

# Northeast Region Forest Pest Update – 11/16/06

## Topics covered this month:

### Insects:

Bald-faced Hornets  
Carpenterworms  
EAB contacts  
EAB FAQs for MFLs

### Diseases:

Fungi Growing on Wood website

### Other:

Fishing Spiders

## Insects:

**Bald-Faced Hornets** – bald-faced hornets make large paper nests with an entrance hole at the bottom (right). Like other hornets and wasps the majority of the population will die out each year with the killing temperatures of winter. Mated females will survive the winter under leaf litter. They do not re-use their old paper nests. Instead, the mated females will start a



new nest next spring. The first eggs laid are tended by the queen, they will mature into female workers who will tend the next batch of eggs to be laid. The nest increases in size as the summer



progresses and more workers are available to tend to eggs & larvae and to build additional layers of the nest. As winter approaches the queen will lay eggs that are unfertilized, these will develop into males who mate with any queens that are present. The old queens, workers, males, and any unmated queens all die at the end of the year. If you want to collect one of these nests to use as decoration in your house or workshop make sure that all the hornets are dead or let it freeze during the winter before bringing it indoors. Adult bald-faced hornets can sting repeatedly.

**Carpenterworms** – carpenterworms are very large, woodboring caterpillars. This one (below, photo by Tony Nowak, Greenville Parks and Forestry) was found in an oak tree. There are 2 possible species of carpenterworm in this area, both attack oaks.

*Prionoxystus robiniae* (found throughout the US) feeds on oak, elm, ash, birch, cottonwood, maple, and willow with red oak being a favorite species, and *Prionoxystus macmurtrei* (found in the eastern 1/2 of the US) feeds primarily on oak. One species is slightly larger than the other but they're both a very large caterpillar when fully grown (2-3 inches long!) and both take 3-4 years to complete development within the tree. The moths emerge during the summer, I believe around June in Wisconsin, and



females can lay 300-600 eggs in small clusters on multiple trees. Eggs can be laid anywhere on the tree and larvae will feed on the main stem as well as branches as long as the branches are large enough to support the feeding of a large caterpillar. Damage consists of large tunnels throughout the wood of the trunk and branches, extensive attacks can kill the tree or branches in the crown, you might notice large open round holes in the bark where the caterpillars will occasionally push out frass and sawdust.

**EAB contacts within WI DNR** – the contact information for reporting EAB has been updated. Those with yard trees or trees in urban setting are still encouraged to contact the EAB hotline at 1-800-462-2803, this number is maintained by DATCP. Those with rural woodlands, and DNR staff, should use the following contacts: Northeast Region - Bill McNee 920-662-5430; West-Central Region – Bria Radtke 715-831-3278; South-Central Region and Southeast Region – Renee Pinski 608-275-3231.

**EAB FAQs for MFL properties** – Jane Cummings-Carlson and Carol Nielson have developed a handout with Frequently Asked Questions about EAB and the MFL program. The handout is attached to this email; if you are unable to open it or need a copy you can contact me, or Jane Cummings-Carlson at [Jane.CummingsCarlson@wisconsin.gov](mailto:Jane.CummingsCarlson@wisconsin.gov)

## Diseases:

**Fungi Growing On Wood website** – have you ever found a fungus and wondered what it was? There's an easy-to-use website available to help you. The website is based on Dr. Leonard Fergus' Wood Decay Manual, which, in turn was based on Overholt's keys, both from Penn State. Check it out at [http://www.messiah.edu/Oakes/fungi\\_on\\_wood/](http://www.messiah.edu/Oakes/fungi_on_wood/) click on "Shape Key" which will take you to a list of shapes, you determine what shape your fungus is (birds nest, crust, gilled, jelly, etc), click on that shape and you can use a key to key out your fungus or go to the Species List and page through the species to find yours, there are good pictures of the different fungi and lots of information like common names, the derivation of the Latin name, edibility, etc. It's a nice website, check it out.

## Other:

**Fishing spiders** – this year I've had numerous reports/complaints/samples of fishing spiders. As one of our largest spiders here in Wisconsin they can be alarming if you suddenly stumble on one. They're actually an intriguing spider capable of running on the water's surface. From the book "Spiders of the North Woods" by Larry Weber: they sit quietly for hours, are semi-aquatic and can stay submerged for as long as 30 minutes. They feed on insects, tadpoles, and small fish. Having good vision they can hunt day or night.



Here in Wisconsin we have 3 species of fishing spider, all have legspans larger than 2 inches. They are commonly mistaken for wolf spiders. Although usually found near water they will occasionally move onto land and into nearby cabins or homes, which usually prompts the calls/reports to me of giant scary spiders. The photo above was found on the GeneralReptiles website.

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<http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/forestry/Fh/index.htm>