

talk

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More Pine Beetle Misconceptions

With all the buzz and press about pine beetles in Colorado, there is so much bad information out there that we could write a book about it. In our fall 2007 newsletter we debunked 5 myths about pine beetles. This past summer we heard a lot of other weird stuff, so here's a few more:

Myth #6—To protect a tree against pine beetle attack, the tree must be sprayed all the way to the top or at least 80 feet, whichever is higher.

The Truth—According to Colorado State University, the trunk must be sprayed at least 30 feet up or until the trunk tapers to six inches, whichever comes first.

Myth #7—Trees must be sprayed by mid-June to be effectively protected.

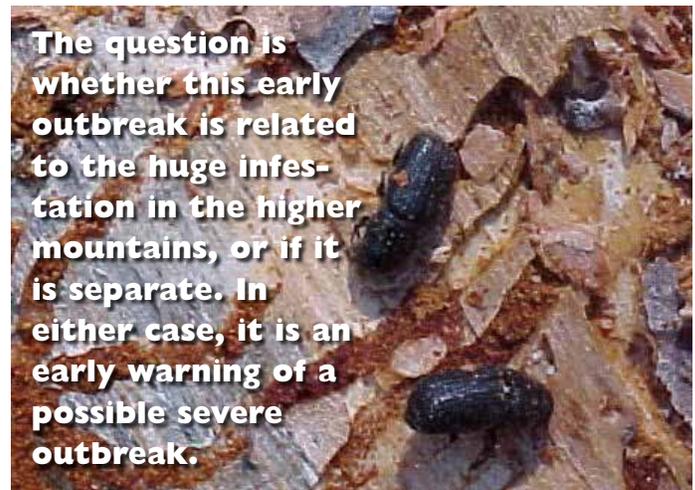
The Truth—The main emergence of pine beetles occurs around **the second week of August**. At LAM our goal is to protect trees by mid-July to be safe, in case of bad weather in late July, but beetles do not emerge to mass attack trees until August. This was reconfirmed by our staff this past summer with constant field inspections.

Myth # 8—All the conifer trees in Colorado will be killed by the current beetle outbreak.

The Truth—While many foresters predict a 100% loss of mature lodgepole pines in Colorado, the Front Range should not see that type of kill. We have a much more diverse forest in this area, which should be more resistant to beetles as they head this way.

Beetle Update

This summer we witnessed small patches of ponderosa pines infested with mountain pine beetle in the Evergreen area. These were mostly groups of 3-6 trees and were found mainly in the west and north areas of Evergreen, including areas such as Soda Creek, El Rancho, Squaw Pass Road and Upper Bear Creek. There are also infested trees scattered throughout the foothills area. The question is whether this early outbreak is related to the huge infestation in the higher mountains, or if it is separate. In either case, it is an early warning of a possible severe outbreak. Recent reports also show Front Range cities from Fort Collins to the Denver Metro area with trees being attacked by pine beetles. These



outbreaks reportedly are related to strong winds from higher elevations blowing mature beetles great distances and/or beetle infested firewood being transported to the Front Range. Here in the foothills west of Denver, it seems to be all around us and it is becoming quite alarming. We will keep you informed in these newsletters of future spreading. Also, you can call our office anytime if you are concerned about the encroachment of pine beetles into your neighborhood.

Beetle Block

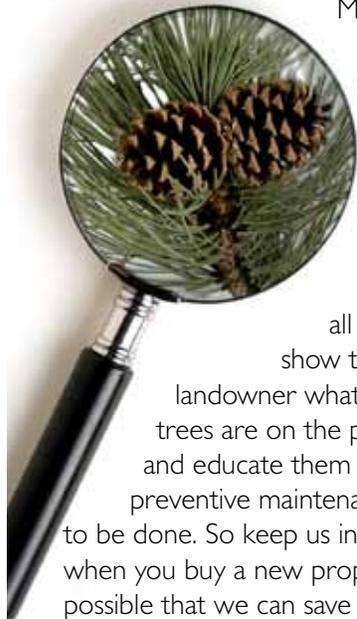
If a major pine beetle outbreak does arrive here soon, we will have a new tool to battle them with. There is now a product available to us called Beetle Block (active ingredient verbenone) that acts as an anti-aggregant to pine beetles. By placing packets of Beetle Block on select trees, we will be able to keep beetles away to a degree. When the beetle senses the verbenone, it thinks other pine beetles have already attacked the tree, and the "hotel" is full. This chemical mimics the secretion of the pine beetle that actually communicates this. Beetle Block has been used in Colorado for the past year or two, and while the history is not long, we have heard enough positive reports on it, that we will implement it into our toolbox. We will probably try it in 2009 on some of the properties we service in the high country, and will have a track record on it, if and when the pine beetle outbreak becomes severe in the Front Range.

