

Georgia Hemlocks Need Your Help

North Georgia's hemlocks are in danger of almost total extinction due to a rapidly spreading infestation of an invasive Asian insect with no local natural predator, the hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA). Hemlock stands are vital to wildlife and water and air quality. For property owners, infestations of HWA create a decline in the beauty and value of their property, loss of privacy, and risk of personal injury or damage to property.

If you have hemlocks that are already infested with HWA or are within 15 miles of an infestation, you or a well-qualified professional can apply a chemical treatment around the base of the trees. This will kill the adelgids and protect your trees for an average of five years. Cultural practices will also improve the survival rate of your hemlocks. For example:

- Keep trees watered (1" per week) and mulched.
- Avoid compacting soil around trees.
- Don't fertilize infested trees.
- Don't feed birds or other wildlife near your hemlocks.
- Remove unwanted, too close together, or very poor condition hemlocks.
- Don't plant hemlocks removed from the wild.
- Ensure purchased hemlocks come from a pest-



Hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) infestation

free area or have been treated. Infestations have officially been confirmed in 14 North Georgia

counties.

So keep your eyes open for signs of the HWA, the most noticeable of which is tiny white cottony egg sacs on the underside of the branches.

For more information please contact me – Charlie Christian, 706-557-1777, bcjunior35@gmail.com.

Submitted by Charlie Christian, Morgan County Master Gardener and Donna Shearer, Coordinator, Save Georgia's Hemlocks Photo by Donna Shearer