

# In the shade

Thanks,  
Kevin  
and  
Guy!



NEWSLETTER OF THE ISA TEXAS CHAPTER

Vol. 40, No. 2

July, 2016





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## In the Shade

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## Board Nominations Open til July 22

Always wanted to be on the ISA Texas Board of Directors or know someone you think would be a great director? Nominations for the ISA Texas Board of Directors are now open.

Download a form at:

<http://bit.ly/ISATNominationsForm>.

Nominations close July 22, so don't delay.

## ON THE COVER

Kevin Bassett (l) and Guy LeBlanc at the 2016 TTCC. This dynamic duo has been in charge of TTCC for many years, but next year they're handing the ropes over to Markus Smith and Jim Dossett. Thanks for everything, Kevin and Guy, you're truly two of a kind.

*Photo by John Giedraitis.*

## PRESIDENT'S LETTER by Vincent Debrock



**G**uess what? Summer is here. Guess what else is (almost) here? The International Tree Conference in Ft. Worth. Undoubtedly the biggest event in our industry this year, and we all know everything is bigger in Texas: we just need to show that to the rest of the world, so please be there and show some Texas hospitality. Find all the details on our website ([ISATexas.com](http://ISATexas.com)) or the ISA website ([bit.ly/ISAConferenceInfo](http://bit.ly/ISAConferenceInfo)).

We also just had the first new oak wilt qualification workshop, based on our old certification program but now better lined up with ISA standards and ready to roll out. We are now ready to offer it yearly or more if the demand is there.

In the last few years, the board has received a lot of requests related to promotion and awareness of ISA Certified Arborists to the public. We have listened and are starting a new program that will hopefully make a significant impact for our membership. We are starting with baby steps to test the waters, as any statewide marketing program is beyond the budget of our association.

As you may have noticed, our new website has a "find a commercial arborist" page, with Google map location of all companies that sign up for being listed, at a cost of \$100 per location, available only to companies that have on staff a Certified Arborist who is also a member of our chapter. This page is, since June 2016, being actively promoted by a professional marketing firm, the Berry company/ Local Vox, by active SEO, as well as by the dissemination of Certified Arborist-related content over the web and social media in all the major Texas markets. As this campaign establishes over the next year, we should show an exponential increase in awareness of the value of ISA Certified Arborists.

We are hoping that the "find a commercial arborist" listing fee can help finance the campaign beyond the budget we currently have allocated, especially if our monitoring shows positive results.

Hoping to see you all—I'm sorry, hoping to see all ya'll—in Ft. Worth to welcome the world of arboriculture to our great state.

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# Hands-On Learning and Networking at ISA's Annual International Conference

The ISA Annual International Conference is coming up soon. Be sure to pre-register to save on conference registration rates. Use the savings to head to Ft. Worth early and attend the three-day Exploring Tree Anatomy Workshop (<http://bit.ly/AnatomyWkshp>) or attend one of the Tree Academy Workshops (<http://bit.ly/AcademyWkshp>).

**Rangers Game:** While in Ft. Worth, don't forget to attend the events hosted by the Texas Chapter. We'll be attending a Rangers game on Saturday after the weekend workshops. Tickets are \$40 in advance or \$50 at the conference. Included is transportation from the Convention Center to the stadium, center field seating and Captains Cash for drinks and food. Fun for all! Only 50 seats, so sign up today! Buy tickets at <http://bit.ly/TXRangerTickets>.

**TREE Fund After Hours:** All 2016 ISA Conference registrants are invited to join us for Texas-sized fun at TREE Fund After Hours, Monday, August 15, 5:30 – 7 pm in the Aisle 500 Food and Beverage Area on the trade show floor. Admission is free and includes appetizers and a cash bar. Get more information at the TREE Fund website.

Arborist App Share • Mini-Auction • Golden Ticket Raffle • Raise Your Hand for Research • Heads or Tails (Aggies vs. Longhorns) • New owner of Quadwheel® announced. Don't miss it!



