

Northern Wisconsin's Forest Insect & Disease Newsletter

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Division of Forestry

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Newsletter Information



Forest Health News Across the Northern Third

Oak Wilt Summary for Northern Wisconsin

Confirmed New Counties

Lincoln County: Oak Wilt was confirmed on 3 properties between Tomahawk and Lake Nokomis. Infection occurred due to pruning in the spring and storm damage. This area is greatly threatened by Oak Wilt due to the abundance of oaks on light soils. Two of the properties have a decent chance to eradicate Oak Wilt, but eradication on the third is highly unlikely.

Sawyer County: Oak Wilt was confirmed on the north shore of Little Lac Courte Oreilles. Infection occurred due to vehicle damage to the tree in the spring. The property owner will destroy the infected tree this winter without severing root grafts, so it is likely Oak Wilt will persist there.

Vilas County: Oak Wilt was confirmed on the northwest shore of Cranberry Lake. This same lakeshore had an Oak Wilt confirmation in Oneida Co. in 2010. Oak Wilt has been at this Vilas Co. location for several years and probably started after a tree pruner spiked an oak (now long dead) several years ago.

Probable Disease Spread Caused by 2011 Wind Storm

Minnesota DNR forest health staff found Oak Wilt for the first time in St. Croix State Park across the river from Governor Knowles State Forest. They suspect the 2011 wind damage promoted Oak Wilt in St. Croix Park. I have little doubt it did the same in areas of Wisconsin. Oak Wilt has been and is present in northern Burnett Co. (see [map](#) on next page). I anticipate finding Oak Wilt in the coming years in Washburn and Douglas counties near areas damaged by the 2011 storm. Please monitor for Oak Wilt and report suspect cases in Douglas and Washburn counties to me.

