

Tree Notes

Trees are an essential part of our natural resources in Yarmouth. They provide us with beauty, shade, clean air and habitat for birds and other small animals. We have built homes, furnished and heated those homes with our trees. Ships built and launched from our Royal River waterfront have sailed all over the world, helping to create and sustain this beautiful community we call Yarmouth. I plan to foster a stewardship to preserve and care for the trees of our town.

My name is Scott Couture. I have happily accepted the role as the Yarmouth Tree Warden. While I've only lived in Yarmouth for a short time, I've been a Maine resident for 30 years. My history with trees dates back to my childhood. My grandfather showed me how to swing an axe to limb trees and split wood when I was ten years old. To this day, if I catch the scent of freshly split oak, I can't help but think of him. I began working for a small landscape company in 1985 at age 18. I learned to plant, prune and care for small trees and shrubs until Hurricane Gloria struck Long Island, NY in September of that year. I quickly learned how to run a chain saw, climb and rig as part of a massive cleanup effort. The physical challenge of working outdoors appealed to me. Side jobs connected me to the industry through the years, while I pursued other things until the ice storm of 1998. I began working for a small tree company out of Richmond, Maine. I obtained my arborist license and managed a tree crew. As I matured in the industry, I began to see trees differently. More than simply landscape accents, I saw trees as part of the fabric of an entire community. I noticed the profound difference of a street lined with large mature trees and the starkness of those without. In 2012, I began working for a tree company in Phippsburg, Maine. I worked with a wide range of equipment to manage trees of all sizes. We worked on large state contracts, road maintenance, land clearing and shore land zone maintenance. While it is clearly important to thoroughly understand the methods for safe and effective tree removal and pruning, my goal is to preserve, plant and care for the trees of our community.

“A society grows great when old men plant trees the shade of which they know they will never sit in.” Henderson

This will be the first article in a monthly column I'd like to call Tree Notes. I want to use it to illuminate different tree issues and concerns in our community to foster a better understanding and inspire a sense of stewardship of our wonderful green spaces.

Yarmouth Community Services and the Tree Advisory Committee recently completed the significant task of treating hundreds of our Ash trees along the right of way for the dreaded Emerald Ash Borer. The work was completed by Bartlett Tree Company. They did a thorough job of preparing these trees to fend off these shiny green pests. We hope that the treatment lasts for three years so that we can continue to enjoy these majestic ash specimens like the ones lining Main Street in front of North Yarmouth Academy.



The hemlock wooly adelgid, HWA, has become a serious concern for our hemlock trees here in Yarmouth. We have received several calls from concerned citizens. This little white wooly critter lives and breeds on the underside of the small needles of the hemlock tree, feeding on the sap. Once seriously infested, the tree will fall into decline and die within



a few seasons. There are several ways to treat these little pests. Neem oil would be the most eco friendly treatment. Imidacloprid and Dinotefuran are also used to control HWA. There is a biological control method using a beetle the size of a poppy seed. The Maine Forest Service is currently working on pilot programs, but the beetles are very expensive and take time to propagate. Application of any of these products is best left to the professionals. Please, take the time to research these options and consult with a reputable tree company to determine what may work best for your hemlock trees.

Some of you may have noticed large amounts of heavy logs and debris piling up on the East Elm Street dam over the last few years. We can thank Scott Dugas Excavation and Hawkes Tree Service for making this cleanup happen. Head down to the Royal River park and have a look at their handy work. They did a great job restoring that natural beauty, but also allowing anadromous species unfettered access to our newly refurbished fish ladder.



Thank you for this opportunity,

Scott Couture
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