

Title: Forest Pest Outreach Survey Project- Raising Awareness

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Abstract:

Invasive insects and diseases can wreak a terrible toll on native tree populations. The general public can have a significant impact on the distribution of these pests but they need to know how to identify them, and what actions should be taken to prevent introduction and spread.

The initial steps of this project were completed in 2016 with the train-the-trainer events and subsequent training of the public to occur in 2017.

Background and justification:

Invasive species are non-native species that can cause harm to the environment, the economy or to human health. Invasives come from all around the world: as international trade increases, so does the rate of invasive species introductions. Invasive species are one of the greatest threats to New York's biodiversity. Invasive species that affect forests cause or contribute to habitat degradation and loss, the loss of native fish, wildlife and tree species, and the loss of recreational opportunities and income (NYS DEC 2017)

The NYS IPM Program and the Garden-Based Learning Program recently teamed up and conducted training for Insect Identification and Late Blight of Tomatoes. This type of train the trainer program is a very powerful system as the Educators and Master Gardeners are empowered and encouraged to develop their own outreach programs, which are therefore regionally specific and appropriate to the audiences. For this project, Master Naturalists and Master Foresters will join with Master Gardeners to help educate the public on current and potential forest pests and how to avoid their spread.

Objectives:

The overall objective of the project is to educate the public to prevent the spread of forest pests (insects and diseases).

The specific objective of this portion of the project is to provide training and resources to Cornell Cooperative Extension Educators in a train-the-trainer setting so that they can educate the public. This also includes volunteers in the Master Gardener, Master Forester, and Master Naturalist programs.

Creating focus groups of Cornell Cooperative Extension Educators to ensure the program meets educators' needs.

Activities

1. The initial meeting with Cornell Cooperative Extension Educators was a face-to-face presentation and discussion session at the 2016 Agriculture, Food and Environmental Systems In-Service training on November 3, 2016. As this event brings many CCE educators together, it was considered a good venue. Thirteen educators who are interested in the training attended.
2. As a means of collaboration and collection of resources, an electronic Box file was created. This allows us to archive recorded meetings and documents to minimize the effect of scheduling issues.
3. Two follow-up conference calls were held (11/28/16 and 12/21/16) to discuss potential locations and pests to consider, to clarify the clientele group for the training, and to discuss the agenda for the training. The final agenda may vary somewhat for each location but will include training on identification and breakout sessions for groups to practice training others on forest pests.
4. Additional groups have shown interest in the training programs. Staff from DEC and regional PRISMs

Outcomes

Identification of CCE educators taking the lead for each region (see information below)

Identification of sites for train-the-trainer programs

Creation of a master list of pests that can be included in the training

Collating/creating resources for the 5-10 most relevant pests (based on discussion with NYS Department of Ag and Markets) to allow each region to choose those they wish to use for outreach and education;

Current broad list of insects for project. Each regional training will choose 3-5 to cover in training but others will also be available.

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid

Emerald Ash Borer
Oak wilt
Brown Marmorated Stinkbug?
Spotted lantern fly
Asian earthworm (invasive)
Velvet longhorned beetle
Asian longhorned beetle
Southern pine beetle
Pine shoot beetle
Sirex wood wasp?
Sudden oak death
Balsam woolly adelgid
Brown spruce longhorned beetle
Spotted wing drosophila ?
Winter moth
Beech bark disease
Thousand cankers of walnut
Winter moth
Asian earthworm
Spruce needlecast – Rhizosphaera?
White pine issues?
Norway spruce gall midge
Gypsy moth
Asian gypsy moth
Pine shoot beetle
Viburnum leaf beetle
Dogwood anthracnose
Nun moth not yet in N America

Resources created will include 'cover sheets' for each pest with quick information for CCE Master Volunteers to use with the public. Additional resources can be included. The intent is to use existing resources rather than recreating them.

'Cover sheets' include:

Name of pest – common and scientific
Pathway of introduction
How to ID pest
Host list and damage examples
Location/range of pest in NY or neighboring areas
Who do I tell?
Other resources

Holding a minimum of 5 regional training programs in the regions most relevant to the project but with intent to reach most of the 50 counties that

have Master Gardener/Naturalist/Forester programs (for the past programs 40-50 people have been trained in each program);

Regional trainings in 2017 are planned for:

Capital District

March 22nd CCE Saratoga

Local lead organizer: Laurel Gailor

Counties in Region: Albany, Clinton, Essex, Franklin, Fulton, Hamilton, Montgomery, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady, Warren, Washington

Finger Lakes Region - South

March 30th CCE Broome

Local lead organizers: Kevin Mathers, Linda Svoboda, Barb Neal (Tioga)

Counties in Region: Allegany, Broome, Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Chemung, Chenango, Cortland, Schuyler, Steuben, Tioga, Tompkins

Lower Hudson Valley

April 7th Teatown Reservation, Ossining NY

Local lead organizer: Jen Stengle

Counties in Region: Columbia, Delaware, Dutchess, Greene, Orange, Otsego, Putnam, Rockland, Schoharie, Sullivan, Ulster, Westchester

Western NY Region

TBD CCE Erie

Local lead organizer: Sharon Bachman, Emily Staychock

Counties in Region: Erie, Genesee, Niagara, Ontario, Orleans, Livingston, Monroe, Seneca, Wayne, Wyoming, Yates

Finger Lakes Region - North

April State Fairgrounds

Local lead organizer: Kristina Ferrare, Paul Hetzler

Counties in Region: Cayuga, Herkimer, Jefferson, Lewis, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Oswego, St. Lawrence

Conference calls to identify the pests covered, finalize the agenda, and determine invited speakers for each location will be held in early 2017.