

Invite Birds to Your Yard

Would you like to get closer to nature? Put up a bird feeder!

Birds are wonderful to watch, especially in winter. Birds provide bright flashes of color, wonderful songs and curious movements. It's a fun activity for everyone in the family.

Now is the time to take action. It's getting cold outside and birds are looking for a warm place with food to stay warm. Here are a few tips:

Get a Variety of Feeder Boxes.

The traditional feeder box mounted on a pole will attract most birds; this is the best feeder to get if you get only one. You can attract a wider variety of birds by adding other feeders. Nylon-covered wire cages filled with suet will attract woodpeckers and chickadees (*shown*). Hanging feeders will attract finches.

Keep It Safe. Mount feeders at least 5 feet high to discourage cats and other predators. Trees or shrubs should be nearby to provide shelter. Keep feeders at least 10 feet away from branches that may be used as jump-off points by cats and squirrels.

Get A Front-Row Seat. Place the feeder near a window where you can sit and watch the birds. Place the feeder within 3 feet of, or more than 30 feet from a window. Birds that strike a window from a short distance are less likely to get hurt.

Provide Good Food. Black-oil sunflower and white proso millet



A feeding station will bring the wonders of wildlife to your home.

seeds are highly desired by birds, rich in calories and provide the best value. Cracked corn and safflower are useful additions to a mix. Niger thistle is often used in hanging feeders. Avoid mixes with wheat, millet, oats and rice. Birds pick through these mixes, making a mess.

Give Them Water. All creatures need water to survive. Choose a bath with a rough surface, gentle slope, and no more than 2–3 inches deep. Add branches or stones that emerge from the water to let birds drink without getting wet. Keep the bath full. Thermostatically controlled heaters will keep water from freezing.

More Tips. Buy seed in bulk to save money. Make a commitment to

feed birds all winter or don't feed them at all. Clean the feeder regularly. Close the feeder temporarily if hawks become a threat. Baffles may be placed on poles below feeders to deter squirrels. Weight-sensitive perches on "squirrel-proof" feeders can deter squirrels and blackbirds. Go to FeederWatch.org for more tips.

Inside This Issue

- ◆ Bird Feeding Tips 1
- ◆ Vulnerable to Ash Borer 2
- ◆ Plant Health Care
 - ◆ Fruits & Veggies, Flowers 3
 - ◆ Trees & Shrubs, Lawns 4
- ◆ Weather Almanac 5

What If EAB Came to Your Town?

Emerald ash borer (EAB) continues to spread across North America and toward us. The pest was detected this year in Sioux Falls and Winnipeg.

Will it spread to North Dakota? Yes. When EAB enters, its presence will be sporadic at first. Our bitter cold winters will slow its spread. We will combat EAB, but this is a powerful pest—it's killed hundreds of millions of ash trees.

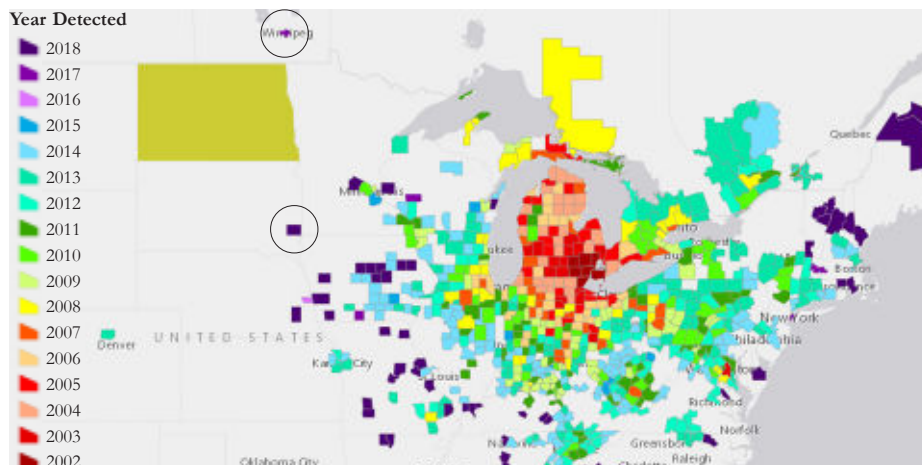
What if EAB came to your town? Would it really make a difference?

Absolutely. Last week I learned about a new tool that can help us understand the potential impact of an EAB invasion. An inventory of trees in public places (for example, boulevards, parks and schools) in 97 small- and medium-sized towns was completed and is available at <http://ndcitytrees.org>. Click on the 'Explore Cities' button to find your town. Privately owned trees were not included in the survey.

This online inventory reinforces our vulnerability to EAB. Ash trees make up over 40% of the public trees in most of these towns. In some towns (Abercrombie, Ashley, Buffalo, Carrington, Cooperstown, Grafton, Langdon, Mayville, McClusky, McVile, Michigan and Rolla), over 60% of their public trees are ash (see aerial photos at right). Imagine what would happen if EAB invaded there! It will be devastating—and costly.

