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POOL OWNERS SOUGHT TO PARTICIPATE IN CITIZEN SCIENCE SURVEY TO IDENTIFY INVASIVE BEETLE

Monitoring Pool Filters for Asian Longhorned Beetles Can Prevent Infestation and Help Protect Trees and Forests

Pool owners are invited to join in the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) fourth annual Asian longhorned beetle (ALB) Swimming Pool Survey now through August 30 to help keep watch for these exotic, invasive beetles before they cause serious damage to our forests and street trees. The Citizen Pool Survey takes place this time of year when ALBs are expected to become adults, emerge from the trees they are infesting and become active outside those trees.

ALBs are originally from Asia and have caused the death of hundreds of thousands of trees across the nation, particularly in maple trees in New York City, on Long Island, in New Jersey, Chicago, Illinois, Worcester, Massachusetts and Clermont, Ohio. DEC's Forest Health Program developed a simple and easy survey to track ALBs for homeowners who have swimming pools and are willing to keep an eye out for these insects.

Pool monitoring offers a simple, economical alternative to traditional procedures for surveying ALBs in the state. It also has the potential to become New York's most effective method for detecting ALBs. In addition, this monitoring program gives residents the ability to take an active role in protecting trees in their yards, communities and forests.

With citizens involved in looking for this pest, there is a better chance of finding new infestations early, helping DEC and other state and federal agencies focus their efforts to eliminate infestations.

In addition to owning a swimming pool, participants will need:

1. A digital camera.
2. An e-mail address.
3. The ability to send a photo via email or text message.

Those that don't have a pool can still help. DEC expanded its photo collection to include anyone who spots a suspect beetle, whether it is found in their pool or not. Residents are also encouraged to submit photos if there is suspicion of an Emerald Ash Borer (see what it looks like on DEC's Emerald Ash Borer web page) or another invasive pest damaging native ash trees. Photos can be submitted to the forest health program email address listed below.

(MORE)

Directions for participating in the pool survey are outlined below:

Step 1: Starting in the last week of July, through the last week of August (when adults are active), at least once a week, or when you clean your pool, check the debris collected in your filter and skimmers.

Step 2: Look for the ALB (See what it looks like on DEC's ALB web page). Contact the Forest Health Program (see phone number and email address below) and we will provide a sheet to help identify insects collected.

Step 3: Take a picture of any insect you think might be an ALB.

Step 4: Send the photos of the insects that look like ALB to foresthealth@dec.ny.gov.

Step 6: Freeze the insect in a plastic container until DEC staff respond (typically that will be about a week). Staff will either instruct you to discard the insect or give instructions on mailing it, delivering it, or arranging for pick-up.

For more information on ALB and the Pool Survey, visit DEC's website at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7255.html>. To sign up for the survey, contact:

NYSDEC Forest Health Program

Attn: Jessica Cancelliere

E-mail: foresthealth@dec.ny.gov

Phone: 518.478.7813

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