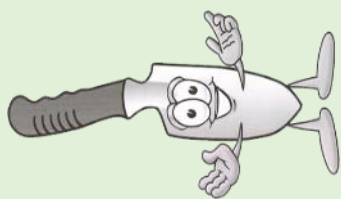


# Trowel Talk!

October, 2017



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- Editor: M.A. Van Berlo
- [newsletter@mgottawa.ca](mailto:newsletter@mgottawa.ca)

## ***Emerald ash borer***

This green invader did not come from another planet but found a way to hitch a ride all the way from Asia. The emerald ash borer was detected and confirmed in the city of Ottawa for the first time in July 2008.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) has been keeping an eye on this invasive pest ever since it was first identified in the Detroit area in 2002 and shortly thereafter in western Essex County in Ontario. Invasive pests that are introduced accidentally in any country can be very destructive because their natural enemies are absent from their new environment. Despite all the measures taken by both the US and Canadian governments, this ash borer has spread to several states and many other Ontario areas. It was also confirmed in Thunder Bay and Quebec City this past summer.



Photo: CFIA website

### **An adult emerald ash borer beetle**

It may be just a small beetle of insignificant size but it has been and, will continue to be devastating. Already millions of trees have been lost in the US and Canada. In Ottawa 50,000 trees have been removed in the last 8 years. It is considered to be in decline here now because so many trees have been removed

This insect has been confirmed to be in Eastern Ontario for about 10 years now, and everyone, but particularly those who have ash trees on or near their property, should learn to recognise the signs and symptoms that can indicate the presence of the emerald ash borer. They include deformities of the bark, D-shaped holes made by adults emerging from the bark and irregular notches on the leaf margins. Symptoms resulting from borer attacks can include thinning and dieback of the tree crown, development of shoots directly from the

trunk, vertical bark cracks and holes created by woodpeckers searching for the larvae. In Asia this borer also attacks trees of the walnut family and elms but so far it has only been found on ash trees in North America.



Photo: CFIA website

### **The D-shaped hole made by the adults emerging from the bark is shown above**

The adult beetles emerge from the bark in May and June. The female lays eggs on the bark from mid-May to mid-August. After emergence, the larvae enter the bark to feed on the sapwood, creating S-shaped galleries just under the bark of the trunk or main branches. These signs and the insect itself are not easy to detect because of the beetle's small size. Therefore, new infestations are usually identified only when the more obvious symptoms become apparent. By then, a tree is already heavily infested and will most likely have to be destroyed. However, there may still be time to protect other neighbouring ash trees if they are only lightly infested. Everyone can help protect our trees from invasive species by buying and using firewood from local sources only.

The [CFIA website](http://www.cfia.gc.ca) provides information on where this pest has been found and pictures of the symptoms to look out for. Be alert and watch for the signs of emerald ash borer activity. A certified arborist will be able to investigate your suspicions. Better safe than sorry.

*Monique Paré*  
Retired Master Gardener

## October TO DO List

- Use power hedge trimmers to cut back perennials – just be sure you don't cut back any shrubs, plant tags or ornaments.
- A reciprocating saw (with a gardening blade) is great for cutting out the dead spot in the centre of grasses or Siberian irises. Remove the overcrowded, dead, woody roots that were in the centre and replace with fresh soil and the plant should grow back into that spot.
- Put stakes in around plants that you plan to wrap for the winter. Then when the ground freezes up you're ready to wrap them. Don't wrap shrubs too early as the mice and voles are still looking for winter homes. It's better to wait until the ground is frozen.
- Water any recently planted trees or shrubs until the ground freezes. Their root system is not well enough developed to secure a winter's supply of moisture.
- If you have gardening or plant ID questions, ask a Master Gardener (contact information to the right).

## Tip of the Month

Shredded leaves make a great mulch for garden beds. You can buy a leaf shredder or simply run over them with a lawn mower until they are chopped into small pieces. Another method that works is to put a small amount of leaves in a garbage pail and then run a string trimmer in the garbage pail to chop the leaves (this method is time consuming). Dry leaves are easier to shred than wet leaves.

Apply 8-10cm of the shredded leaves on top of any garden bed (veggies or ornamental). By spring, the leaves will have packed and started decomposing. By

## Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton



## Where to find us for free gardening advice!

### ONGOING:

**Telephone Help Line:** 613-236-0034

- Wednesday and Thursday 1–3 pm (all year)

**E-mail Help Line:** [mgoc\\_helpline@yahoo.ca](mailto:mgoc_helpline@yahoo.ca)

- monitored daily

- send photos of garden pests, diseases or plants for ID

### CLINICS:

No clinics are scheduled until next spring.

### SPEAKING EVENTS & WORKSHOPS:

**Going grassless – Honey I shrunk the lawn** – Thursday October 19 – 7:30 pm

Julianne Labreche, Master Gardener

City View United Church, 6 Epworth Avenue, Nepean

Hosted by the Nepean Horticultural Society (Guest fee: \$4)

**Getting the garden ready for winter** – October 23 – 7:00 pm

Mary Shearman Reid, Master Gardener

Brockville Wesleyan Church, 33 Central Avenue West, Brockville

Brockville & District Horticultural Society (Guest fee: \$2)

**Cut and Come Again Vegetables** – Wednesday, October 25 – 6:00 pm

Edythe Falconer, Master Gardener

Carlingwood Branch, Ottawa Public Library, 281 Woodroffe Avenue

Hosted by the Ottawa Public Library (Free to library card holders)

**Companion Planting** – November 7 – 7:30 pm

Judith Cox, Master Gardener

Old March Town Hall, 821 March Road, Kanata

Kanata March Horticultural Society (Guest fee: \$5)



For more information on Master Gardeners, visit us at: <http://mgottawa.ca>



June, the worms will have pulled most of the decomposing leaves into the soil and will have added valuable, nutrient rich organic matter into your soil.

There is no need to bag and send the leaves to the City for composting. Keep this valuable organic matter for your own garden. You won't need to buy bagged manure or compost if you make your own.

The following photos show how an electric leaf shredder was able to reduce a large pile of dry leaves down to about 1/5 of its original size.



# Designing resilient gardens for our times

All-day seminar: Saturday, October 21

Location: Rideau Park United Church, 2203 Alta Vista Drive, Ottawa

Registration fee (includes lunch): \$35 (\$40 after October 7)

## Topics

- Water and drought management
- Soil management
- Wash and wear plants (planting for resilience)

## For details:

- see [www.lanarkmg.blogspot.ca](http://www.lanarkmg.blogspot.ca) or [www.mgottawa.ca](http://www.mgottawa.ca)
- call 613-264-8135
- email [lanarkmg@gmail.com](mailto:lanarkmg@gmail.com)



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