

School-to-Nature



Ash Tree

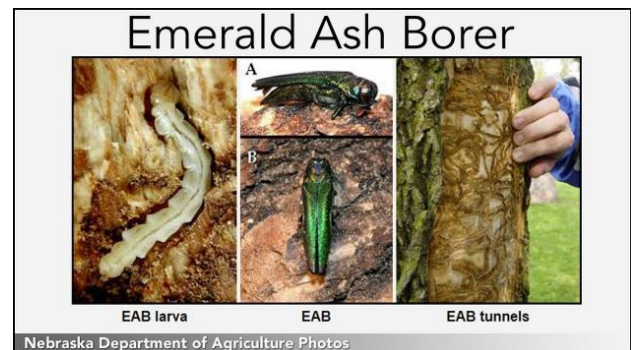


The White Ash Tree is native to the entire eastern half of the United States. It is a sturdy hardwood with graceful leaf fronds. Many homeowners have planted Ash trees in their yards for their beauty and their shade. Ash wood has been used for furniture, baseball bats, hockey sticks, and much more. However, you will not currently see many Ash trees alive. Due to the presence of the Emerald Ash Borer insect, almost all the Ash trees in our area have died.

Quite a few of the dead trees seen in wooded areas like King's Corner are Ash trees. So when you see what looks like a grove of dead trees, it is currently likely that those are Ash trees. (See the photo of the dead trees at the top right.)

The Emerald Ash Borer insect is native to Asia, and most likely came to the US in wooden pallets or wood-based packing material. It was first found in Michigan in 2002, but since then the borer has spread over all the Ash tree's range. The Ash tree is the borer's favorite host for its larvae; and the larvae tunnel under the bark. This is what causes the tree to die.

The hopeful news is that very young Ash trees are sprouting on some Conservancy lands, and we are hopeful that the insects will die out before those trees reach maturity. New Ash trees may have a chance.



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