

2007 Forest Health Highlights

New York



sugar
Maple

January 2008

The Resource

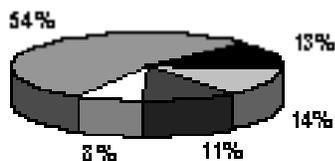
New York's forests provide a recreational base for millions of residents and others visiting the State's scenic regions. Forests are also productive in timber, providing employment to 2 percent of the State's workforce. The manufacture of wood products provides \$2.4 billion annually to the State's economy.

- 62% of the State is forested (18,641,300 acres)

Out of the forested area:

- 82.6% timberland
- 17.4% noncommercial or reserved forest land (data unpublished)

Major Forest Types:



- white/red pine/hemlock (13%)
- oak/hickory (14%)
- other (11%)
- elm/ash/red maple (8%)
- northern hardwoods (54%)

Special Issues

In February 2005, a significant forest health issue emerged with the identification of the **Sirex woodwasp**, *Sirex noctilio*. This new invasive pest of pines was the subject of an intensive Statewide trapping survey in 2007 and was detected in three new counties: Herkimer, Chemung, and Tompkins. Given the relatively low efficiency of the traps and lures currently available for *Sirex noctilio*, and the expansion of the trapping effort into neighboring States, it is not unlikely that other New York counties are also infested but escaped detection by trapping.

Forest tent caterpillar was again the most significant defoliator in New York in 2007. Approximately 194,000 acres were confirmed defoliated, with the most concentrated damage in Chenango, Cortland, and Delaware Counties. Scattered mortality of sugar maple was observed in the Catskills. About 12,000 acres were defoliated by **gypsy moth** in and around Delaware County.

The **Asian longhorned beetle** is still a major concern within the State. Cooperative efforts to eradicate the beetle from the quarantined areas in New York City and Long Island are ongoing, but progress is slow. The most significant findings in 2007 were infested trees on Prall's Island, a small uninhabited island in the Arthur Kill, and on nearby Staten Island in Richmond County. These findings resulted in a cooperative "rapid response" removal of hundreds of potential host trees and increased survey intensity on Staten Island.



The **hemlock woolly adelgid** continues to cause damage and mortality to native forest and ornamental eastern hemlock trees. Damage is most severe in areas that have been infested for several years in the Catskills and southeastern part of the State. In some areas a majority of the trees are infested and many of those are in declining health or dead. Pockets of hemlock mortality can be seen from the air in infested areas. No new counties were found to be infested in 2007, but adelgid populations are noticeably increased within the infested areas. One additional infested property was found in Rochester in Monroe County, where a spot infestation had once been thought to be eradicated.

The **hemlock elongate scale** is common in approximately the same range as hemlock woolly adelgid and often, but not always, found in the same stands. Damage from the scale is hard to separate from damage by the adelgid at times, as both have caused significant decline and mortality of hemlocks independently and in tandem.

Streambaiting in four locations in southeastern New York in 2007 resulted in no positive tests for **Ramorum blight**, caused by *Phytophthora ramorum*. A positive for was reported from Long Island in June 2004. However, subsequent surveys and samples all indicated that *P. ramorum* was not present on the site, and none of the State's other surveys, which centered mostly on Long Island, found the pathogen. It is the opinion of the DEC and most other experts that the initial positive was false, although the federal USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service quarantine of the site remains in place.

A **bacterial leaf scorch** survey in southern New York resulted in no new finds in 2007. There were previous positive finds in Brooklyn in Kings County, Westchester County, and Rockland County. This pathogen is a problem on hardwoods in New Jersey.

Butternut canker is common in New York wherever butternut is found; it is uncommon to see a symptom-free tree. This disease was not reported from any new counties in 2007. The NY DEC has begun archiving locations of healthy butternut, when trees are found or reported, but the dataset is not complete.

The **pine shoot beetle** was discovered in Columbia County, the only new area found to be infested in 2007.

Surveys for **emerald ash borer** resulted in no finds for the insect, but stands containing ash with various symptoms of decline were mapped. Native ash borers were sometimes, but not always, present in these stands and a few cases of ash yellows were found as well.

Symptoms of **Dutch elm disease** are conspicuous Statewide. Many of the trees now succumbing are mature individuals in urban and suburban settings which survived the initial wave of the disease through the region.

Sphaeropsis tip blight (*Diplodia*) caused unusually heavy damage to Austrian pine in the Capital region of New York in Albany and surrounding counties, as well as more moderate damage to other hard pine species.

Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*), an invasive plant which causes severe skin reactions, has now been confirmed at about 400 sites across the State. **Mile-a-minute vine** has been found on State and private lands in the Hudson River Valley, but does not appear to be widely established. Known sites are under management in an effort to keep this exotic plant from gaining a stronger foothold in New York.

The year 2007 marked the sixth field season of annualized plot data collection in New York by the **National Forest Inventory and Analysis Program**. Data will be collected and analyzed in a rotating 5-panel scheme, with one-fifth of the plots being visited each panel. A subset of these plots are co-located **Forest Health Monitoring** (Phase 3) plots, as the two national programs have merged. A summary report of *Forest Health Monitoring in the Northeast* can be found at <http://fhm.fs.fed.us>.

Stewardship

Among the several NY DEC programs that contribute to forest health improvement, the Stewardship Program has the potential to reach a large number of forest landowners. All forest management plans prepared under the Stewardship Program include a forest protection component. The planning process helps alert forest landowners to potential and existing forest health conditions and procedures to protect forest resources.

For More Information

NY Dept. of Environmental
Conservation
Division of Lands and Forests
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12233
(518) 402-9425



Forest Health Protection
USDA Forest Service
P.O. Box 640
Durham, NH 03824
(603) 868-7709

