be to hear about that new option.

For my family and myself, that is what this business has always been about. Over the past 45 years, we’ve grown from my father’s one man operation into the full service company we are today because of feedback from our clients. More often than not, the changes we make at Almstead Tree & Shrub Care Co. reflect what we hear from you. As much as we stay apprised of the latest developments in our industry and strive to anticipate the needs of our clients, nothing can replace what we learn by simply asking and listening.

With that said, I’d like to take time with this letter to ask what *you* would like to see from Almstead. Rest assured, there’s no suggestion too large or too small. Recent actions we’ve taken from customer encouragement range from offering new services (like those in our lawn care division) to accepting American Express cards (that’s right card holders!) and offering online payment through our web site.

If you have a suggestion, please talk to your arborist or call your local office. I’d also love to hear from you personally, so feel free to contact me via email at kalmstead@almstead.com. Plus, look out for surveys from us in the mail and online soon. We truly value your opinions and advice, and we look forward to incorporating your suggestions as we continue working to improve our level of service.

Sincerely,

Ken Almstead, CEO
International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist NY0335



Fall Lawn Services: What’s the Point?

A picture-perfect lawn requires more work than meets the eye. If you’re seeking that golf course quality turf, be prepared to invest some time and money to keep it up. Even if a medium maintenance lawn with few weeds and good color is more to your desire, there are definite steps to take in the fall to improve lawn quality now and next year.

Helping a stand of grass thicken up in the fall goes a long way to building a good lawn come spring. In the Northeast, our lawns consist primarily of “cool season” turf grasses. These ryes, blues and fescues are most active when temperatures are moderate and moisture is readily available. That makes September through Mid-November an ideal time for fertilization. It’s also the time to consider overseeding. Incorporating the proper seed mix for your site will greatly improve your lawn’s quality for seasons to come.

If there’s one problem that prevents great lawns from developing more than any other, it’s compacted soil. Heavy traffic from general use and maintenance operations like weekly mowing can

Have You Considered...

If you want a colorful display of foliage in the fall but don’t have the garden space for a large native tree such as the sugar maple or the quaking aspen, consider this equally vibrant shrub...

- Latin name:** *Ilex verticillata*
- Common Name(s):** Winterberry, Winterberry Holly, Black Adler, Fever Bush
- Tree Type:** deciduous (loses its leaves) multi-stemmed shrub.
- Sun and water requirements:** full sunlight to partial shade; tolerates a wide range of soil conditions but grows most commonly in moist, organic soil
- Expected Growth:** 6’ to 10’ tall and 5”-10” in diameter; but varies with cultivar; Ilex verticillata has a slow growth rate.
- Foliage:** its Pointy and glossy flat leaves are bright green in the summer and turn yellow-green with some purple tinges in the autumn.
- Fruit:** female plants bear white flowers in the spring, followed by a dense cluster of spherical, bright red to scarlet berries that persist well into the winter months.
- Landscape value:** used as an ornamental shrub, Ilex verticillata is most commonly used for its colorful display in fall and winter. Another one of its appealing attributes, however, is its ability to attract several dozen birds, including the Northern Mockingbird, Gray Catbird and the Brown Thrasher.



Thermo-Imaging Techniques for Trees [continued from front]

With the detailed information infrared imaging provides, the decisions we make regarding tree preservation and hazard assessment can be better informed.

Infrared images of trees help us in a number of ways. For instance, we can use them to locate serious areas of internal decay that wouldn’t otherwise be visible. On an older tree, we can see which limbs have the most functional wood before making pruning decisions that may extend the lifespan of that tree. We also know that the more functional wood a tree has overall, the better it withstands stresses to its environment – so infrared imaging can help us determine which trees may or may not withstand the stresses associated with construction projects.

It’s important to note that no tree is composed entirely of functional wood. In fact, as a tree ages, plenty of its wood degrades and ends up playing a more structural role. The most dangerous losses in functional wood are the result of spreading decay due to pathogens, insects or injury. Regardless of the cause, the ability to track the location, severity, and spread of degraded wood is an incredible advantage for any arborist.

It’s Time for a Seasonal Inspection!

One of the most valuable services we offer our clients here at Almstead is an expert visual ground inspection of their trees, shrubs and turf on annual basis, and it’s complimentary. We encourage you to take some time to meet with your Almstead Arborist to review the health, safety and beauty of your landscape.



Recommended Reading

It’s often said that the best things in life are free, and this book is no exception! With the US Forest Service’s recent release of A Tree Owner’s Manual, homeowners now have access to a concise, to-the-point guide on raising trees from sapling to specimen –and it’s free for the asking.


Available for download at treeownersmanual.info or at through the Connecticut Tree Preservation Association at CTPA.org (this version contains a slight modification for Connecticut residents regarding the laws governing tree care companies), the book provides step by step instructions from tree selection and proper planting to selecting qualified tree care professionals. It also has plenty of space to document the stages of your tree’s development and maintenance history.

We encourage all of our clients to download a copy of this book and keep it at hand. It answers many of the basic questions that we find often remain a mystery to property owners. Pass a copy along to friends and family and the trees will be happier for it!

A Tree Owner’s Manual is Full of Helpful Information


- Choosing and Planting a New Tree
- Pruning Techniques
- Checking Tree Health and Safety
- Proper Mulching
- Fertilization and Watering
- Preventing and Correcting Encircling/Girdling Roots
- Protecting Trees from Construction Damage






Antidesiccants

Leaves and needles often lose a detrimental amount of moisture during the winter. Prevent damage to your evergreens with an antidesiccant treatment.



Pruning in Fall & Winter

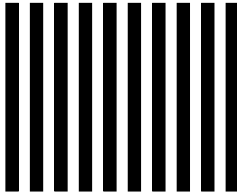
Bare trees allow arborists to clearly see the entire branch structure of your trees, making for easier identification of defects and potential hazards. Let your Almstead Arborist help maintain or improve the health, appearance and safety of your trees this winter season.



Choosing Trees to Plant Next Spring

The early bird gets the worm! If you’re thinking of planting any large specimen trees next year, talk to your Arborist now so that we can reserve the best stock available in local nurseries as they become available in winter and early spring.

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