**Texas Chapter Reception:** Finally, the Texas Chapter is also hosting a reception for all conference attendees on Tuesday from 7–11 pm. Join us for our annual Texas community forestry and arboricultural awards presentation and awesome door prizes. Cocktails, music, and snacks provided by ISA Texas. Raffle and two drink tickets will be distributed at the door, first come, first served.

**Links to more information:** Check out these and all other conference activities at <http://bit.ly/AddlActivities>. Make the most of your conference experience by attending these additional networking opportunities.

Visit the ISA website to review the schedule (<http://bit.ly/FtWorthSchedule>) and educational program (<http://bit.ly/FtWorthEdu>) details.

Download the conference app (<http://eventmobi.com/isa2016/>) to create your own customizable conference schedule and follow us on Facebook and Twitter (@ISArboriculture, #ISAfortworth). See you in Ft. Worth!



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## Driving Safety Note: Be an Exact Driver

by Steve White, Davey Resource Group,  
Austin

We know driving in today's traffic exposes us to the constant danger of damage to ourselves and to our vehicles. I have no idea how many driving hours I've spent trying to discover the key to staying out of wrecks, and worse.

I've discovered the answer: Exact Driving.

This is easy to understand when you consider the opposite of Exact Driving: It is Sloppy Driving.

That's it.

Exact Driving is following all the rules, exactly: Turn signals for every turn and lane change. Proper distances before turn signals. No crossing white lines. Constant, intense use of mirrors to absolutely know what is going on outside your truck/car. There are pages of other rules in the Texas Drivers Handbook to follow. That's it. All of them. Follow all of them!!!! You know what they are.

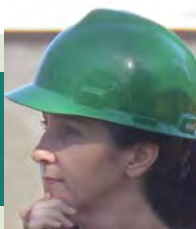
It will only take you seconds of using this method to spot the scads of other drivers that are driving Sloppy. Find them. See them. Avoid them. Don't be one of them.

Ditch the phone and pay attention to the most hazardous task we all do every day. Be an Exact Driver!!! ■



## EDITOR'S NOTE

by Rebecca Johnson



Well summer is here, and things are heating up in Texas. The saying has always been "summertime and the livin' is easy" but that's not true for Texas arborists. Especially this summer.

First the bad news. Texas A&M Forest Service announced that emerald ash borer (EAB) was detected within Texas for the first time. Four adult beetles were found in a trap and positively identified as EAB in May. While it's not a surprise that they're here, it's still disheartening. Now is the time to start educating yourself and your clients about options—whether it's treatment or removal. Also crapemyrtle bark scale (CMBS) has been confirmed to be expanding its food palate and attacking American beautyberry now. Find more information on both of these insects in this issue.

But there is good news. We had an amazing Texas Tree Climbing Championship in New Braunfels this May and had our first women competitors ever in a Texas competition. Star Hansen and Candace Matthews both had great climbs and qualified for the Masters' Challenge.

And still to come is the ISA International Conference in Ft. Worth in August. If you haven't already registered, do it now. Don't forget to check out all the great workshops leading up to the conference and the additional activities during the conference. There are lots of great opportunities for networking; be sure to take advantage of as many as possible. Check out ISA's website for more information: <http://bit.ly/FtWorthSchedule>.

Also, nominations are now open for the ISA Texas Board of Directors. If you've always wanted to be more involved with ISA Texas this is your chance; there are three slots open for three-year terms.

Nominate yourself or someone else, but do it quick; the deadline is July 22. Nominations forms can be found and downloaded at <http://bit.ly/ISATNominationsForm>.



