

A Citizen's Guide to Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Detection in Ontario

When to Look

Hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) is visible anytime from November to May. The woolly balls become more prominent later in the winter. HWA is inactive and very hard to see for most of the summer. If you'll be moving between forests plan to complete surveys by mid-April to reduce the chance of accidentally spreading HWA. If you're out hiking in May and would like to check some trees, by all means do so, however you may want to limit your survey to one forest area.



Jason Michael Crockwell

What to look for

During winter and spring, look for white woolly balls on the underside of twigs at the base of needles. Hemlock woolly adelgid has the following characteristics that differentiate it from look-alikes:

- It is permanently attached to the branch and immobile during the winter/early spring.
- The balls of wool are attached to the twig not the needle.
- The "wool" is waxy, not silky or stretchy and is wispy (like a cotton ball), not fabric-like.
- There are separate distinct balls of wool.
- It doesn't look painted on (like pine sap).

How to look

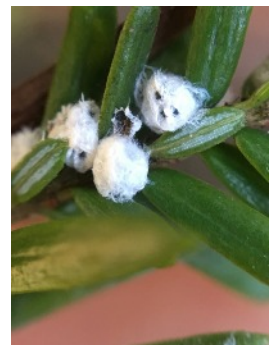
- Start your survey in an accessible location, choose a hemlock tree with branches within arm's reach.
- Examine the underside of branches - closest to the tips - for HWA's white woolly egg sacs.
- Check 3 branches per tree, about the lower 1 m of each branch. Look closely at the twigs.
- Continue to survey by moving randomly from one hemlock to the next, ideally selecting a tree at least 10-15 feet from the previous tree surveyed.
- Survey 15-25 trees, or as many trees as time, weather, and safety permit. It's fine if there are not many hemlock in the area you are surveying, and it's ok to only check a few trees if time is limited.
- Large stands should be surveyed in several locations.
- Hemlock branches found on the ground provide a good way to check on what may be going on higher in the tree.
- Check hemlock bark for signs of wool after spring rain storms.
- Complete surveys by mid-April to reduce the chance of accidentally spreading HWA.
- Photograph and record GPS locations of any suspected sightings, and report them (see below).

Where to look

Prioritize lakeshores and streamsides, or areas near bird feeders. Given the option it's usually best to start by inspecting a number of trees near water, then randomly move inland.

If you find it

If you think you've found hemlock woolly adelgid, *leave it where it is - take photos and record the GPS location*. Mark it with flagging tape if you have some, and note down directions that someone else could follow if need be.



Jonathan Carpenter

In Ontario you can verify and report your finding on your smartphone using the EDDMapS Ontario app (www.eddmaps.org/ontario), or email: Erin.Bullas-Appleton@inspection.gc.ca, phone: 1-800-442-2342

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Photos

Are you monitoring?

Let us know by email at
info@ancientforest.org.

Tell us where, when and
how many trees.



Bring with you

GPS, compass, map, pen
and paper, camera, hand
lens, flagging tape, warm
clothes, food and water.