OREGON TREE HEALTH THREATS

March 2026

This monthly newsletter gives updates and resources on emerging threats to the health of Oregon's trees in natural and managed landscapes. It is published by the Oregon Department of Forestry in collaboration with other state, regional, federal, Tribal, and local agencies and organizations. To subscribe, email jim.gersbach@odf.oregon.gov

In this issue:

ODF releases new videos on emerald ash borer and how it kills ash trees

The Oregon Dept. of Forestry has released two videos providing basic information about emerald ash borer and its life cycle, including how the tree-killing pest likely arrived in Oregon and when, how it has spread since, how it kills ash trees, and what can be done to respond.

You can watch the first 6-minute-long video on YouTube at EAB 101: What is EAB and where is it found?

The second 9-minute long video on YouTube can be watched at EAB 102: How EAB kills ash trees

Sticky purple traps to catch EAB are now available from ODF

Emerald ash borer can be hard to detect. Larvae are hidden inside tree trunks. Adults live for only a short time in the summer, spending most of their time in the forest canopy where they can be hard to see. That's where sticky panel traps come in. Hung high in trees, they can capture flying adults and help determine if EAB has entered a new area of the state.

The Oregon Dept. of Forestry is again making some EAB traps available to cooperating agencies in Oregon for the coming season. Last year, 23 participating agencies placed 335 EAB traps in Oregon.

Nine of the traps resulted in a positive detection, which greatly informed communities preparing for this pest. An online guide to how traps are used can be seen here.

Washington State proposes a ban on importing untreated firewood

The Washington State Department of Agriculture is proposing to ban untreated firewood from other states to prevent the introduction of invasive insects, including EAB. Read the proposed rule here. Washington sits between Oregon, where EAB was discovered in 2022, and British Columbia, where the pest was found in 2204. Firewood is a known way the insect's larvae get transported to new locations where they can start infestations. The proposal would put Washington State alongside states like Michigan, which has its own proposal to ban imports of out-of-state firewood.

Salem treated a third of its ash trees last year to protect them against EAB

When it comes to emerald ash borer, the City of Salem is not waiting around for the pest's inevitable arrival. Five years ago the city banned the planting of ash trees. Then, under Urban Forester Milan Davis's direction, workers inventoried the city's right-of-ways and parks and found about 1,800 ash trees of various species. Davis prioritized treating those in good condition to protect them from infestation by EAB. Last summer, 600 ash trees in the northern half of the city were injected with the highly effective insecticide emamectin benzoate. This summer, about the same number of ash trees in good condition will be treated in the southern half of Salem.

Photo: Nolan Rogers injects chemicals into an ash tree in Salem to protect it from EAB. Salem plans to protect two-thirds of its street and park trees using this method.

One discovery was that the city's old flowering ash trees *(Fraxinus ornus)* did not take up the injected chemicals very well compared to other ash species. Many of these will therefore be removed over time rather than treated. A number of Salem's other ash trees are not in good condition. Those in the poorest condition have also begun to be removed and replaced. This approach spreads out the cost of removals and disposal of wood

waste rather than the spike that would occur when EAB arrives and rapidly starts killing trees.

Original cost estimates to contract with private tree care companies to do the injections were about $200,000. Davis said he was able to have two employees do the same work in a month for $60,000.

New collections of Oregon ash seed will assist in finding resistance to EAB

To test for resistance to emerald ash borer in Oregon ash, researchers plant out large numbers of seedlings from throughout the species' natural range. They then monitor to find the few, if any, that may be resistant to EAB.

"Because resistance is rare, we increase our chances of finding some the wider a net we cast," said USDA Forest Service Geneticist Richard Sniezko at his agency's Dorena Genetic Resource Center (DRGC). "That's why last fall we put out a call for people to collect more seed."

DRGC and Oregon State University have already planted seedlings from a massive 2019 collection by the Oregon Dept. of Forestry (ODF) and other cooperators that gathered more than 900,000 seeds. That collection was completed just before the discovery of EAB in Oregon. Some seeds from that collection have been planted at:

- DRGC in Cottage Grove in southern Lane County
- Washington State University's Research and Extension Center in Puyallup, Washington

More Oregon ash were planted in December 2025 from seed collected from 2019 thru 2024 from trees in British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and California. Those plantings are at:

- ODF's J.E. Schroeder Seed Bank in Marion County
- Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge in Washington County
- Roseburg Forest Products land in Linn County

Mariel King at DRGC said response to the latest collection effort was gratifying. "We received 149 batches of Oregon ash seed. Of those, 116 came from Oregon, 27 from Washington State, and six from California."

Based on the lack of resistance in other North American ash species, finding resistance in Oregon ash may depend on how many can be planted out. "Resistance might come down to one tree in 10,000 or 100,000. So the more we and our collaborators and citizen scientists plant and monitor, the better chance we have of finding the few that might be resistant," said Sniezko.

OSU's Glenn Howe, an Associate Professor of Forest Genetics, added, "It's a long-term investment in trying to secure the future of a tree that plays a vital role in our river ecosystems."

EAB treatment workshop in Hillsboro is scheduled for Friday, March 13

The Oregon Dept. of Forestry's Urban and Community Forestry program, the Pacific Northwest chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture, (ISA), and the City of Hillsboro Public Works are hosting a tree-injection workshop on Friday, March 13th at Hidden Creek Community Center in Hillsboro. This is an opportunity for arborists, pesticide applicators, and public works employees to learn about applying pesticides through trunk injection and about different injection equipment options. Register here. This is a popular workshop. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis and will be closed when available slots are filled.