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## EVENTS

### July 8

Certified Tree Worker Aerial Lift Exam  
Givens Park, E. 12 St., Austin  
Misti Perez, 512-965-1076

### August 12

Certified Arborist Exam  
ISA International Conference, Ft. Worth  
Misti Perez, 512-965-1076

### August 13-17

ISA International Conference, Ft. Worth  
See conference schedule at  
<http://bit.ly/FtWorthSchedule>

### August 25

Certified Arborist Exam  
Tyler  
Misti Perez, 512-965-1076

### September 9 - September 30

Certified Arborist Test Preparation Course  
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San Antonio Botanical Garden, 555 Funston  
Emma Trester-Wilson, SABG, 210-829-5360

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# Texas Tree Climbing Championship 2016

by Kevin Bassett,  
TTCC Chair,  
retired

Wednesday May 18<sup>th</sup> was our event setup and site preparation for this year's TTCC. We had a great crew, with Guy LeBlanc directing the effort.

In spite of continuous hard rain, Thursday May 19<sup>th</sup> was our arborist seminar featuring Phillip Kelley of North American Training Solutions. Kelly Eby had the foresight to reserve the Landa Haus for us. The beams in the ceiling allowed Phillip to do a great aerial rescue training in the morning and to pass on some information about chainsaw maintenance, safety, and use in the afternoon. Unfortunately, due to the weather we were not able to go out and cut on some trees.

Friday May 20<sup>th</sup> the weather cooperated for the running of the preliminary events at Cypress Bend Park. We were graced with our first two women competitors in many years. Both of these ladies earned the opportunity to attempt a Masters' climb under the rules. I hope they, and even more women in arboriculture, will continue to participate in this event. They both did a great job.

We also raced chainsaws with our sponsor Stihl/Blue Mountain, and I would like to extend a special thank you to Matt Rose and the guys from Stihl who made this event work. Stihl also provided saws for us to use during Thursday's seminar and some great prizes for the winner in the stock saw competition.

Another special feature of the TTCC is that we allow out-of-chapter climbers to participate. They add a lot to the competition and over the years we have had several out-of-chapter competitors go on and win the ITCC. These include current champion James Kilpatrick, and recent ITCC champions James Earhart and Scott Forrest. I believe that the addition of these top caliber climbers really enhances the exchange of new ideas and climbing techniques and is a key reason for Texas arborists to attend and compete with some of the world's best.

Saturday May 21<sup>st</sup> was the day for our Masters' Challenge final. Along with this event, we also had a great Arbor Fair, which included a recreational climb. Phillip Shultze from the Lady Bird Johnson Wildflower Center was the leader

in getting a whole new generation of tree climbers started in the on-rope experience. Kelly Eby with City of New Braunfels put together a great group of organizations who work to improve our environment. We should continue to make outreach to the larger community a part of the event. In the future I hope a Tree Fair Chairperson will be appointed to organize and run the Tree Fair and co-ordinate with the TTCC to grow the entire event and bring more of the general public into the mix.

We had seven climbers in the Masters' Challenge this year: the top four men from the chapter competition, the two women competitors who earned the right to attempt the Masters' climb, and an out-of-chapter-contestant who was the one of the top climbers in the preliminary events.

Jimmy Prichard was the top point earner in the preliminaries, followed by Miguel Pastenes, Abram Zies, and Otoneil Sanchez. Matt Starks earned the out-of-chapter slot, and the two women competitors were Candace Matthews and Star Hansen. Miguel managed to come out on top and won his ninth TTCC Championship. Abram Zies was second, followed by Otoneil Sanchez and Jimmy Prichard. Star Hansen is our first women's champion and has earned her way into the NATCC this year and into the ITCC in 2017. Candace had a very good climb going but unfortunately was unable to finish due to a dropped piece of equipment.

Next year, I expect these two women and maybe some others will battle once again for the right to represent Texas in the NATCC and the ITCC. The women climbers at these events have been waiting a long time to welcome a Texas woman into their group. They will encourage Star and help her become a more confident and skilled climber. The ITCC women climbers have made incredible strides in their performance at the ITCC to the point where they compete at a technical level equal to the men. I expect to see the same growth in the women climbers in Texas.

