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www.healthytrees.com
wachtel@wachteltree.com



An Arborist's View of 2010 and What Might Come in 2011

by Dave Scharfenberger, Board-Certified Master Arborist WI-0131B

The summary of the previous year is always fairly easy. Even I can usually remember the highlights of last season. (Just don't ask me what I had for breakfast yesterday!) Predicting the future can be more of a challenge.

While 2010 had problems, it was **one of the best growing seasons** in many, many years. We had good moisture most of the summer with very little drought stress. This is a real change from the past five years. There were plants I was concerned would not make it through another dry season. Last year gave them the break they needed for sustained root and top growth.

The down side to the moisture of the good growing season was the number of fungal diseases that were encouraged by the wet conditions. **Apple scab** on crabapples and **needlecasts** on pines and spruces were the biggest ones. **We will see the damage on the pines and spruce for many years to come.** One additional area of concern is an increase in **root rots** and **decay in the bases of trees** that will impact trees for many years. Previous dry conditions weakened trees and last year's wet conditions have allowed infection. An example of this is one of my favorite sections of woods to ski in at Pike Lake State Park which has been hit very hard by this, with dozens of fallen mature trees.

A positive from 2010 is the numbers of **gypsy moth**, **Japanese beetle** and **emerald ash borer** were all down in

most areas. We should enjoy it while it lasts. These may be down for a year or two but they are not going away!

Treatments need to continue.

A final bad problem last year was **scale insects**. We saw magnolia and lecanium scale at levels we have never seen before. This is a problem that will continue into 2011 and **needs to be monitored.**

What else might we expect in 2011? With all of the snow we have had, there is a high likelihood of **salt and rodent damage**. Due to the high snow levels, the rabbits made it over some of the fences I carefully installed at home. I guess they have to eat, too.

Some other creatures that might be eating your plants this summer are **Japanese beetles**. The good soil moisture of 2010 could help survival of the larvae, meaning higher numbers this summer. It is also likely that foliar diseases like **apple scab** and **needlecasts will continue strong** unless it is a very dry spring. There is a lot of inoculum (spores) from last year waiting for the new leaves and needles to emerge this spring. Preventative protection will be important.

No matter what nature throws at you, feel confident that your Wachtel Tree Science Certified and Board Certified Master Arborists can help to protect your trees' health and your property's appearance.