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Best wishes to our readers for the New Year! We would like to take this time to bring you up to date on some of the developments since the Conditions Report published in September of last year and alert you to some upcoming workshops and presentations that might be of interest.

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INVASIVE FOREST INSECT UPDATES

More information about invasive insects and diseases threatening Maine's forest and ornamental trees can be found at www.maine.gov/doc/mfs/InvasiveThreats.htm.

Asian Longhorned Beetle

Asian longhorned beetle has not been found in Maine, but the infestation in nearby Worcester, MA was established for 20 years before it was reported. A digital version of the new Forest Service/University of Vermont publication entitled *Asian longhorned beetle and its hosts trees* is available on the USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area website at: <http://na.fs.fed.us/pubs/detail.cfm?id=5268>. Although the adult beetles are not active this time of year, some of the signs and symptoms of infestation by Asian longhorned beetle will be visible in winter. Maine's gateway to information on Asian longhorned beetle can be found at: www.maine.gov/alb.

Emerald Ash Borer

Purple trap update: all traps that could be retrieved have been (read bears and firearms), with still no EAB detected in Maine. In all, 956 purple sticky traps were collected from ash trees around the state by Maine Forest Service and cooperators (Plant Industry (ACF), USDA APHIS, PPQ and Penobscot Indian Nation). This year's trapping effort will be reduced, but we still expect to have approximately 850 of the purple prisms deployed across the state. Look for more information about the 2012 survey in our Annual Summary Report.

Volunteers who girdled an ash last June to participate in Maine's EAB trap tree network may have already felled and bucked those trees in anticipation of bark peeling workshops to be held in the coming weeks. This year the cooperators will be looking for additional volunteers to contribute to this detection survey. For more information contact Molly Lizotte, molly.lizotte@maine.edu.

Winter is a good time to conduct visual survey for EAB in forest stands and ornamental trees of interest. Woodpecker driven detection picks up this time of year as the birds zero in on rich food-sources beneath the bark of trees. Look for bright patches on trunks and branches where woodpeckers have picked off the outer bark. Excavations for EAB would not go far beyond the outer sapwood, as the insect is usually found no deeper than a half inch from the cambium. See www.maine.gov/eab and choose EAB Signs/Symptoms under featured topics for pictures of this and other clues of EAB infestation.

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Hemlock Woolly Adelgid

Late last month hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) was found along the Salmon Falls River in Berwick. Infestations were detected in seven new towns in 2012, six of those were found during Maine Forest Service detection surveys. This brings the number of towns in Maine known to have forest infestations of the insect to 37. A current map of forest detections can be found on-line at: www.maine.gov/doc/mfs/HWAOverview.htm#status.

This is a good time of year to look for HWA:

- The waxy covering of the insect expands as it continues to feed through the winter making the adelgid easier to spot.
- The low winter sun angle combined with reflective white surface of snow (in some places) highlights the bright white cotton ball-like masses on the undersides of hemlock twigs.
- Right now no HWA eggs and crawlers are present, so the insect can only be spread through movement of live hemlock material. Sometime in February or March the insect will begin laying eggs and there is a risk of picking up the eggs, and later crawlers, on clothing and other objects and moving HWA to new places.

Winter Moth

In December a request was sent out asking if people were seeing moth flights to pinpoint where in Maine there might be impending winter moth infestations (Our native moths stop flying at the end of November when the temperatures drop into the teens). The response was both good and bad. Over 130 samples were sent in plus that number again in phone calls and emails. People in Maine care about their trees.

Moths sent in were dissected for positive identification as the male winter moths (the females have no wings and are hard to find) are impossible to tell apart from the native Bruce spanworm moths. Virtually all the moths that could be identified – some were too damaged to use – were winter moth. Interestingly, the vast majority of moths can go through the postal cancelling machine and still be identified.

Cape Elizabeth is the new 'hot spot' for winter moth. Portland, Scarborough, South Portland and Peaks Island (which had some defoliation in 2012) are also high on the list in Cumberland County. York and Kennebunkport in York County had a number of positive samples. Winter moths were detected from Kittery to Rockland plus two towns on Mount Desert Island and a number of off shore islands – including Matinicus Island, 20 miles out to sea. There are now 33 towns in seven counties with the invasive winter moth confirmed. Most of the towns with winter moth hug the coast with Lyman and Gorham being the most inland towns. Defoliation from the invasive winter moth was first found in Harpswell and Vinalhaven in 2012 with a report of a moth flight from Harpswell in 2011.

We can hope that colder temperatures inland will keep winter moth populations down but at this point we do not know how far they can spread.

For more information go to: <http://www.maine.gov/doc/mfs/InvasiveThreats.htm#wm>

NEW DISEASE LEAFLET

Sirococcus tip blight (*Sirococcus conigenus*) is becoming one of the most significant disease threats to commercial forest production in Maine. After the spruce budworm epidemic of the late 1970's and early 1980's, thousands of acres of red pine (*Pinus resinosa*) plantations were established on forest lands that had been harvested during pre-salvage and salvage operations. Many of these plantations occur in the Downeast region of Washington and Hancock counties, and in the central Maine region of southern Franklin and Somerset counties. Many additional plantations exist in eastern Aroostook County, as well.