Matt Starks' Masters' climb was a demonstration climb and as such provided Matt with some valuable experience to take forward into future competitions at the Mid-Western Chapter and to the NATCC regional and ITCC. ►





# TTCC Winners

## Men's competition

Aerial Rescue  
1st: Jimmy Prichard  
2nd: Miguel Pastenes  
3rd: Otoneil Sanchez

Work Climb  
1st : Abram Zies  
2nd: Miguel Pastenes  
3rd: Jimmy Prichard

Belayed Speed Climb  
1st: Miguel Pastenes  
2nd: Jimmy Prichard  
3rd: Nick Salter

Throwline  
1st: Jimmy Prichard  
2nd: Andrew Machuca  
3rd: Vicente Pena-Molina

Secured Footlock  
1st: Miguel Pastenes  
2nd: Jimmy Prichard  
3rd: Abram Zies

Masters' Challenge  
1st: Miguel Pastenes  
2nd: Abram Zies  
3rd: Otoneil Sanchez  
4th: Jimmy Prichard

## Women's competition

Belayed Speed Climb  
1st: Candace Matthews  
2nd: Star Hansen

Work Climb  
1st: Star Hansen  
2nd: Candace Matthews

Masters' Challenge  
1st: Star Hansen  
2nd: Candace Matthews



Congratulations to the winners! Front: Otoneil Sanchez. Back (l to r) Star Hansen, Candace Matthews, Jimmy Prichard, Abram Zies and Miguel Pastenes.

## New Leadership for the TTCC

Now it is time for a new regime to take the leadership of the event. The new chair, with ISA Texas board approval, will be Markus Smith. I hope everyone will continue to volunteer and give Markus all the help which has been given to me. The new head judge will be Jim Dossett. The head judge is responsible for putting together the judging and technician teams for each of the five events as well as the Masters' Challenge final. The new head technician will be Jackson McIntosh. These three men form the leadership team for the TTCC. Please let them know they have your support and give them the confidence that you will honor any commitments you make to help them out. Loyalty is a two-way street.

So, from the bottom of my heart to all y'all: thank you for your commitment and unselfish participation. I hope more of the chapter's members will become active in the TTCC and consider making a commitment to this event as well as NATCC and the ITCC. I have been blessed to be able to do so.

By making that commitment, I have been able to travel all over the United States and the world. I have been unbelievably fortunate to make friends and get to know most of the top arborists from around the world. Looking back, it has been an amazing adventure and I have made many friends who, like me, love trees and pursue excellence in arboriculture.

This event is much bigger than a mere competition for bragging rights. It has driven safety improvements and improvements in equipment. It has spawned new climbing techniques and been a driving force in making tree care an honorable occupation. Every dollar spent and every minute volunteered has been repaid in multiples. I would not want back one single minute of the time invested in these competitions. As a climber, technician, judge, chapter liaison to the ITCC, and chapter chair, I have had a wonderful career of volunteering for these events. Now, it is time for younger men and women to pick up the torch. A foundation has been laid, yet there is much left to accomplish. Together ISA Texas members will continue to make the TTCC simply the best.

With great humility and my deepest heartfelt thanks to all who have helped me over these many years, hasta la vista. ■



# Thanks to everybody who makes the TTCC a great event

by Kevin Bassett, TTCC Chair, retired

## The Volunteers

Thanks to our great setup crew: Guy LeBlanc, Nicolas Martinez, Nevic Donnelly, Jim Carse, James Tuttle, Phil Kelley, Jackson McIntosh, Curtis Hopper, Clint Taylor, Keith Babberney and Bill Koenig.

Special thanks to Bryan White and Kirsten Schneider who do the thankless but most important job of scoring for the TTCC. It is a tough job. If you see these individuals please remember to thank them for their time and effort. They seldom have the time to go watch an event. Each of them has my sincere thanks and admiration for a job flawlessly done for many years! Our event photographer Margaret Spencer has done a great job of documenting the event for many years. Thanks, Margaret!

