

Emerald ash borer found in trees on Craftsman Circle in Asheville

by Adriana Mendez
Thursday, June 15th 2017

BUNCOMBE COUNTY, N.C. (WLOS) — The emerald ash borer has taken over ash trees on Craftsman Circle in Asheville. Western North Carolina forest health experts said they first spotted the metallic green beetle last year in traps in northern Buncombe County. **The infested trees are the first sightings within the city.**

Pat Ballard, who lives in Asheville part-time, said it's the beauty of the mountains that drew her to the area. She is now concerned that her beloved trees are under attack.

"It's rather distressing to see that occurring, when those trees have been growing for 11 to 12 years. Now, we got to start over with smaller trees, and, hopefully, they won't get attacked by some little critter," said Ballard.

The non-native beetle first emerged on shipping pallets from Asia in 2002. **Experts said EAB is responsible for killing millions of ash trees across the country.** It's the larvae that suffocates the tree from the inside, depriving it of key nutrients, while creating s-shaped tunnels.

"Ash is a hearty tree. Fifteen years ago, I recommended my dad to plant ash. We didn't know emerald ash borer back then," said Craig Lawing, a forest health specialist with the N.C. Forest Service.

Signs of an emerald ash borer infestation include thinning and dying crowns; increased woodpecker activity that causes the tree to look like it is losing patches of bark; small, 1/8-inch D-shaped exit holes where adult beetles emerged from the trees; galleries on the inside of the bark; cream-colored larvae; and epicormic sprouting, or sprouting from the main stem of the tree.

"If you start seeing the leaves dying from the top then back, that is the first thing you look for," Brain Heath, a forest health specialist with the N.C. Forest Service, said.

According to the United States Department of Agriculture, research is being done to find ways to protect the tree through seed collection.

North Carolina is under a quarantine for the emerald ash borer. This prohibits the movement of ash plant parts, the insect, ash nursery stock and all hardwood firewood into non-quarantined areas such as South Carolina or central Tennessee.

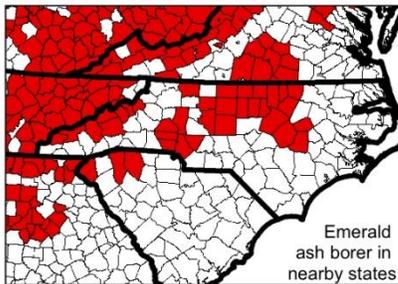
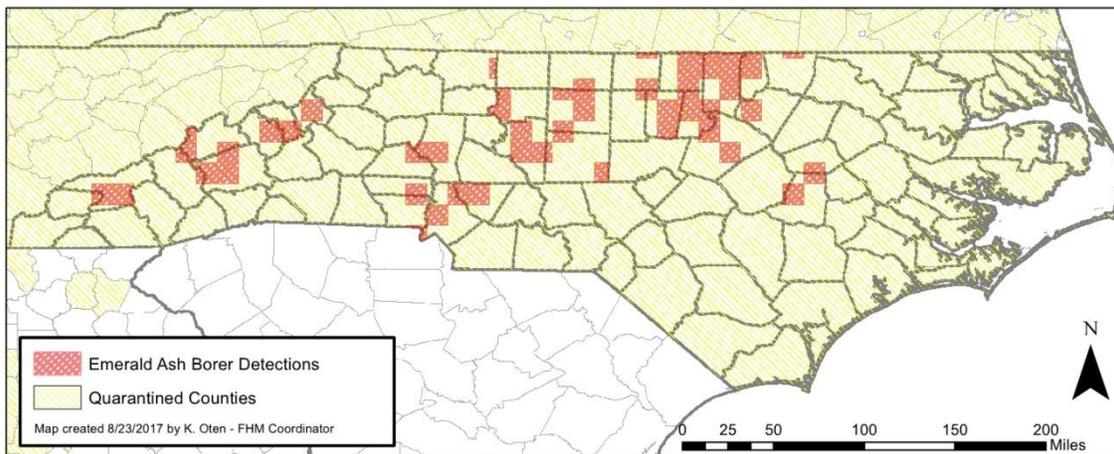
Adult EAB beetles are about a half-inch long and 1/8-inch wide. If their wing covers are pried up, their bodies are a metallic purplish-red color. In North Carolina, the adult EAB is expected to be active in late spring and early summer, likely April through June. EAB larvae may be found under the bark of the tree most of the year.

The spread of invasive insects in the state is often because of human activity through the transportation of infested wood products such as firewood. It is strongly recommended that people burn local or treated firewood to reduce the spread of invasive pests.

The North Carolina Forest Health Branch monitors the spread of invasive pests. People who suspect there is an infested tree in an area near them should call 1-800-206-9333 or email newpest@ncagr.gov.

<http://wlos.com/news/local/emerald-ash-borer-found-in-asheville-06-15-2017>

Emerald Ash Borer in North Carolina



The emerald ash borer is a non-native invasive insect that has already killed tens of millions of ash trees in North America.

Susceptible trees in N.C. are green ash, white ash, Carolina ash, pumpkin ash, and white fringetree. This beetle can spread naturally (by flying) or through the accidental, human-facilitated movement of infested material such as firewood or ash timber.

Counties are confirmed positive when a specimen is secured and identification verified. Counties declared positive based on signs/symptoms only include: Gaston & Randolph.