A good mix of trees is important. It's preferable that no more than 20% of trees in a town are of the same family. This limits the impact of any pest or disease (like EAB or Dutch elm disease) creating severe havoc.

Our vulnerability to EAB calls us to be vigilant in the detection of the pest. First signs include dying back of



Emerald ash borer was detected in Michigan in 2002 and continues to spread, albeit sporadically in recent years (purple counties). The pest has not been detected in North Dakota (gold) but was detected this year in Winnipeg and Sioux Falls (circled).

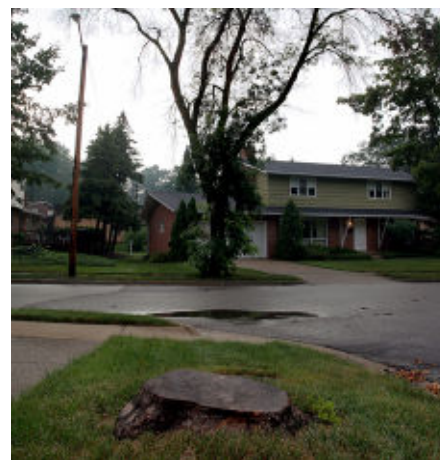


Inventories of trees in Buffalo (left) and Cooperstown (right). Each dot is a tree on public property. Dark orange dots are ash trees. Over 75% of public trees in these towns are at risk of dying from emerald ash borer; greater diversity is needed.

the crown, lots of woodpecker activity, increased suckering along the main stem, and D-shaped exit holes in the trunk.

Communities are encouraged to increase the diversity of tree plantings. Oak, hackberry, Kentucky coffeetree, honeylocust, corktree, ironwood, buckeye and Japanese tree lilac are examples of good alternatives, depending on site.

For more information, download *Emerald Ash Borer Biology and Integrated Pest Management in ND (Publ. E1634)*.



Streets in North Dakota may someday be full of stumps and dying ash trees.

Plant Health Care

Fruits & Vegetables



Asparagus Ferns

Ferns may be left over winter to collect snow and increase soil moisture. Trim at ground level and remove in March before new growth begins. Disease-infected ferns should be removed now.



Clean Under Fruit Trees

Rake and remove fallen leaves and fruits in the orchard. This debris may become the source of diseases and insect pests next year. Beware of wasps when picking up fallen fruits.



Clean the Garden

Remove or deeply bury any diseased plants or fruits in the garden. This will reduce the likelihood of infection next year.



Sooty Blotch

Rub these fungal blotches off the fruit surface; the apples are edible. Prune trees next March to increase sunlight and air movement in the canopy. Fungicides will prevent this.



Protect Young Trees

Place white tree guards around trunks of young fruit trees. This prevents the bark from cracking and protects it against wildlife damage.

Flowers



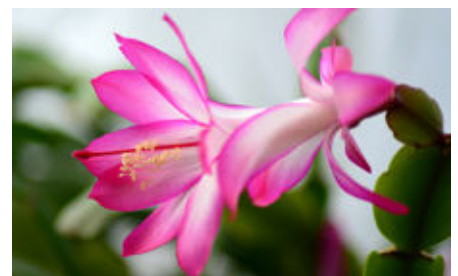
Plant Alliums, Other Bulbs

You can plant bulbs until the soil freezes. The flower bud is already inside the bulb. The bigger the bulbs, the better. Plant in clumps of six or more bulbs for impact. Add slow-release bulb fertilizer. Irrigate. Mulch when soil freezes.



Mulch Tender Flowers

Apply 4–6 inches of straw after the ground freezes this month. This mulching will insulate plants from extreme temps, prevent premature sprouting, and keep the soil stable during freezing/thawing cycles.

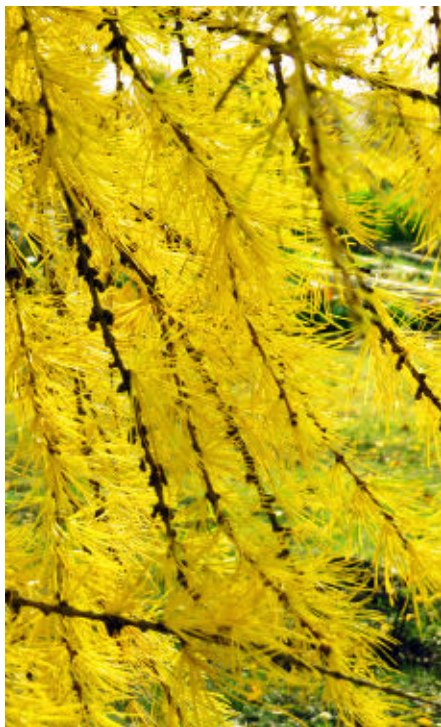


Holiday Cactus

Its delicate blooms drop easily; handle carefully. Keep plants out of drafts. This cactus is native to rainforests (not deserts), and it likes humidity. Allow the soil to dry slightly between waterings (like most houseplants).

Plant Health Care

Trees & Shrubs



Golden Larch

The showiest “evergreen” in fall is the one that isn’t green. It’s the larch a.k.a. tamarack. Its green needles turn gold in fall and drop to the ground. The barren branches look dead over winter—ugly!—but will awaken in spring with new green needles.



