



Lake George Association

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NEWS RELEASE

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For IMMEDIATE RELEASE

State to Expand Survey Efforts for ALB

Lake George, NY – September 22, 2010 - This fall, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) will use a new tool to expand survey efforts for the Asian Longhorned Beetle (ALB), the Lake George Association has learned. High-risk campgrounds throughout the state have been identified for the survey work, including 13 DEC campgrounds and four state parks under the jurisdiction of the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP).

The invasive Asian Longhorned Beetle feeds on and kills several species of hardwoods, including ash, maple, birch, elm, and willow trees. "If ALB becomes established in the forests of the Northeast, it could become one of the most economically and ecologically costly invasive species ever introduced to the United States," said Emily DeBolt, the LGA's director of education.

A cooperative effort between the DEC, the United States Dept. of Agriculture (USDA), and the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry has resulted in a new tool to detect early infestations of this destructive invasive forest pest. Stephen Teale, an entomologist at SUNY-ESF, has developed a semiochemical lure for use in the ALB trap. This ALB survey trap is the first of its kind.

Throughout the summer-to-early-fall flight season of the ALB, the new traps have been deployed at high-risk campgrounds in the Adirondack and Catskill Parks. There are 51 traps in seven DEC campgrounds in the Lake George area. Six other DEC campgrounds, three in the Catskills and three in the Adirondacks, have 24 traps. Fifteen additional traps are deployed within OPRHP state parks. The black panel traps hang from host trees, such as ash, maple, willow, and birch. After the traps are removed at the end of the flight season, any insects caught will be collected and identified. The public is urged not to touch or remove the ALB traps.

While the trap was developed to detect ALB, it also serves to educate the public about the threat ALB poses to our forests, and to enlist public assistance. Members of the general public, rather than experts, have found most of the initial ALB infestations in the United States. The DEC traps are fitted with an informative sign about the insect and the "Don't Move Firewood" message, along with an ALB identification card. "Public awareness of the signs and symptoms of ALB is essential to detecting and limiting the spread of this insect," said Ms. DeBolt.

ALB was first discovered in North America in Brooklyn, NY in 1996. It was likely brought to the United States on untreated wood packing material from Asia. The beetle has been found in New York (New York City and Long Island), New Jersey, Illinois, Massachusetts (Worcester and Boston), and Toronto, ON.

What the public can do:

- Don't more firewood. Leave firewood at home. Do not bring it to campground or parks.
- Get firewood from a vendor near the campground or park you will be visiting.
- When purchasing firewood, ask:
 - Where did this firewood come from? Is it local?
 - Has this firewood been inspected?
 - What kind of wood is it?
- Become aware of the signs and symptoms of ALB in trees on your property and in your community.
- Report sightings or symptoms to the state of New York by calling toll free at 1-866-640-0652.
- Capture any suspicious insects in a jar and freeze them to preserve them for easy identification. Take digital pictures of the insect and any damaged trees, in case officials request them.
- Limit the trees that supply the ALB with food and shelter. Don't plant ALB host trees (maples, birches, elms and willows) on your property.

How to identify the beetle:

Adult beetles are most active during the summer and early fall. They can be seen on trees, branches, walls, outdoor furniture, cars, and sidewalks. While the ALB may appear threatening, it is harmless to humans and pets.

The ALB is easy to identify:

- One to one-and-a-half inches in length;
- Long antennae banded in black and white (longer than the insect's body);
- Shiny, jet black body with distinctive white spots;
- Six legs; and
- A blue color may be present on the feet.

(The ALB is sometimes confused with the native Whitespotted Sawyer beetle. Unlike the ALB, the Whitespotted Sawyer is found on pine trees and it always has a white dot at the top and center of its back, just below its head. The ALB never has a white dot there.)

Signs of ALB infestation include:

- Shallow divits in the host tree's bark;
- Sap seeping from wounds in the tree;
- Dime-sized (1/4" or larger), perfectly round exit holes in the tree; and
- Sawdust material on the ground and branches.

The website www.beetlebusters.info provides additional information about the ALB.

The LGA is a non-profit membership organization of people interested in working together to protect, conserve, and improve the beauty and quality of the Lake George Basin. It is the nation's oldest lake association. For more information, contact the LGA at (518) 668-3558 or visit the LGA website at www.lakegeorgeassociation.org.

Photo Caption 1: A new type of ALB trap hangs from a tree on Floating Battery Island on Lake George this summer. Photo courtesy of LGA.

Photo Caption 2: Pictured at left: An adult female ALB. The ALB is one to one-and-a-half inches in length, with a black shiny body and distinctive white spots. It sometimes has blue color present on its feet. At right is a female Whitespotted Sawyer Beetle. This native species is sometimes mistaken for the ALB. Photo credit: www.beetlebusters.info

Photo Caption 3: The ALB makes perfectly round, dime-sized exit holes in its host trees. Photo credit: www.beetlebusters.info.