There is a group of Texas arborists who donate time, personnel and money to



cover some of the expenses for the TTCC. These include: James Tuttle, Tree Loving Care, Lubbock; Keith Brown, Austin Tree Experts, Austin; Nevic Donnelly, Texas Tree and Land Company—They Might be Monkeys, Austin; and Steve Houser, Arborilogical Services, Dallas.



It takes a small army to organize and put on this event. All the technicians, judges and other volunteers are indispensable. They jump in and unselfishly provide their expertise, time, and skills to make TTCC one



of the very best chapter events anywhere. When you see these people, give them a hearty handshake and a sincere thank you. It has been a great honor for me to work with all of these wonderful arborists.

Special thanks to our head judge, Guy LeBlanc, and head tech, Jim Dossett. Due to the care taken to set up the events and put forward a safety-first attitude, the Texas Chapter continues to have a flawless safety record. We must continue this tradition!

I would also like to recognize a couple of awards which have become traditional:

*The Spirit of the Competition* award. This year's honoree is Matt Starks of the Mid-Western Chapter. This award is voted on by the event teams.

*The Outstanding Volunteer* award. I have selfishly appointed myself as the sole voter. This year, Curtis Hopper was outstanding in every way. He came ready to work. He did each rotten job I gave him and cheerfully came back for more! Thank you, Curtis, and congratulations on becoming one of our latest members to achieve the BCMA designation from the ISA.

Last but not least I want to thank two people in particular who carry out their duties with extraordinary efficiency and a great attitude. One is our Executive Director, John Giedraitis, and the other is Kirbie Houser. Without Kirbie—and you can trust me on this—we would not have had successful events these past four years. Designing and ordering the t-shirts for competitors, judges and volunteers; making sure we have food to eat; making sure clean restrooms are available; making sure I've done my job; and taking care of a myriad of details—Kirbie has been a driving force in making this event run, and run well.

## The Sponsors

The TTCC is blessed to have a hard core group of sponsors who attend year after year. The funds they provide and the support they give cannot be measured, but it is priceless. Special thanks to J.L. Matthews Company, Vermeer of Texas, Bandit of Texas, and Stihl Blue Mountain Equipment. Additionally, Tree Stuff provided an amazing pile of gear for the preliminary event winners.

Please remember these fine sponsors when you are making your purchasing decisions. They support this event and are loyal to Texas arborists and as we all know, loyalty is a two way street. Without them, all we would have for the winners would be an “atta boy ... atta girl,” a medal, and a smile with a handshake. ■







# ArborMaster® Climbing Kit Prize Package

Thanks to the following companies for the ArborMaster Climbing Kit Prize Package for the TTCC. The kit includes:

- Arborist Technical Helmet by Petzl,
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Miguel Pastenes is champion for the ninth time.



Climbing by the river at the TTCC in New Braunfels.





More TTCC scenes. Photos in this issue by Margaret Hall Spencer, John Giedraitis, Bill Green and Paul Johnson. To see more TTCC photos by John Giedraitis and Margaret Spencer go to: <http://isatexas.com/gallery/2016-texas-tree-climbing-championship/>.



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# Texas doctors start writing prescriptions for nature

by John R. Warner, CF, CA; Urban District Forester

This spring a shared vision became reality when the Conroe healthcare community, forestry professionals, project partners and families gathered to dedicate the new Nature Explore outdoor classroom at the Lone Star Family Health Center (LSFHC). It is the first classroom of its kind on site at a medical facility.

The Nature Explore program provides research-based learning opportunities for children by developing outdoor interactive classrooms. It is a collaborative program of US Forest Service, Arbor Day Foundation, National Environmental Education Foundation, and Dimensions Educational Research Foundation. There are 320 nationally certified Nature Explore classrooms.

The idea for the Conroe classroom began three years ago with a meeting of two forestry professionals—Dr. Tamberly Conway, US Forest Service, and John Warner, Texas A&M Forest Service—with two representatives of LSFHC—Dr. Daniel Porter, Medical Director of Family Medicine, and Marilyn Kasmiersky, Director of Professional and Government Relations.

