

SPECIAL POINTS
OF INTEREST:

Re-Leaf is here!

A special tree for St.
John's Park

EAB monitoring
continues

The culprits of oak
decline

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ReLeaf for Winnipeg's Canopy

A new program to aid in the fight against Dutch elm disease (DED) has just been launched in Winnipeg. The City of Winnipeg and Trees Winnipeg have joined forces to deliver the **Winnipeg ReLeaf Program**—a city wide initiative to encourage tree planting on private property.

Winnipeg has been working hard to keep DED in check, employing a variety of tools to maintain our forest canopy. Losses to DED, however, have drastically increased in recent years, with the city losing an average of 5000 elms per year to the disease, not to mention hundreds of other trees lost to other insects, diseases, vandalism, and storm damage. Tree planting has always been one of the key activities of Winnipeg's urban forestry program, but the city cannot replace trees on *private property*—which is where about 80% of DED-infected elms are found.

Through the ReLeaf Program, homeowners can purchase young trees at a discounted price, thanks to the generous funding support of *TD Canada Green Streets* and *Tree Canada*. The bargain price of \$55 also includes mulch, rabbit guards, tree care books and brochures, and a tree-planting workshop host-

ed by Trees Winnipeg. The workshops are designed to provide homeowners with all the knowledge they need to plant and care for their new trees and give them the best chance of survival in an urban environment.

Why our urban forest is shrinking

While the mechanisms behind the spread of DED are not fully understood, an important factor contributing to Winnipeg's recent DED losses is the age of our trees. Most of the elms we see today (like on our classic elm-lined streets) were planted over 100 years ago as part of a massive city-wide effort to "green-up" Winnipeg; and "city gardener" David England led the city in planting about 5000 trees per year. Even then, the American elm was revered for its beauty and hardiness. But as these trees have aged, they have naturally become more susceptible to insects and disease.

New threats on the horizon

As if battling DED wasn't enough, Winnipeg is on high alert for emerald ash borer (EAB) which is nearly on our doorstep. The beetle, originally from Asia, is expected to be just as destructive to our native ash populations as DED was for

our elms. Cities that are already fighting EAB (such as London, ON) are having to remove entire streets of ash to slow the spread of the beetle, leaving few resources left for tree planting or other forestry projects.

The importance of species diversity

The ReLeaf Program is helping to promote the advantages of having a diverse urban forest—not only diverse in terms of species, but also in age. Winnipeg has already seen how relying on only a few tree species can have devastating results as DED (and soon EAB) has spread through many of our neighborhoods like wildfire. Over the years, horticulturists have developed numerous species varieties that can be successfully grown in our climate, and this diversity helps maintain the urban forest in the face of tree species-specific pests.

It is said that "one generation plants a tree, and the next sits in its shade". This is an opportunity to leave a legacy for those who come after us, and will enjoy Winnipeg's urban forest just as we have.

Kerienne La France
Executive Director,
Trees Winnipeg

New Traps Deployed in the Search for Emerald Ash Borer



New plastic funnel traps will be set up in ash trees throughout Winnipeg. (Semiiochemical.com)



Suckers on the ash trunk could be a sign of an EAB infestation (Bugwood.org)

Starting in late June, Winnipeg residents may notice something new in the trees in their neighbourhood. Trees Winnipeg is continuing with its emerald ash borer (EAB) monitoring program which has been on-going since 2012. The beetle, which is native to Asia, has been spreading quickly

throughout eastern Canada and the United States and has proved to be devastating to both natural and urban ash forests. Though not yet detected in Manitoba, forest managers, ecologists, and arborists are on high alert—EAB was most recently found in Duluth, Minnesota, only about 500 km from Winnipeg. Given that approximately 40% of Winnipeg's urban trees are ash, the beetle will cause significant damage in the city, not to mention the impact on natural ash forests throughout the rest of the province. In cities where EAB has already established, municipalities are not only struggling to rapidly remove infested trees, but limited resources mean that other forestry activities (like planting and pruning) must be put on hold until the infestation is under control.