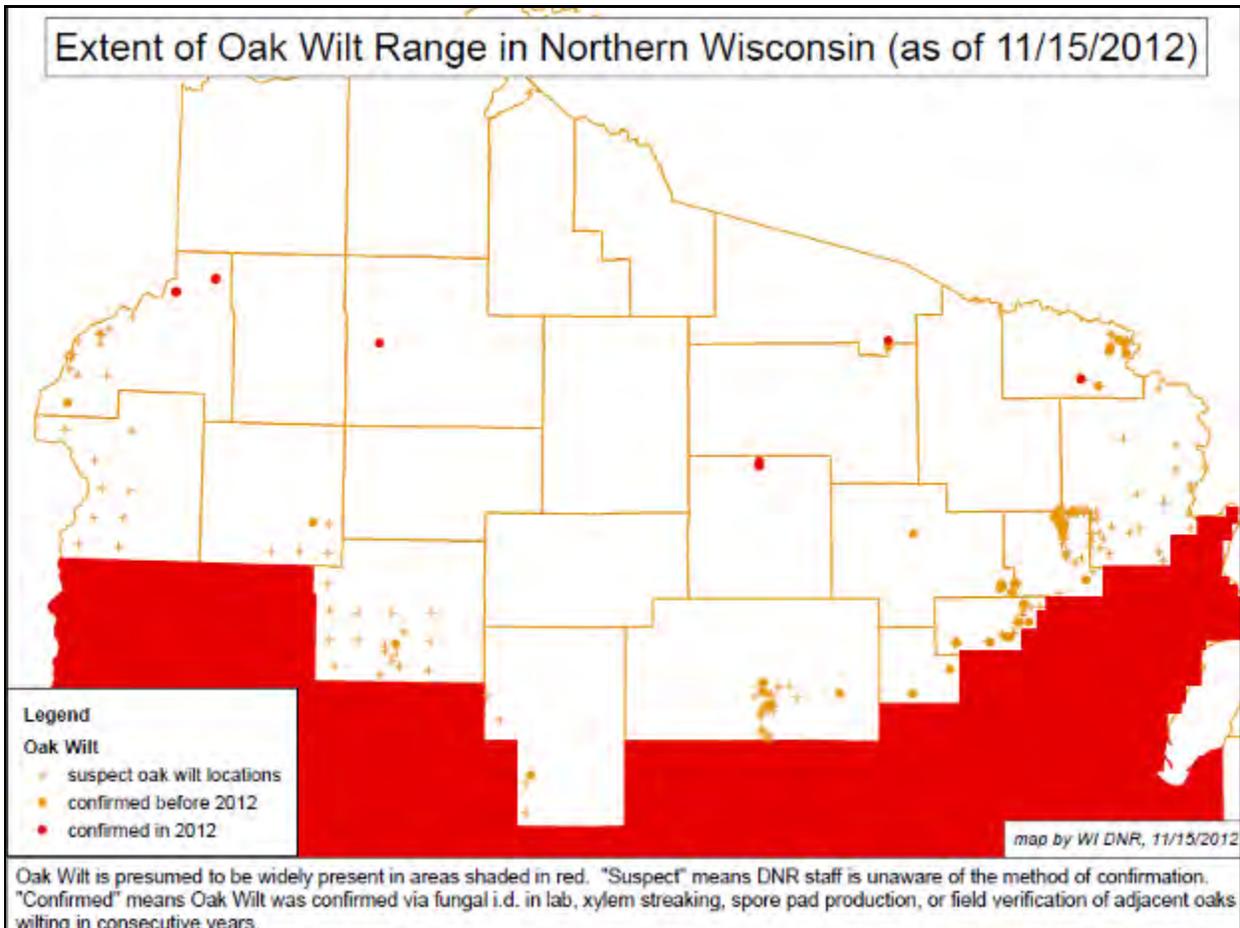
Oak Wilt Management Concerns

This year I have seen many failures of oak wilt management, both on private and public land. Here are two things managers need for success:

1. **Thoroughness:** Why trench if the trench isn't nearly deep enough, or why trench 95% of a circle around an infestation?
2. **Proper Timing:** Early June or early August may be too early or too late, respectively, to implement the experimental "Nine Mile Herbicide Method." Cutting down wilting trees during leaf-on without doing anything prior (e.g. severing root grafts) makes things *much* worse.

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In summary, it is much better forest management to do nothing at all than attempt control of Oak Wilt improperly or not thoroughly.