The workshop will feature presentations from ODF, the Oregon Dept. of Agriculture, and equipment and pesticide manufacturers on:

- pesticide licenses and categories
- best management practices from the ISA
- demonstrations from two leading equipment manufacturers

ODF has also secured ISA and ODA continuing education credits (CEUs) for those attending the workshop. Attendees can receive 4.5 International Society of Arboriculture CEUs (A,M,Bp) and CEU's for Pesticide Credits from ODA.

OSU is hosting forest health conference in Corvallis on March 18

Learn about challenges to the health of Oregon's forests at a conference being held March 18 at Oregon State University in Corvallis. "Forest Health in Oregon: State of the State" is a vital forum for researchers, practitioners, and industry experts to discuss the trends shaping our ecosystem. Sessions will cover critical topics, such as the ongoing effects of the 2021 Heat Dome, wildfire resilience, emerging insect outbreaks, and the latest strategies for disease management. Participants will gain access to cutting-edge research, monitoring tools, and practical mitigation strategies for foresters, land managers, and woodland owners.

Registration deadline: Wednesday, March 11

In-person cost: $85 (Student cost is $50). Price includes lunch. There is also a virtual option costing $35.

This conference has been approved for 7 Category 1 Society of American Foresters credits and 8 Oregon Professional Logger maintenance credits. Register at

https://extension.oregonstate.edu/events/forest-health-oregon-state-state-2026

Tree and forest health is topic of March 7 class in Hood River

Learn how to promote the health of trees and prolong their lifespan at a one-day class in Hood River on Saturday, March 7 starting at 9 a.m. Teaching the Central Gorge Master Gardener's community class will be Oregon State University Extension Forester Glenn Ahrens. Pre-registration isn't required. Class will be held at the Hood River Valley Christian Church, 975 Indian Creek Road in Hood River. There is a suggested $10 donation, all of which will be given to FISH Food Bank. Central Gorge Master Gardeners will match donations up to $1,000.

Ahrens will share how to assess and manage tree and forest health, especially in the face of changing environmental conditions. He'll explore the complex and interrelated causes of tree problems, from environmental stressors like climate and soil conditions to interactions with insects and disease. Attendees will learn how to spot potential problems and take steps to support healthy landscapes.

Publications

- ***Sequestration of plant defenses by spotted lanternfly (Lycorma delicatula) and effects on avian predators.*** by Anne E. Johsnon, Allison Cornell, Fang Zhu, Ashley E. Shay, Gabrielle Davis and Kelli Hoover. Pennsylvania State University. Journal of Chemical Ecology Oct. 23, 2025. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10886-025-01647-6

- ***A Valley Without Ash: Exploring Strategies for Forested Wetland Restoration Post Emerald Ash Borer Invasion in the Willamette Valley, Oregon*** by Hull, Chloe (2024). OSU. https://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/concern/graduate_projects/3j333b36w

- ***Genomics-Driven Monitoring of Fraxinus latifolia (Oregon Ash) to Inform Conservation and EAB-Resistance Breeding'*** *by Melton, A.E., Faske, T.M., Sniezko, R.A., Thibault, T., Williams, W., Parchman, T. and Hamilton, J.A. (2025), Molecular Ecology e17640. https://doi.org/10.1111/mec.17640*

- ***Monitoring Oregon ash forests in the face of the emerald ash borer: A guide for small woodland owners and managers***

  https://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/pub/em-9451-monitoring-oregon-ash-forests-face-emerald-ash-borer

- ***Larval development and parasitism of emerald ash borer*** **(Agrilus planipennis)** ***in Oregon ash*** **(Fraxinus latifolia)** ***and European olive*** **(Olea europaea):** ***implications for the West Coast invasion***

Journal of Economic Entomology | Oxford Academic

- ***Modelling impacts to water quality in salmonid-bearing waterways following the introduction of emerald ash borer in the Pacific Northwest, USA.*** Maze, D., Bond, J. & Mattsson, M. *Biol Invasions* (2024). https://doi.org/10.1007/s10530-024-03340-3

- ***Alternatives to Ash in Western Oregon: With a Critical Tree Under Threat, These Options Can Help Fill Habitat Niche.*** G. Kral, and D.C. Shaw. 2023. OSU Extension EM 9396. https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/em9396

- ***Oregon Ash: Insects, Pathogens and Tree Health*** by Oregon State University Extension (also available in Spanish at this same website) https://extension.oregonstate.edu/pub/em-9380

- ***Wood Decay Fungi Associated with Galleries of the Emerald Ash Borer*** by the University of Minnesota and Uruguay's *Instituto Nacional de Investigación Agropecuaria* Forests | Free Full-Text | Wood Decay Fungi Associated with Galleries of the Emerald Ash Borer (mdpi.com)

Useful links for more information

Past *Oregon Tree Health Threats Bulletins* (2023 to present)
https://oregon-eab-geo.hub.arcgis.com/pages/latest-news

Roundup of Oregon-specific EAB information including where to report new EAB sightings
www.OregonEAB.com

Mediterranean oak borer fact sheet
https://www.oregon.gov/odf/Documents/forestbenefits/fact-sheet-mediterranean-oak-borer.pdf

Map to find where EAB is currently confirmed in Oregon
https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/9f29b1860cb04d36ad71b122148277f3

EAB monitoring guidance
https://www.oregon.gov/odf/forestbenefits/Documents/eab-monitoring-guidance.pdf

Oregon Dept. of Agriculture
https://www.oda.direct/EAB

Oregon Dept. of Forestry
https://www.oregon.gov/odf/forestbenefits/pages/foresthealth.aspx

OSU Extension
https://extension.oregonstate.edu/collection/emerald-ash-borer-resources

Emerald Ash Borer Information Network, a collaborative effort by the USDA Forest Service and Michigan State University
www.emeraldashborer.info

USFS Forest Health Protection
https://www.fs.usda.gov/foresthealth/index.shtml