With a new finding of significant mortality in a red pine plantation in Mayfield Township (Somerset County), Maine appears to be at the forefront of significant disease losses in these immature plantations. The disease is widespread in the state, with infection levels largely determined by weather factors of high moisture and an ample supply of

susceptible species. Management of a more widespread epidemic, should one develop, will likely prove difficult and costly. Trees in many plantations nearby and elsewhere in the state are also infected, but with significant damage not yet realized. The Maine Forest Service, Forest Health and Monitoring has published a new pest alert in response to this development. This alert is available on-line at: <http://maine.gov/doc/mfs/SirococcusPine.htm>.

NEW HAMPSHIRE 2012 FOREST HEALTH HIGHLIGHTS

Insects and diseases do not recognize state boundaries so it can be helpful to monitor what is happening in nearby states and provinces. Each state in the Northeast either cooperates with the USDA Forest Service Durham Field Office (DFO) in compiling an annual Forest Health Highlights publication or produces one on their own. New Hampshire Forest Health has just released their 2012 newsletter and you can find it here: <http://eepurl.com/tik99>. The Maine Forest Service cooperates with DFO in production of the highlights, and we publish an in-depth annual summary report of conditions.

ON THE CALENDAR

January 8th-10th, Augusta, ME, 2013 Agricultural Trades Show

The 72nd annual Agricultural Trades Show will be held at the Augusta Civic Center on January 8-10, 2013. Admission is FREE! More information, including the complete program is linked from the department's home page: www.maine.gov/acf. The Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry will have a display and the Maine Forest Service staff will be presenting three talks:

Tuesday, **January 8th**: Maine Christmas Tree Association: **10:45-11:45 am**, Balsam Woolly Adelgid & Related Insects on Fir (Penobscot Room)

Wednesday, **January 9th**: Small Woodland Owners Association of Maine: **1:45-2:15 pm**, The Ten Insects and Tree Diseases Every Maine Landowner Should Know (Augusta Room)

Wednesday, **January 9th**: Beginning Farmer Resource Network (BFRN): **6:00-7:00 pm**, The "Winter" Crop: What new farmers need to know about the part of their farm that's growing trees (Knox/Lincoln/Oxford Rooms)

January 30th-31st, Saratoga Springs, NY, Northeastern Forest Pest Council 75th Annual Meeting

The 75th annual winter meeting of the Northeastern Forest Pest Council (NEFPC) will be held jointly with the NY/NE Societies of American Foresters (SAF) winter meeting in Saratoga Springs New York. More information about the meeting including registration details and meeting agenda can be found on-line: <https://sites.google.com/site/northeasternforestpestcouncil/meetings>. Deadline for registration with either group is **Monday, January 7th**.

February 5th, Camden, ME, Forest and Backyard Insects of Camden

Camden Garden Club

10:15 am Picker Room at the Camden Public Library. Free and open to all!

February 7th, Wiscasset, ME, Insects & Diseases of Maine Trees

Garden Club of Wiscasset

1:00-2:00 First Congregational Church of Wiscasset, 28 High Street, back entrance (parking shared with Lincoln County Courthouse). Cancelled if schools closed.

February 15th, Mount Desert, ME, Weeds Bugs and Coffee Mugs

9am-10:30am, Somesville Fire Station, Free Please pre-register by February 12th, To register contact Gale Ross (207) 287-2793; E-mail: gale.ross@maine.gov. This talk on invasive plants and insects is geared towards local property caretakers, landscapers and gardeners in the Mount Desert Island region.

Save the Dates: May 15th-17th Northeast Forest Health Workshop/Maine New England Society of American Foresters Field Meeting

Northeast Forest Health Workshop (NEFHW) will be held jointly with the Maine and New England Society of American Foresters Field Meeting at Sunday River Resort near Bethel, Maine. Stay tuned to the New England SAF web page for more details: <http://nesaf.org/>.

The program will start Wednesday with a joint session from 1 pm to 3 pm, followed by a NEFHW indoor session from 3:30 to 5 pm for reports. On Thursday, an all-day field trip is planned with topics including white pine needle damage/defoliation, *Sirococcus* shoot blight of eastern hemlock and red pine, ash dieback/decline and monitoring for the emerald ash borer (EAB), including hands-on demonstrations for girdling EAB trap trees. A field trip option on Friday will head to the Cumberland County coast for an in depth look at three invasive forest pests: winter moth, browntail moth and hemlock woolly adelgid. Elongate hemlock scale will also be discussed. The field trip will wrap up in Freeport in the early afternoon.

Preliminary registration costs are \$135 including field trip transportation and all meals on Thursday and breakfast & box lunch on Friday. Hotel rooms will be \$79 per night at a nearby inn or \$94 per night at the Summit Resort which has the meeting rooms.

MFS_conditions_reports is a seasonal series of updates about insects and diseases affecting and threatening Maine's forest and shade trees. Several issues are produced each growing season with the first usually appearing in mid- to late-April and the last in late- summer. To unsubscribe or manage your subscription visit:

http://mailman.informe.org/mailman/listinfo/mfs_conditions_reports

For more information on MFS programs, services, and publications, call the Maine Forest Service at 207-287-2791, or 1-800-367-0223, or send an email to forestinfo@maine.gov. Visit our website at www.maineforestservice.gov.