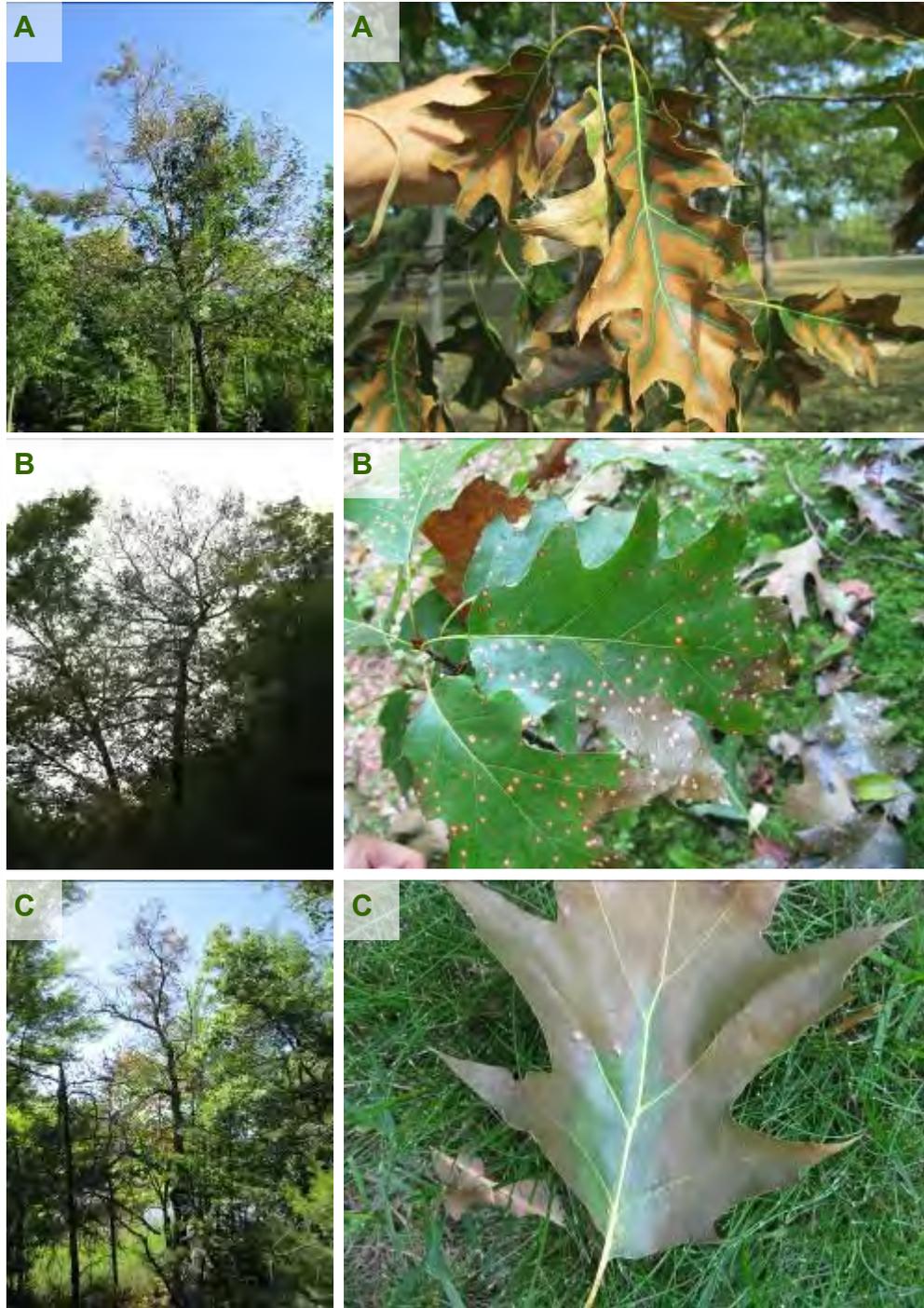
Oak Wilt Look-alikes

Last year I saw a very good Oak Wilt look-alike—*Cylindrosporium* leaf spot (see Figure 2B). I saw a bit more of it this year, and I have reason to believe this leaf disease defoliated 7 trees just southeast of Eagle River.

Cylindrosporium is a worthless Oak Wilt look-alike though compared to SOMETHING that happened this year on at least 3 oaks (see Figure 2A). Unfortunately, the something has eluded identification. I do know, without doubt, it is not Oak Wilt. I won't bore you with hypotheses.

Take home message: There are very good Oak Wilt look-alikes. They have defoliated oaks up to 75% within one month. The difference is they did not defoliate the oaks completely, and they did not kill buds (or trees).

Figure 2: A. Not Oak Wilt. The cause was unknown but most likely occurred due to a combination of weather and site factors. This occurred on several oaks in August and September 2012 in north-central Wisconsin. B. Cylindrosporium Leaf Spot (with tip burn) in August 2011 in north-central Wisconsin. C. Oak Wilt in mid-July. The tree on the left is a wilting oak north of Tomahawk.