The project eventually transformed 2,500 square feet of lawn into a hands-on classroom with winding path, footbridge, babbling creek, logs, tree cookies, tree stumps, native trees and grasses, and many more engaging areas.

More than 30 physicians at LSFHC are being trained in the science and research behind the project as well as the role the outdoor space will play as they write prescriptions for nature-oriented activity.

Dr. Porter understands that sometimes the best thing a physician can prescribe is a good dose of nature. He believes the physical and sensory experiences offered by this natural teaching space are the first steps in developing a more active ►



Ribbon cutting, with over 100 people attending the ceremony, recognized this space as the first in the nation to connect doctors and patients to a Nature Explore classroom.



and healthy lifestyle. Patients will also be encouraged to visit neighboring forested areas and green spaces like those found at W.G. Jones State Forest, Sam Houston National Forest, and Conroe City parks.

Getting patients actively engaged outdoors not only supports battling the youth obesity epidemic—due mainly to poor dietary choices and inactivity—but also addresses many psychological disorders like depression, attention deficit, and anxiety. LSFHC’s mental health section plans to utilize the sensory learning areas in the classroom.

These classrooms put research into practice,” said Susie Wirth, Arbor Day Foundation’s Nature Explore Outreach Director. “This project would not have been possible without the strong support of local community, national and state agencies, and many groups and organizations.”

Special thanks for providing leadership and professional guidance goes to Texas Society of American Foresters, Furr High School Green Institute and Green Ambassadors, ISA Texas, Texas A&M Forest Service’s Diversity Urban & Community Outreach Team, Boy Scouts of America Eagle Scout, Latino Legacy, and Friends of the National Forest & Grasslands in Texas.

A dedication ceremony and tree planting celebrated the new classroom on National Arbor Day, April 29. ■



A \$500 donation from the B. Koontz Fund, Texas Society of American Foresters, helped provide tree tags for all of the trees planted in the Nature Explore classroom.



Texas A&M Forest Service handed out containerized southern crabapple trees at the dedication ceremony.

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## Texas A&M Forest Service Confirms:

# Emerald Ash Borer Found in Texas



The invasive emerald ash borer (EAB) beetle that has killed tens of millions of ash trees across the U.S. has been detected in Texas. State and federal agencies are preparing people and communities with information, education and preventative measures to fight the pest.

Earlier this month, the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) and Texas A&M Forest Service (TFS)—agencies leading the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) EAB survey in the state—trapped four adult beetles in Harrison County just south of Karnack, Texas. Although the ash trees in the immediate vicinity of the trap did not exhibit symptoms of the pest, the USDA’s Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) laboratory confirmed the specimens were emerald ash borers. Efforts are underway to identify any infested trees.

Texas has anticipated the arrival of the EAB and has strategically placed beetle detection traps across the state for the past four years in an effort to provide an early warning if and when the invasive pest arrived.

“Early detection of this destructive pest minimizes its spread and enables us to effectively work with those affected by

providing information and science-based solutions to potential attacks,” said Texas A&M Forest Service Forest Health Coordinator Shane Harrington. “TFS is working with other state and federal agencies to ensure that the general public, home- and landowners know fact from fiction and what to look for when monitoring for EAB.”

The EAB is a destructive, non-native, wood-boring pest of ash trees and poses a significant threat to urban, suburban and rural forests, killing both stressed and healthy ash trees. The trees typically die two or three years after becoming infested. Native to Asia, the EAB was first discovered in southeast Michigan in 2002. Since then, infestations of this invasive pest have been found in 26 states and have killed tens of millions of ash trees.

In the United States, there are 16 ash species susceptible to attack. Texas is home to seven of these species. Ash trees make up less than 5 percent of rural Texas forestlands but comprise a large population of the state’s urban forests. TFS is working with APHIS, the Texas Department of Agriculture, and USFS, among other state and federal agencies, to implement a response plan.

