

Urban Tree Commission

Issue 1

Spring 2017

Caring for Defoliated Trees



Find out about how you can help your leafless tree.

2

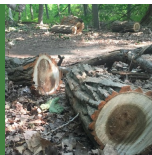
Merit Tree Application



New this year you can nominate a Newton Tree for a Merit Tree designation!

3

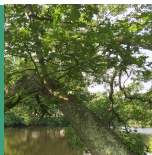
By the Numbers



Learn about all the 2016 Newton tree action on page 3.

3

UTC Information



Read about the UTC's work and how to get involved.

4

Join our next meeting!
Third Friday of each month
7:45am • City Hall



Welcome

Welcome to the Newton Urban Tree Commissions' first newsletter! Here you'll find helpful tree information, learn about the UTC's new Merit Tree Program, and learn more about the UTC's work.

Caring for Defoliated Trees

By Nathan Cenis

Massachusetts Certified Arborist & International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist

For many years now, Newton and surrounding communities have been impacted by foliage feeding pests of deciduous trees. Winter moth caterpillars in particular have been a constant and impactful pest. Now, gypsy moth caterpillars are knocking at the city's limits and posing an additional stress to already weakened trees. When a tree experiences one or more early season defoliation events (loss of leaves), a constant question an arborist hears is "What can I do to help the tree?!"

A properly executed treatment program can drastically reduce the populations of caterpillar defoliators and eliminate or minimize harm to beneficial insects and microorganisms. However, once a tree has suffered the stress of defoliation there is still much that can be done in most cases to aid in tree recovery.



Significant leaf loss from caterpillar feeding plus the added drought stress of recent years means trees need help in the urban environment. Unlike forest soils, urban soils

are not rich in organic matter or nutrients. Also, urban soils are typically highly compacted, which inhibits root development and nutrient and water uptake. Creating more forest-like soils, then, allows a tree's roots to carry out necessary and critical functions to generate a new flush of foliage to compensate for defoliation by the caterpillars.

As a homeowner, the single best thing to do is to water the trees when needed. The trick is to make sure the water is actually getting to the roots in proper quantities! Generally,

"the single best thing to do is to water the trees when needed"

this is a much higher amount than most people realize. To further assist tree health, the arboriculture community now implements a process called "Root Invigoration™." This process de-compacts and amends soils around the trees and shrubs allowing natural and supplemental water as well as life giving oxygen and nutrients to penetrate and become available to the tree roots.

Subsurface fertilization and soil nutrient management can drastically help trees as well. Soil samples with species specific fertilization recommendations ensure that products applied are exactly what is needed to reduce environmental impacts such as leaching, but also to promote the health of the tree.

Our trees are a huge part of the Newton community, and with some help from us, they will keep Newton green for the many years to come.



Merit Tree Program

New this year, nominate a Newton tree to become a Merit Tree! Merit trees are trees that are large in size, have some historical significance, or are a rare species. We hope to establish a public database of merit trees located throughout the city.

We are still working out the details of this new program, so visit the UTC webpage on the City’s website for more information in the near future!

Did you know?

Scientists estimate that there are 60,065 species of trees in the world! The Newton Forestry Division picks 30 of those to plant as Newton’s street trees.

By the Numbers

200

Between the Forestry Division and the Newton Tree Conservancy, 200 trees will be planted this spring.

200

The Forestry Division and Newton Tree Conservancy planted another 200 street trees last fall.

1,000

Thanks to an increased budget, the Forestry Division was able to make up a large backlog and remove 1,000 trees.

2,400

After removing trees, the Forestry Division was also able to make up a backlog on stump grinding, grinding down 2,400 stumps!

20

The Newton Tree Conservancy is raising 20 seedlings at their community garden!

8

Number of Urban Tree Commission Members. All are welcome to attend a meeting and consider joining.



Do you have a large or historically significant tree in your yard or neighborhood?
Stay tuned for information about the new Merit Tree Program!

What we do and how to get involved

The purpose of the Urban Tree Commission is to advise the tree warden, the mayor, the city council and the general public on all matters concerning public trees, including but not limited to, the selection of trees for planting, planting and pruning of trees, the treatment of disease, and the preservation and regular maintenance of trees.

We meet on the third Friday of each month at 7:45am at Newton City Hall and anyone is welcome to join the meetings.

Please email chair Jessica Barton at jessbarton1117@gmail.com to be added to our email list to receive future newsletters.