Just as it did in the fight against Dutch elm disease,

Winnipeg is taking a proactive approach in preparing for the arrival of EAB. The City of Winnipeg has launched its private ash tree inventory with the goal of identifying all ash trees in the city to better predict the impact of EAB and to help guide EAB management decisions. The key to minimizing the impact of EAB is early detection followed by a rapid response. The new funnel traps being deployed by Trees Winnipeg will aid in the monitoring effort. Additional monitoring is being conducted by CFIA through the use of parasitic wasps—natural predators of EAB.

There are a number of things Winnipeg residents can do to help keep Manitoba free of EAB. The beetle is thought to have spread so quickly because of the movement of firewood. As we enter camping season, be sure to burn firewood where you buy it, and don't bring it home with you as beetle larvae may be living under the bark, waiting to emerge. Also, keep an eye on ash trees in your neighbourhood and report dying trees to 311. Canopy dieback, epicormics shoots on the lower trunk (suckers), and excessive woodpecker activity could be signs of an EAB infestation.

While there is no "cure" for EAB once a tree is in-

fectured, municipalities have employed pesticide injections to help protect individual trees against the beetle. Treatments are a long-term commitment, and are not economically feasible for foresters to use on all trees within the city, but the injections could be a useful tool for homeowners hoping to preserve high-value trees on their property. Another significant action residents can take is to plant more trees on their property. Planting species other than ash help increase biodiversity and help maintain Winnipeg's forest canopy despite the heavy losses Winnipeg expects to face when EAB arrives.

For more info on EAB, Winnipeg's ash inventory, and tree planting, visit www.winnipeg.ca/publicworks/parksOpenSpace/UrbanForestry/default.stm

Kerienne La France
Executive Director,
Trees Winnipeg



A technician injects the systemic pesticide, TreeAzin® into the base of an ash tree (Photo: BioForest.ca)

The Culprits of Oak Decline

As one of our native species, natural and planted oak groves add character and play an important ecological role in our urban environment. Unfortunately, a number of Winnipeg residents with bur oak trees in their yard have witnessed the decline and death of these timeless trees.

Oak decline is often blamed on an insect pest known as the two-lined chestnut borer, but this insect usually attacks an oak after the tree's health is already diminished. The two-lined chestnut borer is known as a secondary, or contributing, stress factor. Primary, or inciting, stress factors are what cause trees' health to decline in the first place. Therefore, reducing the initial state of stress on your oak trees can prevent infestation of two-lined chestnut borer, and keep the trees alive for their

natural lifespan of multiple centuries.

Changes in an oak's surrounding environment often cause a decline in tree health. Construction activity is a significant stress for trees in an urban environment, but taking a few simple steps can prevent harm from occurring. A Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) is one of the best ways to prevent tree stress. The zone is created with temporary fencing, signage, and awareness of construction personnel to avoid heavy equipment from entering the area. The TPZ should expand to at least the drip-line (canopy circumference) in order to reduce soil compaction, root loss, and trunk wounding. Changing the grade or slope of the ground near trees can also affect drainage, thus impacting the root system. Older trees are especially susceptible to these changes.

Sanitation is another important step to prevent the attraction of two-lined chestnut borer, which breeds beneath the bark of dead and declining oaks. Removing dead trees and dying limbs can prevent the infestation of surrounding oak trees. Any wood removed should be debarked, burned, or buried to render it unusable to the two-lined chestnut borer.

As with many tree health issues, stress reduction is imperative for the prevention of oak decline. If you're planning any changes or building any structures on your property, a certified arborist can guide you in protecting your tree for generations to come. To find an ISA-certified arborist in your area, visit www.treesaregood.org.

Zabrina Yaremko
Outreach Coordinator,
Trees Winnipeg



The two-lined chestnut borer is often blamed for oak decline, but it's rarely the primary factor
(Photo: George Heaton)

Do You Have a Heritage Tree?

