

Common Ash Tree Species



Black Ash

Habitat: Poorly drained sites such as swamps, streams and riverbanks.
Features: 40 to 50 feet in height, small than either white or green ash. The terminal buds are more black when compared to the brown of either green or white ash.



Blue Ash

Habitat: Dry upland limestone sites.
Features: Twigs that appear to be square. The wings that grow on the twigs give the tree its square twig identifying characteristic.



Green Ash

Habitat: Poorly drained soils, along streams, in bottom lands, and throughout wet woods.
Features: Compared to the leaf scar of the white ash, the scar appears more like a semicircle with a flat line across the top.



White Ash

Habitat: Upland sites with little tolerance for wet areas.
Features: The leaf scar (area where leaf was attached to the branch) on white ash has more of a grin to it than do other ashes.

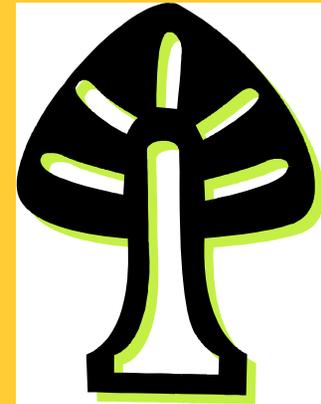
More information about the National Ash Tree Collection Initiative, including how to identify and collect ash seed, is available on the Web at www.ashseed.org.



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National Ash Tree Seed Collection Initiative

Help Save America's Ash Trees for Future Generations



America is losing its ash trees at an alarming rate. An invasive species, the emerald ash borer, has already destroyed millions of ash trees.

The loss of all of America's ash trees is a real possibility. An effort is underway to gather seeds from populations of ash tree species nationwide.

You can assist this effort by collecting ash tree seeds and sending them to us for genetic preservation.



www.ashseed.org

History of the Emerald Ash Borer

The emerald ash borer is an insect species native to Asia. It is believed to have entered the United States sometime in the mid-1990's near Detroit, Mich.

The emerald ash borer has spread throughout much of Michigan as well as surrounding states and Canada. Local, state and federal officials have attempted to slow its spread. Ash trees in infested areas have been destroyed and there is a ban on moving ash logs or firewood. Despite these efforts the ash borer continues to spread.

The Emerald Ash Borer

The emerald ash borer is a beetle that infests ash trees. The insect lays its eggs in crevices in the trees' bark. The larvae then bore into the tree and feed beneath the bark. An infested tree typically will die in two to three years.



*Photo Courtesy
USDA Agricultural
Research Service*

The Plant Materials Program

The National Ash Tree Seed Collection Initiative is being led by the Rose Lake Plant Materials Center in East Lansing, Mich. Rose Lake is part of the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service Plant Materials Program.

The primary mission of the Plant Materials Program is to develop and distribute plants for conservation purposes. The centers also provides plant-related technical assistance in conservation projects.

The National Ash Tree Seed

Collection Initiative

With the potential for all of the country's ash trees being lost, staff at the Rose Lake Plant Materials Center developed a plan for the worst case scenario.

The Rose Lake PMC decided to preserve seed from diverse populations of ash trees while it is still possible. The PMC entered into an agreement with the USDA Agricultural Research Service to store the seed at its Genetic Preservation Facility in Fort Collins, Colo.

Staff at Rose Lake sort and classify the submitted seeds before sending them to a USDA Forest Service facility for x-ray analysis. X-ray analysis helps determine which seeds are viable for preservation.

The staff at Rose Lake is now working to enlist volunteers to collect ash tree seed from as many native trees, and from as wide an area as possible. This will be a long-term project as the ash borer continues to spread, threatening additional populations and species of ash trees.

Several factors make the collection of ash tree seeds a challenging task. Only female trees produce seeds and they do not produce seed every year. Healthy trees capable of producing seed are also being destroyed to slow the spread of the ash borer.

Your help is needed to ensure that the ash tree's genetic heritage is preserved.



*Plant Materials Specialist
Dave Burgdorf shows ash
seeds at the Rose Lake
Plant Materials Center.*

Ash Seed Collection Form

- Please fully complete this form and enclose it with your seed shipment.
- Keep seed from different locations separate and include a collection form for each.
- Send seed within 24 hours of collecting it.

Collection Site Information

State _____ County _____
Township _____ Range _____
Major Land Resource Area _____

Collection Information

Date Collected _____
Collector's Name _____
Street _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Group Affiliation (if any) _____

Is sample for tribal seed collection?
Yes ___ No ___
If yes, what tribe? _____

Can extra tribal seed be shared?
Yes ___ No ___

Seed Collection: Collect at least 500 seeds from each population and check for filled seeds. Mature seed is typically brown to tan in color and separates easily from the tree. Put seeds in a cloth or paper bag and store under cool, dry conditions until shipment. **Do not** ship in a plastic bag. If possible, please e-mail John Leif after sending your seeds.

Send Collected Seed to:
Rose Lake Plant Materials Center
USDA-NRCS
7472 Stoll Road
East Lansing, MI 48823
Telephone: 517/641-6300
Fax: 517/641-4421
E-mail: john.leif@mi.usda.gov