

arbor topics



Proud to be Accredited by the Tree Care Industry Association.

Welcome to our series on Tree Mythbusters. In this series, we take long-standing myths about trees and tree care and BUST them apart.

TREE MYTHBUSTERS

Our first myth is brought to you by Joan W. from Chicago, IL.

I've always heard that tree roots only go out as far as the branches on trees. The biggest root is the one that goes straight down into the ground. Is that true?

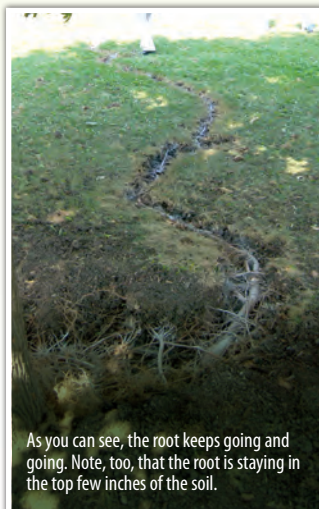
We put our top people on this to see if this is, in fact, a myth. To get to the truth, we conducted a study on a tree in a park in the heart of downtown Chicago. We chose a medium sized tree and got to work. Now, we could have just hand dug into the tree base, found a root and continued to keep digging out soil to follow that root until it ended. But that would have been very damaging to the tree (and the grass wouldn't look too good either). Take a look at the photos below and follow our process as we look to bust this myth.



We used a tool that sprays a steady stream of highly compressed air to break apart the soil and expose the roots. The tree's roots are exposed, but the roots are safe.



Next, we found one of the larger roots and used the air tool to pull away all of the soil and follow that root to its end. We used a non-toxic spray paint so the tree root could be easily identified.



As you can see, the root keeps going and going. Note, too, that the root is staying in the top few inches of the soil.

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Tree Mythbusters

... continued from cover



It seems that this is a common misconception that tree roots only extend as far out as the branches on a tree (commonly referred to as the Drip Line). In fact, they reach much farther out than that. And, they are found in the top 12 inches of the soil ... NOT one long root that goes deep into the earth.

Keep this in mind when you are considering construction around your home or office, such as building a deck or extension. It might seem as if the construction is far enough from the tree to actually damage it, but as we've learned here, you can't be too sure. Best bet is to have an Arborist come out to your property to review your construction plans and discuss options to keep your tree healthy and happy. So there you have it: a tree myth BUSTED.

If you are interested in submitting a tree or tree care myth, please email us at treedoctor@thecareoftrees.com and we'll try and BUST it in an upcoming blog, which you can find at <http://blog.thecareoftrees.com>.

The Care of Trees Earns Coveted Angie's List Super Service Award!

The Care of Trees has been awarded the prestigious 2010 Angie's List Super Service Award, an honor bestowed annually on approximately five percent of all the companies rated on the nation's leading provider of consumer reviews on local service companies.



"Our Super Service Award winners are the cream of the crop when it comes to providing consistently high quality customer service, as judged by the customers who hired them," said Angie Hicks, founder of Angie's List.

Twelve offices of The Care of Trees have received Angie's List Super Service Awards by meeting strict eligibility requirements including earning a minimum number of reports, an exemplary rating from their customers and abiding by Angie's List operational guidelines.

What is Angie's List?

Angie's List collects consumer reviews on local contractors and doctors in more than 500 service categories. Currently, more than one million consumers across the U.S. rely on Angie's List to help them make the best hiring decisions. Members get unlimited access to local ratings via Internet or phone, exclusive discounts, the Angie's List magazine and help from the Angie's List complaint resolution service. Take a quick tour of Angie's List and view the latest Angie's List news at www.angieslists.com.

Ask the Tree Doctor!

Rex A. Bastian, Ph.D., is a doctor of Entomology and our Vice President of Field Education and Development. Rex has more than 25 years of experience in diagnosing and treating tree diseases and other problems caused by pests, soils, and site-related incidents. If you have a question for Dr. Rex, you can e-mail him at treedoctor@thecareoftrees.com and we will feature selected questions in the next issue of *Arbor Topics*.

Dear Tree Doctor,

My insurer insists that I fix a driveway severely broken up long ago by a giant and majestic Water Oak nearby. The oak's dripline extends to the far side of the driveway, and a series of major roots cross the driveway at about 90 degrees.

How can I build something visually acceptable that will not damage the tree nor the house? On your site I found you mention the possibility of wooden decking. How is this done? Would this be an arched bridge over the former central portion of the driveway? Or, a low wooden platform?

What you are looking to do in this situation is essentially build a low deck, using footing that can be placed in the soil between the roots that will support the weight of a vehicle. Properly located and carefully dug, installation of the footings will have minimal impact on the existing root system.