Perhaps you do and don't know it yet! The Province of Manitoba launched the Heritage Tree Program in Fall 2015 to celebrate the trees in our community that have cultural, historical, or biological significance. A tree doesn't have to be old in order to achieve *Heritage Status*—it can be an exceptionally large tree, or a rare species not commonly found in our region. It can be a young tree with a great story, or a

local landmark that adds character to your neighbourhood. Trees Winnipeg is working to share these wonderful tree stories with the world—if you think you might have a Heritage Tree on your property, contact Trees Winnipeg to learn more about nominating your tree for Provincial recognition!

www.savetheelms.mb.ca/projects/heritageTreeProgram.php



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Thank you to our supporters of
Winnipeg's 2016

Arbor Day

Celebration in St. John's Park!

Arbor Day in Winnipeg has always been an event that brings the community together to celebrate the role of trees in our neighbourhoods. Winnipeg's tree care professionals truly came together again in 2016 to make Arbor Day a great success! *Thank you from Trees Winnipeg!*

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A special Thank You to the volunteers from the following organizations who make Arbor Day possible!



My Favorite Tree

The white spruce is truly Manitoban, being our provincial tree! A very common conifer planted in Winnipeg, the white spruce provides greenery in yards year-round. The tree also attracts many species of birds which eat the seeds from its cones, including chickadees and nuthatches!

The white spruce is very hardy for our Manitoban climate and can tolerate a wide array of soil and light conditions. Because of its hardiness, it is common for organizations to give out these trees as donations and event favours. For example, the Manitoba Forestry Association provides

white spruce seedlings at an affordable cost for use as wedding favors and free seedlings are also handed out at Trees Winnipeg's annual Arbor Day Celebration in May. A variety of white spruce commonly sold at garden centres is known as Black Hills spruce (*Picea glauca* var. *densata*). As with all newly planted trees, the main requirement to encourage establishment of white spruce seedlings is generous watering to maintain soil moisture. It is also recommended to abstain from the use of fertilizer around the tree to avoid chemically burning the roots. If planted in an

appropriate location, such as where the branches would not become an obstacle, no pruning should be necessary. A common practice is to remove lower branches, but this is not recommended. The lower branches provide shade to the roots, maintaining moisture and cooler temperatures where the tree needs these conditions most. A truly low maintenance tree available at a low cost, the beauty it adds to a landscape throughout the year is priceless!

Zabrina Yaremko
Outreach Coordinator,
Trees Winnipeg

White Spruce *Picea glauca*



White spruce is Manitoba's Provincial tree

All Trees Tell a Story™

Featured Tree: St. John's Park Arbor Day Tree



Arbor Day poster contest winner, **Nicole E.** lends a hand to Trees Winnipeg's President, **Gerry Engel** as he digs the hole for tree planting. (Trees Winnipeg, Manitoba Tree Register)

For the first time, Trees Winnipeg brought its annual Arbor Day Celebration to St. John's Park in Winnipeg. To commemorate this special event, **Vermeer Canada** generously sponsored the official Arbor Day Tree Planting ceremony, and a golden cascade linden was planted on the park property. The tree planting was led by City Forester, Martha Barwinsky, Trees Winnipeg President, Gerry Engel, and Nicole E., the Arbor Day poster contest winner whose artwork was featured on the Arbor Day t-shirts. The tree's measurements were recorded on the Manitoba Tree Register, and though it may be a young tree at the moment, it could become known as a

Manitoba Heritage Tree in the future. No doubt, this tree, along with the other unique tree species found on the grounds, will contribute to the beauty of the park for years to come. See all the details of this tree and other fascinating tree stories at:

www.manitobatreeregister.ca



Thank you to Vermeer Canada for planting this legacy in St. John's Park!





Thank you
**Main Branch
Tree Service** for
supporting Trees
Winnipeg's Arbor
Day Celebration!

www.mainbranch.ca

Save the Date! May 27, 2017

Arbor Day is always
the **last Saturday of
May!**

Join us next year on
May 27th—where will
we host it in 2017?
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The Coalition to Save the Elms

**To preserve and protect our urban forest and urban
environment**

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