Eastern Larch Beetle Damage Summary

Minnesota has reported damaging populations of Eastern Larch Beetle for several years, and many of you have been reporting mortality for several years too

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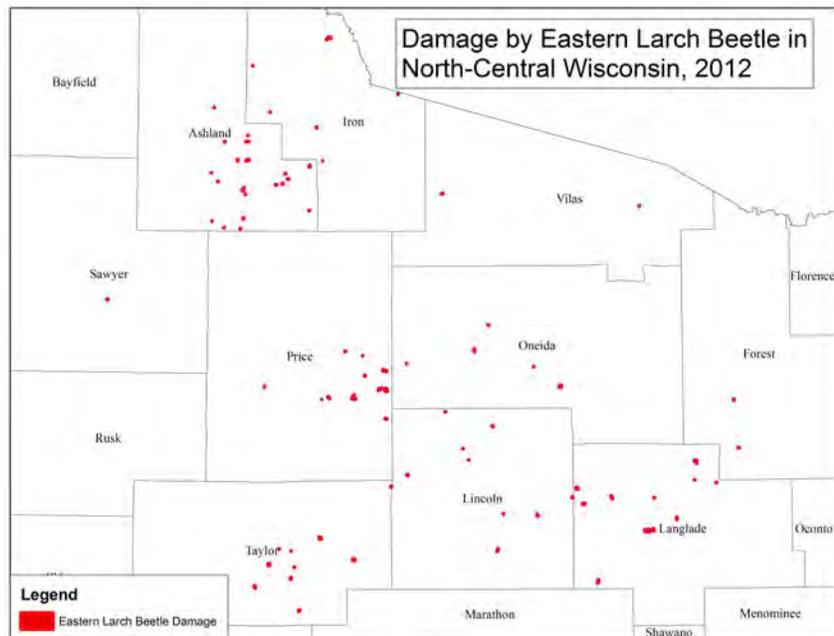
in Wisconsin. I finally sized up the infestation in the eastern half of Northern Region. I saw several tamarack stands that were already destroyed by this native bark beetle, but I also saw a lot of stands that were still salvageable or not close to being killed off. Specifically, I mapped 108 infested stands. The majority of those had infestations of less than 10 acres. Only seven stands had infestations larger than 40 acres, and they were located in western Langlade, eastern Taylor, eastern Price, and southern Oneida counties.



Figure 3: Taylor County tamarack stand infested with Eastern Larch Beetle. It should be pre-salvaged. Photo taken in August 2012.

If you're managing tamarack, keep your eyes on them. If you start seeing red bark (see [April 2012 edition](#)) in the winter time on a number of trees, I recommend you attempt to regenerate the stand if it is remotely close to scheduled harvest age.

Not much is known about management techniques to subdue the Eastern Larch Beetle. Fortunately Minnesota has assembled a team to evaluate how best to manage tamarack, and I anticipate Wisconsin benefiting from this team's work in the future.



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Gypsy Moth Defoliation Likely in Bayfield Peninsula in 2013

Reports of many gypsy moth egg masses in Bayfield's peninsula were made by DATCP and landowners. High egg mass numbers were reported along Whiting and Jammer roads, southwest of Bayfield, and also along Echo Valley Road within 2½ miles of Highway 13. Both these areas were defoliated in 2012 (see [July 2012 edition](#)). Given these reports and very high male moth trap catches by DATCP in the vicinity, it is likely 2013 will see heavy defoliation in parts of the Bayfield Peninsula. This means two years in a row of defoliation in some areas. Managers should avoid adding any stress to oak stands that have been defoliated. If a thinning can't be delayed 1 or 2 years after a defoliation, then thinning on frozen ground is an alternative to avoid stacking stressors.

Spruce Budworm Outlook for 2013 in Northeast Wisconsin

My counterpart Mike Hillstrom evaluated spruce budworm egg mass numbers in northern Marinette County in late summer 2012. What he found suggests we'll continue to see defoliation in spruce and balsam fir in northeastern Wisconsin in 2013.