The idea is to locate spots between the roots where the footings can be placed to support the frame that supports the decking. This isn't too different from building a low deck around the house, other than beefing up the construction so it will support a vehicle. An air tool (see *Tree Mythbusters* for photo) can be used to locate the major roots so a suitable location for the footings can be identified. Essentially, you are building a low bridge over the roots, rather than cutting through the roots to install the drive. The decking can be matched to the grade outside the existing root zone.

This project would likely require the cooperation of your local Certified Arborist for the root location/air tool work, and a competent landscape architect/contractor to design and install the footings and decking. Contractors knowledgeable about how tree root systems develop will quickly catch on to what you are trying to do.

Bridging over the root system will result in the least amount of injury. You should be commended for thinking about such things before initiating any construction.

– Dr. Rex



Win a \$250 Tree Care Gift Certificate

We value your opinion. In this age of Internet and web-based activity, we would love to know more about your online habits. To thank you for sharing with us, send in your survey (below) and you will be put into a drawing for a \$250 tree care gift certificate toward our services. We will randomly select one winner. All entries must be postmarked by May 31, 2011. You may also take the survey online at www.thecareoftrees.com/survey.



1. How many hours a day do you spend on the Internet (search engines, websites, online reviews)? _____
2. What percentage of the time is spent on what types of websites?
_____ news sites, _____ blogs, _____ social media,
_____ entertainment, _____ financial, _____ healthcare,
_____ shopping, _____ other
3. How many hours a day are you checking your email? _____
4. If you are looking for a new service for your home (lawn service, etc.), where would you most likely go to get contact information or to research the company? (Please list your first and second choices.)
_____ online Yellow Pages, _____ Angie's List,
_____ craigslist, _____ Google, _____ Yelp,
_____ Facebook/Twitter, _____ friend/family member,
_____ Yellow Page books, _____ online, _____ Valpak
5. If we were to offer lawn service, would you be interested?
 Yes No
6. Which of these avenues do you use most frequently to watch TV/movies? (indicate top two avenues with "1st" and "2nd")
_____ online (Hulu, TV/cable network site),
_____ DVR/TiVo or Season Pass, _____ mobile device,
_____ live TV, _____ Netflix, _____ Redbox

Name: _____

Address: _____

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Telephone: _____

Email Address: _____

Past Winter Weather Causes Bark Damage



Although snow provides a beautiful backdrop, sometimes it drives small animals to feed on the bark or small twigs of many landscape plants. Rabbits or voles (which are similar to field mice) eat the bark and cambium off of many plants during the winter when more suitable food supplies are limited.

The damage is obvious, since the bark is often stripped or chewed off. Vole damage is more difficult to observe and prevent as most of this damage is near ground level and under the snow. Depending on the type of damage and when it occurs, there are many possible protective measures that can be applied. Repellants can be used, but physical barriers or fences are usually best. To know for sure how to avoid this damage, contact your Arborist.



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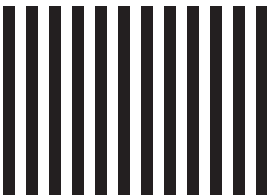
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Emerald Ash Borer Infestation Continues

Many communities have been hit hard by the Emerald Ash Borer and unfortunately the infestation continues to spread. Ash trees currently represent between 10 percent and 40 percent of our local urban forest.

Fortunately, there is hope. The Coalition for Urban Ash Tree Conservation, a group of university scientists and industry professionals, created and endorsed a consensus document on 1/6/2011 that states:

*"... despite availability of cost-effective treatments, many municipalities, property managers, and homeowners continue to rationalize tree removal as the only viable management strategy for EAB. This is based on **erroneous beliefs that tree removal slows the spread of EAB**, or that treatment is not effective, economical, or environmentally sound. Current science supports conservation via treatment as a sensible and effective tool for managing healthy ash trees in urban settings. **In many cases, tree conservation is economically and environmentally superior to tree removal.**"*

As stewards of your trees, it is our job to help you manage the Emerald Ash Borer. If you are unsure if you have an ash tree, or want a professional opinion about which trees to protect, call your certified Arborist, and also visit our website www.thecareoftrees.com/EAB.



(photo courtesy of Craig Schaar, City of Toledo, Division of Forestry)

Connecticut

Greenwich	203.863.0900
Hamden	203.288.1629
Norwalk	203.847.1855

Maryland & D.C.

Gaithersburg	301.444.9041
Washington, D.C.	202.898.0025

New York

Elmsford	914.345.8733
Mount Kisco	914.241.8110
Mount Vernon	914.668.5628

Virginia

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Dulles	703.661.1700
Tree Preservation and Land Restoration	703.661.8001

National - Tree Preservation and
Land Restoration 877.818.7337

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