The statewide plan includes monitoring

beetle movement, conducting educational campaigns, providing technical assistance in prevention, preparation and recovery, and working with regulatory agencies in considering and establishing quarantines in affected counties.

“The Texas Department of Agriculture, through our biosecurity program, is committed to defending Texans from invasive species like the EAB, which have the power to decimate our crops and landscapes,” Texas Agriculture Commissioner Sid Miller said. “Working together with Texas A&M Forest Service and our federal counterparts, we will implement a comprehensive response plan to tackle this threat to all Texans.”

TFS is also working with the state’s forest industry, rural landowners, urban communities and homeowners on detecting possible infestation and taking measures to slow the movement of the beetle. Measures of control include protecting ash trees through the use of insecticide tree injections and soil drenching, and bolstering the urban forests with other tree species not susceptible to the emerald ash borer.

“Proper planning can reduce the impact of EAB in our communities,” said TFS Urban and Community Forestry Program Coordinator Paul Johnson. “Removal of poor quality ash, planting trees that aren’t susceptible to EAB, and protecting high value ash by treating them will help us weather this attack. Work with a forester or an ISA Certified Arborist to help you assess your EAB risk and care for your trees.”

To learn more about EAB, please visit [www.emeraldashborer.info](http://www.emeraldashborer.info) and <https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/eab/>. Download the fact sheet and check out photos on Flickr.

Texas A&M Forest Service contacts:  
Shane Harrington, Forest Health Coordinator, [sharrington@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:sharrington@tfs.tamu.edu), 936-546-1470  
Paul Johnson, Urban & Community Forestry Coordinator, [pjohnson@tfs.tamu.edu](mailto:pjohnson@tfs.tamu.edu), 210-289-0815 ■



# An Understory of Poison Ivy

by Steve White, Davey Resource Group, Austin

I was recently performing a tree inventory in a 20-acre patch of thick woods in North Austin. The second thing I noticed was the extreme carpet and waist-high covering of poison ivy. The first was the sad situation of groups of homeless people living every day in the hidden protection of those dense woods. So sad. Poison ivy is a very nice looking plant with its deep green sheen, colorful petioles and attractive clumps of tiny berries. The person with no knowledge of the plant would be intrigued.

Well there I was, needing to walk all through those woods and all the time telling myself I can do this and not get 'poison ivy.' I've had it before, and it was bad, bad, bad. Torture. To say the least. So here I have some tips about how to handle the torturous plant and survive.

The plant contains a very light oily substance called urushiol. It performs like other oils in that it is hard to remove from our skin. It takes multiple washings with soap and hot water. The painful rash can be avoided if it is washed away soon after contact. The best option is to keep it off the skin. My partner and I walked all through those woods with arms in the air and carefully choosing paths that took us through the lowest levels of poison ivy. We were there for three hours and sometimes it was only possible to turn backwards to pass a few of those climbing vines.

As soon as we got out of the woods we went to a place with hot water and soap for an initial clean-up. After a 30-minute drive home, the clothes were carefully removed and dropped into a washing machine and another thorough soap and water washing took place. Boots were put outside in the sun for drying. No touching those, either.

The good part is I survived the potential agony. The reason is I knew how to identify the plant and knew how to not let it touch my skin. I also knew not to touch my clothes while I worked and always kept a keen eye as to where the plant was. Avoiding poison ivy is similar to avoiding bees: Identify. Stay away. Know what to do. ■





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# Crapemyrtle Bark Scale now feeding on native American beautyberry shrub

by Zaina Gates, Texas A&M Forest Service

Crapemyrtle Bark Scale (CMBS), *Eriococcus lagerstroemiae* or *Acanthococcus lagerstroemiae*, has been in Texas feeding on crapemyrtles for a little over 10 years. It has spread significantly from its initially reported location, the Dallas area, to East Texas, the Houston area, Central Texas, and South Texas.

