

Don't Forget to Spray for Ips Beetle in March

I spoke at a meeting of the Hiwan Hills Homeowners Association on October 16th and was surprised to learn that most residents are not aware of the ips beetle problems



present in the area. While pine beetles get a lot of television and print coverage, ips beetles are a major problem, especially for conifers that are stressed from drought, mistletoe, construction, or any other reason. Ips beetles are active from March through November most years, so preventive spraying must be done early in the season with a very high concentration solution of insecticide. If you need someone from Lam to come out and inspect your trees to see if ips is a problem at your property, just give us a call this winter. For more information on ips beetles you can go to www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/insect/05558.html 🌲

Mike Goldblatt

2006 Was a Tough Year for Aspen Trees

Aspen are popular trees to plant. Everyone likes the beautiful fall colors, the way the leaves tremble in the slightest breeze, and they are a relatively fast-growing tree. There are, however, many problems that occur with aspens. They are extremely vulnerable to a host of insect and disease problems (see main article on page 3) as well as other problems, including elk and deer damage.



The heat wave we experienced in the early summer of 2006 added insult to injury for many local aspen. Some showed serious browning or blackening of leaves and/or branches. In some cases entire trees or even groves died. The heat wave was in addition to a 6-7 year drought cycle that had already stressed the trees in the area. Statewide there are many millions of aspen trees dying. Forestry experts are not sure of the exact causes, but drought and high temperatures are prime suspects.



At Lam we try to promote healthy aspen by performing several spray applications annually to reduce the effects of the inherent problems. We generally do two insect/fungus treatments on the foliage shortly after leaf-out (around late May–early June). Sometimes a third application is performed, especially if aphids persist into mid-summer. If there is a severe insect problem, we will sometimes recommend soil injections with imidachloprid (Merit) which will give longer and better control than a foliar application, but it is more expensive. If there are signs of poplar borer activity, we will do a preventive spray on the trunks in April or May. These are our typical treatment plans, but diagnosis on a specific property may determine a different treatment. Additionally, it is often advised to cull the dead, dying and diseased aspen in a grove to promote good health in the rest of the grove, since it is usually one interconnected plant.

In general, our philosophy at Lam is: If you can avoid planting aspen, do so. If you must have aspen in your landscape, be prepared to identify and treat the problems as they appear, to keep a healthy stand of trees. 🌲

2006 Lam Tree Scholarship Awarded



The annual Lam Tree Scholarship has been awarded to T.J. Zeylmaker of Aspen Park. T.J. graduated from Conifer High School in May 2006 and is attending The University of Northern Colorado, where he is majoring in science. T.J. was an all-state football player at Conifer H.S., but has switched his focus to rugby at U.N.C. T.J.'s father Tom and mother Sandy Miranda are both employed by Jefferson County Schools. Sandy also works part-time as assistant office manager at Lam Tree (Lam has no input into who actually receives the scholarship, only the criteria) so we know and like T.J., and we're elated that he is the recipient. The Lam Tree Scholarship is awarded annually through Evergreen Scholarship/Bootstraps to a local high school student who seeks higher education in the outdoor sciences. 🌲



High Country Pine Beetle Update

Many of you have seen the incredible outbreak of Mountain Pine Beetle in the high mountains, especially Grand, Summit, and Eagle counties. We have been doing a lot of preventive spraying and tree removals in these areas the past few years. While we've all witnessed the browning out of entire mountainsides, be aware that the outbreak is only getting worse. There are forestry experts who are saying that these counties may lose up to 90% or more of their mature lodgepole forests. For every tree currently infested, next year there will be 7-10 more. This is much higher than the historical annual rate of increase. These forests are composed of a monoculture of same age lodgepoles, approximately 80-120 years old. Forest fires have been suppressed for this entire period, and now the forests are extremely unhealthy and crowded. With our current seven year drought added to the equation, the outlook is bleak. Preventive spraying can protect high-value trees, but the overall outlook calls for massive tree loss, and the possibility of huge fires. Foresters and concerned citizens are taking steps to mitigate these issues, but the power of nature makes us feel very small.

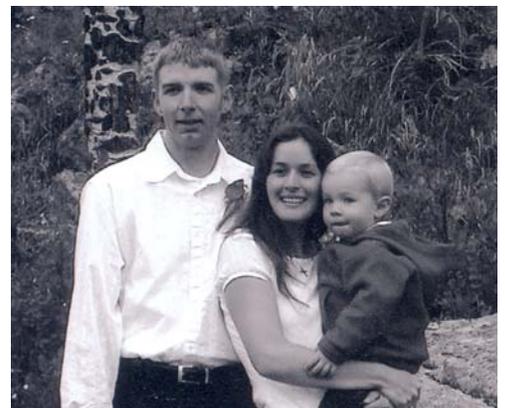
In the past year we have observed the beetle spilling over the divide into Clear Creek, Boulder, Gilpin and west Jefferson counties. While beetle populations have been stable here in Jefferson County in recent years, this may change. 🌲



EMPLOYEE PROFILE:

Tom Purves

Tom joined our team in May of this year. He previously worked for 2 years for Wright Tree Service, which is a national firm specializing in line clearance work. Tom was born and raised in Pittsburgh, Pa., and moved to Colorado six years ago. He and his wife Sara live in Evergreen with their two year old boy Owen. Tom works on the tree removal and trimming crew. 🌲



Aspen Can Be a Troublesome Tree

By Robert Cox, horticulture agent, Colorado State University Cooperative Extension

Ask a horticulturist about the use of quaking aspens (*Populus tremuloides*) in the home landscape and the advice you likely will hear is “OK, but...”