Known Range of Beech Scale Expanded

-by Bill McNee

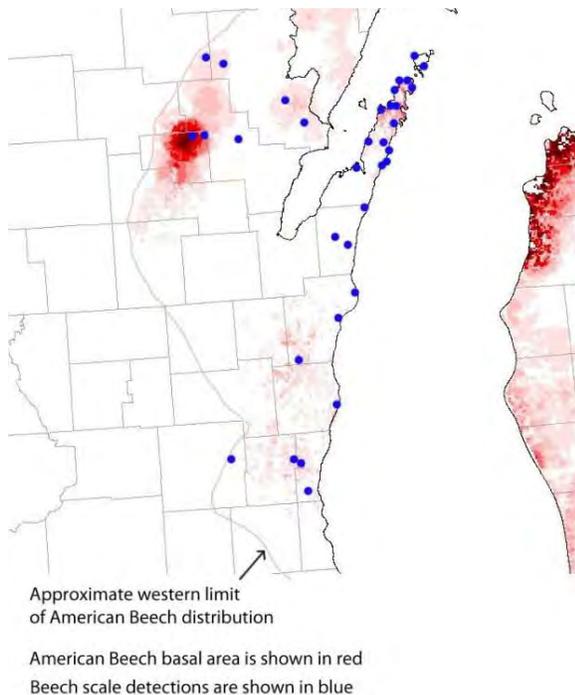


Figure 6: Beech scale surveys done in 2012 found that beech scale, the insect associated with beech bark disease, is now present throughout most of the range of American Beech in Wisconsin. Current year surveys were done by staff from UW-Stevens Point and Menominee Tribal Enterprises. Blue dots show beech scale detections. Shaded red represents beech abundance. Map by Bill McNee.

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Late Season Sawfly Ate Oak Leaves

Figure 7: Oak Slug Sawflies skeletonizing oak leaves. These critters were not unusual in Oneida & Vilas counties from August to October. They partially defoliated trees, starting at the top of the crown. They were not cause for concern.



The Rot Room

Welcome to the Rot Room. Come here to keep your white rots, browns rots, and canker rots straight. Brown rot is more structurally unstable than white rot. Canker rotters cannot be compartmentalized well, so they are classified by the DNR as “high risk.”



Figure 7: This is the Northern Tooth fungus, an annual conk. Rather than a pore layer, it has a tooth layer. It is a late season fruiter, often seen on maples. It causes a spongy white heart rot, which can be extensive sometimes. (O'Brien, USFS, bugwood.org).

The Positive Corner

Sick of reading negative agency newsletters? Roll out on the wrong side of bed? Confused by a reorg.? Here's a place to come when you need cheering. Revel in the overwhelming positiveness

USDA risk mapping has found that north-central Wisconsin (e.g. northern Vilas Co.) is less climatically suitable for gypsy moth than other areas of the state. A final map of the work will be distributed at a later date. These results could be an explanation for why we haven't had the predicted level of gypsy moth activity in the area, even though the pest has been here for at least 10 years (by Bill McNee).

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Odds & Ends

Invasive Plant Herbicide Control—Web Resources

It seems there are thousands of web resources out there to find out what chemicals kill a given invasive plant. Here are two webpages I'd like to highlight:

[Timing of Herbicide Application for Planted Trees in Wisconsin](#)

[Factsheets \(including herbicide recommendations\) of Invasive Plants](#)

Wisconsin EAB 2012 Summary

No, EAB in this newsletter does not stand for Earn-a-buck. I know many of you have had bucks on the brain lately. As far as I've heard, that management policy is not back.

A lot happened on the regional Emerald Ash Borer front in 2012. EAB was discovered for the first time in several Wisconsin communities adding to the number of quarantined counties. [Dogs](#) were trained to detect EAB in Minnesota! Biocontrol agents continued to be released in Wisconsin and nearby areas of Minnesota.