Irrigate Evergreens

Irrigate evergreens to fill needles with water. This prevents needle tips from drying (*shown*) due to winds and glaring solar rays over winter. Young, wind-exposed trees are most sensitive.



Rake Under Pines?

Do not rake fallen needles under evergreens unless the needles have disease. Needles enrich the soil, moderate temperatures and conserve moisture under the tree.



Rough Bullet Galls on Oak

Each gall was a chamber that sheltered a developing wasp. The wasp exited in fall when it matured. Empty gall shells may persist on trees for 5 years. Bullet galls are usually harmless, but clusters can stunt growth. Pick off galls, if feasible.



Black Knot on Chokecherry

Prune out knots, going 6+ inches below the knot, in winter. The fungus spreads easily in wind and rain and its widespread presence in neighborhoods makes infections in the future likely. Some universities recommend spraying trees with fungicides when buds break in spring.

Lawns



Trim Your Lawn

A tall turf attracts voles (*shown with its damage*) and becomes more susceptible to mold. Cut your lawn at a normal height or slightly lower (1.5–2.0 inches).



Mulching Leaves

Shred leaves with your mower. The lawn will not suffocate from the mulched leaves as long as you can see the grass blades after mowing. Thick layers of leaves must be raked.



Dormant Seeding

Filling in bare spots? Seed may be sown now in flat, sheltered areas. This seed will sprout in spring. Sow seed, lightly incorporate in soil, and irrigate once.

Weather Almanac for October 2018

Site	TEMPERATURE ¹				RAINFALL ^{1,4}				GROWING DEGREE DAYS ^{1,5}			
	October				October		2018		October		2018	
	Avg	Norm	Max	Min	Total	Norm	Total	Norm	Total	Norm	Total	Norm
Bottineau	36	42	76	6	1.01	1.25	10.64	14.48	57	74	2190	2153
Bowman	40	44	72	14	0.94	1.38	12.59	12.68	104	103	2252	2270
Carrington	39	44	75	16	1.30	1.77	10.91	17.08	53	98	2390	2340
Crosby	38	41	73	14	1.23	1.11	9.89	12.65	64	65	2171	1998
Dickinson	42	43	72	16	0.91	1.27	13.99	14.16	105	117	2385	2267
Fargo	40	46	74	21	2.29	2.15	18.78	18.14	35	96	2719	2489
Grafton	38	43	76	8	2.62	1.98	15.56	17.64	32	81	2338	2177
Grand Forks	39	43	76	12	2.93	1.97	17.33	17.22	31	76	2442	2219
Hazen	40	46	74	14	1.03	1.38	10.74	14.41	93	142	2351	2508
Hillsboro	39	45	75	14	3.53	2.17	17.76	17.85	37	81	2482	2340
Jamestown	39	44	73	15	1.37	1.69	20.33	16.64	47	80	2296	2298
Langdon	36	40	72	13	1.72	1.49	11.41	16.68	27	43	2047	1830
Mandan	41	44	71	15	1.69	1.37	16.81	15.44	89	102	2467	2336
Minot	39	43	75	14	1.10	1.41	10.40	14.72	66	65	2325	2099
Mott	40	44	71	12	0.73	1.28	10.46	13.39	103	125	2377	2371
Rugby	37	42	75	13	0.91	1.18	11.19	16.10	55	80	2251	2155
Wahpeton	40	47	72	19	1.82	2.39	18.13	19.14	37	106	2655	2608
Watford City	41	43	74	18	0.56	1.03	10.11	12.09	90	101	2365	2260
Williston	41	46	72	17	0.78	0.97	11.84	12.00	87	134	2362	2571
Wishek	39	44	70	13	1.07	1.61	15.25	14.33	55	82	2311	2122

DAYLENGTH (Nov 1, McClusky, center of ND)²

Sunrise: 8:25 AM Daylength: 10h 1m
 Sunset: 6:26 PM Change since Oct 1: -1h 42m

LONG-TERM OUTLOOKS³

Nov 8–12: Temp.: Below Normal; Precip.: Above Normal
 Nov 10–16: Temp.: Below Normal; Precip.: Above Normal

^{1,2,3} Sources: North Dakota Agricultural Weather Network, www.sunrisesunset.com, and National Weather Service, respectively.

^{4,5} Rain data begin April 1. GDDs for garden vegetables are not available. GDD data in this table are for corn, which responds to temperature as most vegetables grown in gardens. Data begin May 1 with base minimum and maximum temperatures of 50 and 86°F, respectively.

Credits

Sources:

Craven, S., D. Drake and J. Nack. 2007. Bird feeding: Tips for beginners and veterans. Publ. 3176. University of Wisconsin-Extension.

Project FeederWatch. 2018. Cornell Lab of Ornithology. <https://feederwatch.org>

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Written by Tom Kalb, who expresses gratitude to the NDSU educators who contributed to this report: Lezlee Johnson, Breana Kiser and Joe Zeleznik.

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