Property Inspections For Your Trees and Yard

Most people wouldn't buy a residential property without first having the house thoroughly examined by a professional inspector. Yet rarely do prospective buyers have their trees inspected before a purchase. At LAM Tree, new property owners who weren't aware of the condition of the trees often call us to look at dying or diseased trees after a purchase. Hiring an I.S.A. Certified Arborist to examine the trees before you buy only makes sense. Trees are extremely valuable to your property value, especially here in the foothills where many people buy land based on the beauty of the native trees. For a fee of \$90 per hour, Lam Tree can send an I.S.A. Certified Arborist out to meet with you at your prospective property. For an acre or so of land it usually is only about a one hour fee, which is much less than a home inspection. During a tree inspection we will often find beetle infested trees or other problems such as

Dwarf
Mistletoe
infestations
and other
diseases
that a
buyer
should
be aware
of. Ideally,
all we do is
show the new
landowner what types of
trees are on the property
and educate them as to what
preventive maintenance needs

to be done. So keep us in mind when you buy a new property. It's possible that we can save you a major headache.



What You Should Know About Watering Your Trees

While we were suffering through the awful dry spell during the spring and summer of 2008, our arborists were often summoned to look at declining trees. To our amazement, many property owners were not aware that trees could use, and often require, supplemental water in addition to rainfall. Even in an average year, young trees always need additional water. In a dry year it is a matter of life and death. Mature trees also need supplemental water when it is dry. From the people who were watering their trees, we often heard statements that were as bad as the ones we heard from the non-waterers – “I’ve been watering the heck out of my trees”, or “I water them every day”. Our advice to you is don’t underwater or overwater your trees. And don’t have a set schedule. Rather than watering on a schedule, simply dig six inches or so below the surface with a trowel or screwdriver and check the soil. If it crumbles in your hand, water is needed. If the soil forms a ball in your hand, no water is needed. And when you do water, give the trees a deep soaking. This promotes strong root growth. Frequent light watering promotes much weaker root growth. After watering deeply wait until the trees are thirsty again and then give them that deep soaking they want. If you follow these easy tips, your trees will be much healthier for it.

Check out our new site at www.lamtree.com

We had a website before most people knew what a website was. We have now completely redone the site. There's plenty of information about our company, as well as trees. There are also links to other sites for more in depth information about arboriculture. Check it out today.



Champion Tree Winner

This past spring we announced a contest to celebrate our 30th anniversary. We set out to find the largest ponderosa pine in the foothills. Our contest stated that anyone who could find a ponderosa pine within 20 miles of Evergreen Lake that was larger than one we knew of would be awarded \$300 in services from Lam Tree. Trees are measured using a points system based on a formula including height, circumference and crown spread. Well, nobody could come up with one bigger than ours at 219.75 points. In spite of that, we are going to give out a consolation prize to the largest entry submitted. That prize goes to Gary Sterns of Evergreen who located a pondo that came close at 209.25. We are glad to award Gary a \$105 gift certificate for tree services from us.

Congratulations Gary, and thanks to everyone who participated. By the way, our separate contest to find a blue spruce that would beat the national champion came up short as well. The national champion remains a blue spruce in Utah that is 127 feet tall, with a circumference of 190 inches and a crown spread of 43 feet for a total of 328 points.



This valuable ponderosa pine was close to death, suffering from root stress, when Bob Thompson, who lives in The Ridge at Hiwan, called us. Much of the foliage was browning. We were hesitant to perform a root treatment because the situation was so dire. Bob really wanted to save the tree, and wanted to try the treatment anyway, so we did. Today, as the picture above shows, the tree is in good health and is flourishing. To quote Bob " I didn't think it was going to survive. Whatever you put in there sure worked!" While this is a dramatic case, we can often help stressed trees if we're called early enough. If you have a key tree that is not in optimum health, give us a call. We can often help by applying a combination of ingredients to the root zone of your tree. This formula includes mycorrhizae (beneficial root fungi), organic materials, water, and slow release nitrogen if appropriate.



This photo depicts the four major native conifers in our area in similar ages and sizes, lined up in a row. It's the first time we've ever witnessed all four species at a mature age in a row like this. Can you name all four species? See answers below.

From left to right: Ponderosa Pine, Douglas Fir, Lodgepole Pine, Colorado Spruce

Why Do Leaves Change Colors?

The fall colors in Colorado this year were spectacular in many places. The yellows and occasional oranges in the aspen and cottonwood were beautiful. Have you ever wondered what causes the beautiful colorations in the leaves? Fall color is associated with the process of leaf senescence – the growth phase from full maturity to death – leading up to the fall shedding of leaves. When the green chlorophyll pigments fade in autumn, the colored pigments of carotenoids (yellows and oranges), tannins (browns), and anthocyanins (reds and purples) are exposed. The chlorophyll production is reduced as the nights get longer, and these other pigments become unmasked. While shorter days are the most consistent trigger, colder temperatures are also a factor in the color change. The best color years are when the days are clear and the nights are cold but not

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freezing during senescence. Rainy and cloudy weather during this period limits photosynthesis and the sugars available for pigment production. A puzzling phenomenon occurs when two deciduous trees are next to each other and one is yellow and the other is still green. This is probably due to differences in amounts of available soluble sugars in the leaves. These differences are caused by genetic and environmental factors. Studies about leaf color change continue, especially regarding the anthocyanins. A University of Auckland study has shown anthocyanins to be powerful antioxidants, which benefits the host plant. Another study at the University of Montpellier has indicated that trees with the flashiest displays of red (high anthocyanin content) resist insects better than other surrounding trees.



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