Up to this point, it has been considered only a problem for its host species, the crapemyrtle. In its native range of Japan and China, CMBS has been reported on plants from 13 families including economically important crops such as soybean (*Glycine max*), apple (*Malus pumila*), brambles (*Rubus sp.*), boxwood (*Buxus sp.*), cleyera (*Ternstroemia japonica*), fig (*Ficus carica*), persimmon (*Diospyros kaki*), and pomegranate (*Punica granatum*), in addition to crapemyrtles, according to Mengmeng Gu.

While assisting the city of Texarkana with a tree inventory in July 2015, in the city parks, Zaina Gates, Urban Forester with Texas A&M Forest Service, noticed an American beautyberry shrub located near an infested crapemyrtle that appeared to be infested with CMBS.

Samples were collected and sent in for DNA testing. Both morphological and molecular identification confirmed that the scales found on native American beautyberry plants (*Callicarpa americana*, Verbenaceae) next to CMBS-infested crapemyrtles in Texarkana were indeed CMBS.

This is the first confirmed case of CMBS being found on

another species of tree in the US, according to Mike Merchant, PhD, BCE, professor and extension urban entomologist with Texas A&M Agrilife Extension Service. According to Mengmeng Gu, this would add the 14th to the existing 13 families reported with CMBS infestation internationally. The American native plants in three genera, *Celtis*, *Diospyros* and *Myrtus*, could very likely be potential hosts of CMBS.

There are so many examples of exotic pests (benign, not too harmful, or even useful at first glance) becoming invasive and causing significant economic and environmental impacts, that CMBS should be taken very seriously. According to Mengmeng Gu, “It was recognized among the top nine pests reported in the past two years by the *Greenhouse Grower* magazine and was listed as one of “key management arthropods.” In the most recent *Pest Management Strategic Plan for Container and Field-Produced Nursery Crops in FL, GA, KY, NC, SC, TN, and VA: Revision 2015* [(PMSP) coordinated by Southern Nursery Integrated Pest Management Working Group and funded by the Southern Region IPM Center] it was noted that “no biological control of the crapemyrtle bark scale is known.”

**Here's how you can help:** Report it at <http://www.eddmaps.org/> if you see something similar on crapemyrtles and ‘pink blood’ comes out when smashed. An educational session is being planned at TNLA EXPO in August to provide more information on this issue. ■





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April 6, 2016

Dear Mr. John Giedraitis,

My name is Madison Law and I am currently a sophomore in the Forestry Department at Stephen F. Austin State University. I am honored to have received the International Society of Arboriculture, Texas Chapter Scholarship.

I come from a small town in Texas called Montgomery that sits on the outskirts of Conroe. I have always enjoyed going to my local parks and reading outside in my neighborhood and city. I prefer the mix of urban settings and natural elements. This is the one of the reasons I want to be an urban forester; to bring nature to people and keep a healthy city with healthy plants.

Coming to SFASU and enrolling in the amazing forestry program has been a perfect fit for me, especially since I truly enjoy learning about forestry. I plan on graduating in two years and getting my degree in forestry with an emphasis in urban forestry. With this degree, I hope to go into personal tree care. Receiving this scholarship will help me advance my academic career in forestry as I work to achieve my goals and become an urban forester.

Again, thank you for honoring me with this scholarship.

Sincerely,  
Madison Law  
Junior, Urban Forestry Major



Madison receives the award from Maxwell Holmes, College Advisor, SFASU.



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## What's the Big IDea?

### Can you identify this Texas tree?



If you know this tree, look for the photo on our Facebook page and correctly identify it in the comment section under the photo, using the full scientific name and one or more common names. If you don't know it, check the page for an answer in a few days. The winner gets bragging rights and the chance to submit a tree to stump fellow arborists in the September issue.

*Hint: One of the common names refers to the fragrant smell of the wood when it is pruned.*

### May Winner



May's tree—Carolina buckthorn, *Frangula caroliniana*—was correctly identified by Kelly Eby, Urban Forester, New Braunfels.