NJ Invasive Species Strike Team

FoHVOS
FRIENDS OF HOPEWELL VALLEY OPEN SPACE

Strike Team Report
July 2019

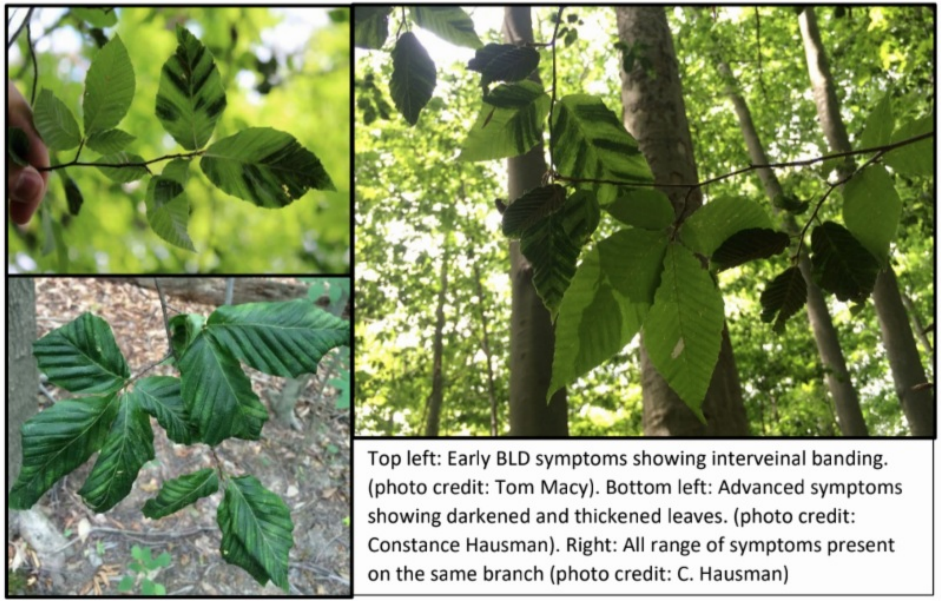
Stay on guard for Beech Leaf Disease!

Some bad news for NJ beeches…Beech Leaf Disease!
The Strike Team has had our eye on Beech Leaf Disease for a few years, since it was reported in western portions of New York and Pennsylvania (see USDA Pest Alert). There are reports this year from Long Island and Connecticut, so it either skipped New Jersey, or it just hasn't been found yet.

The organism causing the disease is still unknown, but appears to be associated with a leaf nematode (*Litylenchus crenatae*). Symptoms include dark bands between leaf veins, thickened and leathery leaves, shriveled or curled leaf edges and reduced leaf development from aborted buds. Please keep on the lookout and let us know if you see possibly infected trees – it can be reported through our phone app under "Plant Pathogens" – we'll pass along your observations to Rosa Yoo with the NJ Department of Agriculture.

Download the Strike Team App for iOS, or contact us through the Strike Team website. Your participatiom can help us track, manage, and eradicate invasive species!

Michael Van Clef, Ph.D.
Strike Team Program Director



Top left: Early BLD symptoms showing interveinal banding. (photo credit: Tom Macy). Bottom left: Advanced symptoms showing darkened and thickened leaves. (photo credit: Constance Hausman). Right: All range of symptoms present on the same branch (photo credit: C. Hausman)

Live and Learn!

The goal of this 'Live and Learn!' feature is to spread newly obtained knowledge provided from Strike Team partners. Please share your expertise! Send news of successes or lessons learned, either big or small, to Mike at mvancleef@fohvos.org.

Raw, fresh wood chips can make an excellent deterrent to the germination of invasive species such as Japanese Stiltgrass, Mile-a-Minute and Garlic Mustard and also provide an excellent mulch around new restoration plantings (or home garden plantings). In addition to suppressing weeds and maintaining good water retention for plantings, it is likely that they improve soil microorganism communities by shifting the balance from bacterial to fungal organisms, which would make them more similar to healthy forest soils.

It is often said that wood chips "rob" nutrients from plants, but I have never notic that as a problem for native trees, shrubs or wildflowers that likely evolved with lower available nitrogen than the majority of our modern soils impacted by human activities.

You can usually get wood chips for free (or nearly free) from local tree companies that would have to pay to dispose of them. While cost is low, the logistics of transporting and putting down enough chips can be challenging. A layer of about 3 inches is required…so LOTS of chips and LOTS of labor needed to cover large areas. When you can back a truck up to your planting location or have a short run easily covered by a wheelbarrow, then you might consider wood chips for invasive species control!

Keep in mind, in order for wood chips to be effective, you need a depth of 3 inches. This year, we learned the hard way that 1-2 inches just isn't enough. We had a small restoration that took many hours to cover with the chips, but it just wasn't deep enough to prevent Stiltgrass and mile-a-minute from germinating…

The Strike Team needs your help to fight invasive species throughout New Jersey. By making a membership donation, you directly fund our

efforts to keep invasive species at bay and protect our native plants and wildlife. Donate through the link below!

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Contributing Partners

If you would like to know how to become a Strike Team Contributing Partner, please contact lhorvath@fohvos.org

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