Forty years ago, aspen was seldom used in home landscapes. In the interim, however, the use of this tree has increased dramatically in Colorado’s urban landscapes.

Aspen grow fast, lending the landscape an early finished look, and it provides an informal touch of Colorado to the suburban home or urban landscapes. Aspen is a small to medium-sized tree that won’t overwhelm smaller yards so typical of today’s urban subdivisions. It has attractive bark, leaves tremble in the slightest breeze and the tree can develop good fall foliage color.

That’s the good news. Now for a reality check: Aspen is affected by numerous insects, diseases and cultural problems. While there are plenty of good-looking aspen around the region, it also

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is the most common problem tree discussed in calls or samples brought to Colorado State University Cooperative Extension’s Plant Diagnostic Clinic. Ecologically, aspen serves as a “succession” tree, quickly seeding in where other vegetation was lost because of erosion, fire, logging, insects or disease. It provides cover for seedlings of pine, fir and spruce, and as these become larger, the “nurse crop” of aspen may die out. Aspen reproduce not only by seed but also by extensive suckering. An aspen grove starts as suckers shoot off the roots of a mother tree, which arrived at the site by seed. This suckering habit can be a nuisance in the urban landscape, coming up in lawns and gardens. Aspens are short-lived trees, as expected from their role in forest ecology. In the urban landscape, even properly cared-for aspen may not reach 20 years. Life spans can be shortened further by one or more of several insects or diseases that attack aspen. Fungal diseases, such as *Cytospora* or other cankers which attack the trunk, are common, as are diseases of the foliage such as rusts, or leaf spots. Of the many insects that attack urban plantings of aspen, oystershell scale, aphids and aspen twiggy fly are most prevalent.



Save Money- Call us in Winter

Don't forget, you can save money on tree work by calling us during our slow season for your tree removals and trimming. As our business has grown over the past 28 years, our off-season has gotten smaller, but if you call this fall or winter and schedule the work for Jan 15- March 1, you can often save 10-30 %.

Interesting Tree Fact

Allelopathy is an interesting phenomenon in the tree world. The word is derived from two separate words, allelon which means “of each other” and pathos which means “to suffer.” Allelopathy refers to the chemical inhibition of one species by another. The “inhibitory” chemical is released into the environment where it affects the development and growth of neighboring plants. These toxins can affect the neighboring plants in various ways including the inhibition of nutrient uptake. There are certain trees that are noted for allelopathy, but the most notable one is the black walnut (*Juglans nigra*). If the black walnut doesn’t want any close neighbors, it releases the chemical Juglone into the root zone around it. Juglone is very toxic to other species and can cause severe symptoms and even death to neighboring plants. 🌲



Benefits of Proper Mulching

- Helps maintain soil moisture. Evaporation is reduced, and the need for watering can be minimized.
- Helps control weeds. A 2- to 4-inch layer of mulch will reduce the germination and growth of weeds.
- Mulch serves as nature's insulating blanket. Mulch keeps soils warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer.
- Many types of mulch can improve soil aeration, structure (aggregation of soil particles), and drainage over time.
- Some mulches can improve soil fertility.
- A layer of mulch can inhibit certain plant diseases.
- Mulching around trees helps facilitate maintenance and can reduce the likelihood of damage from "weed whackers" or the dreaded "lawn mower blight."
- Mulch can give planting beds a uniform, well-cared-for look. 🌲

Aspen Can Be a Troublesome Tree

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Aspen prefers the moist but well-drained, slightly acidic soil found at higher elevations. Much of the soil in the Front Range of Colorado is compacted, poorly drained alkaline clay. Aspens transplanted to such soils are at a disadvantage, especially considering that much of the original root system was lost in the digging process.

Aspens transplanted to landscapes are collected primarily from the mountains. A few nurseries offer nursery-grown aspens, which are grown to salable sizes in pots or in the field. While these should not experience the stress that mountain-collected aspens do, later insect and disease problems still are possible.

Horticulturists and plant pathologists are hesitant to recommend aspen as a landscape tree for the Front Range. For those who insist, aspens should be planted on north or east slopes, or on north or east sides of the house, in soil well amended with organic materials and mulched after planting.

Conditions often become extremely hot and dry on south or west exposures; this would further stress aspen. Should an aspen trunk become severely affected by *Cytospora* or oystershell scale, the gardener should be willing to cut down that trunk and allow other sucker shoots to develop into new trees.

Another complaint about aspens in Front Range landscapes is that they do not develop as brilliant a yellow fall color as those in the mountains. Differences in soil chemistry and texture, soil moisture, day/night temperatures and sunlight intensity between the Front Range and the mountain areas all contribute to this.

Should you plant aspen? Probably not, if you have space only on south or west exposures, or if the planting site is small and narrow. Yes, if you are willing to amend soils before planting a nursery-grown aspen and will monitor the aspen for problems. Remember that your nearby nursery or garden center carries many other tree choices for the landscape. 🌲

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