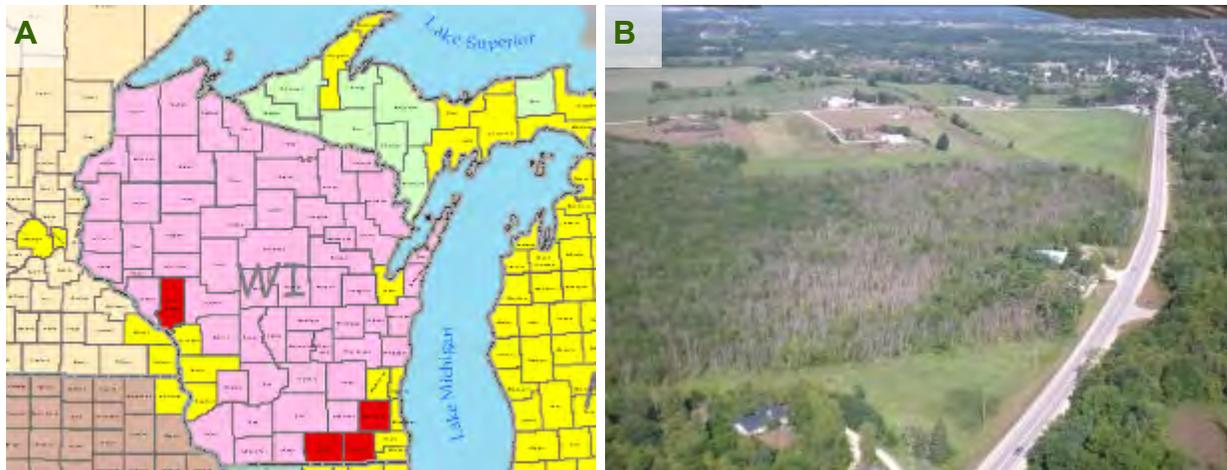


Figure 8: A. Counties shown in red were quarantined in 2012. Yellow counties were quarantined prior to 2012 (USDA APHIS November 1, 2012). B. Aerial photo showing EAB-killed ash trees in the Newburg area. EAB was first discovered in the Newburg area in 2008 (photo by WI DNR, July 2012).

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Annosum Policy Update

Paul DeLong suspended the requirement for treatment for Annosum on *affected* state lands from December 1, 2012 through March 31, 2013.

Forest Health Links

- [Effects](#) of neonicotinoids (ornamental insecticide preventers of EAB) on bees
- [Tree Doctor](#) app

Forest Health Web and Phone References

- Insects
 - Invasive Insect [Factsheets](#)
 - [Emerald Ash Borer](#)
 - * EAB Hotline—1-800-462-2803
 - [Gypsy Moth](#)
 - * Gypsy Moth Hotline—1-800-642-MOTH
- Diseases
 - Invasive Pathogen [Factsheets](#)
 - [Annosum](#) Root Rot (Heterobasidion Root Disease)
 - [Oak Wilt](#)
- Plants
 - Invasive Plant [Factsheets](#)
 - [Timing of Herbicide](#) Applications for Planted Trees
- Sick Tree Diagnostic Keys:
 - U. of Minnesota Extension—[What's Wrong With My Plant](#)
 - [Natural Resources Canada](#)—navigate to a tree species to see insects/diseases
 - U. of Wisconsin Extension [Green Industry Website](#)



Back page: An Annosum (Heterobasidion) bracket fungus in a La Crosse County stand (picture courtesy of Laura Van Riper, MN DNR).

Front page: An oak with Oak Wilt on the shore of Lake Nokomis in Lincoln County. This oak had a large limb broken in the summer, which most certainly served as the entry court for this deadly pathogen.

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Note: This pest report is an informal newsletter and covers forest health issues in the northern 18 counties of Wisconsin. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide forest owners and managers in the Northern Region with regional up-to-date forest health information. I welcome your comments/suggestions on this newsletter and your reports on forest health problems you observe in your area. If you would like to subscribe to this newsletter, please contact Brian Schwingle at brian.schwingle@wisconsin.gov. Previous issues of this newsletter and regional forest health updates from other Wisconsin regions are available at <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/ForestHealth/Publications.html>.