



Hemlock Woolly Adelgid Fact Sheet

THE PROBLEM: Our forests are threatened with the loss of our native eastern and Carolina Hemlocks. They are being attacked and killed by the Hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA), a tiny, aphid-like insect accidentally introduced to the east coast from Asia in the 1950's. The HWA attaches itself to the stems at the base of the needles, inserts its long, slender mouth-part called a stylet, and then feeds from the tree – consuming the starches in the tree's branches and twigs that are essential to new growth and injecting a coagulant that prevents the sap from reaching the leaves (needles) – ultimately resulting in tree death, often within 3- 6 years. The devastation from this tiny parasite has spread from Virginia north to Maine and south to Georgia. Infestations of the HWA have reached Rabun, Habersham, Stephens, Towns, White, Union, Fannin, Gilmer, Pickens, Lumpkin, and Dawson Counties and are traveling fast. **If nothing is done to combat HWA, 80 - 90% of our hemlocks may die in the next few years.**

THE STAKES: Hemlocks fill an important niche from many aspects, and their loss would have a tremendous impact on our quality of life.

- **Aesthetically:** Hemlocks are one of our most beautiful trees. They contribute greatly to the enjoyment of those who live, work, and play among them, as well as the many people who come to north Georgia for tourism and outdoor recreation.
- **Environmentally:** Hemlocks are vital in providing food and habitat for about 120 species of vertebrates - including bear, turkey, white-tailed deer, and over 90 species of birds. They provide abundant shade necessary to many native plants and help maintain necessary temperatures in mountain streams for trout and other native fish. They protect watershed and water quality, preventing build-up of harmful bacteria and massive soil erosion.
- **Economically:** On average, the north Georgia counties with Hemlocks enjoy over a billion dollars of tourist spending. Healthy mature trees such as Hemlocks add an average of 7-10% to homeowners' property values. They provide the net cooling effect of 10 room-sized air conditioners running 20 hours a day, perform as much as \$4,000 dollars worth of water purification per mature tree along our waterways each year, and save billions of dollars a year by filtering CO₂ and many different pollutants from the air as they produce oxygen for us to breathe.

THE SOLUTION: While pesticide treatment can control adelgid populations on individual trees, a combination of this method with cultural and biological controls (i.e., releases of several species of predatory beetles known to feed only on adelgids, creating a predator prey balance) is key to saving the Hemlocks in our forests. Several states have established laboratories to produce these beetles, and results are encouraging in those states. Due to public support, there are now three labs rearing predatory beetles in Georgia at Young Harris College, UGA, and North Georgia College.

Future success in Georgia's forests depends on whether enough predatory beetles can be reared and released by these labs to keep up with the HWA. Increased public awareness and funds for operational costs are still needed. Your support can really help. **Please consider making a tax-deductible donation** to help save Georgia's beautiful Hemlocks. Please make your check payable to Lumpkin Coalition and mail it to:

Lumpkin Coalition
3865 Dawsonville Hwy.
Dahlonega, GA 30533

Also learn what YOU can do to save the Hemlocks on your own property. For more information, call the Hemlock Help Line 706-429-8010 or visit www.lumpkincoalition.org and click on the Hemlocks page. There is help and hope!!!

Lumpkin Coalition Mission Statement

The Lumpkin Coalition is a non-profit, non-partisan, issue-based organization formed to facilitate projects that benefit north Georgia, Lumpkin County, and its residents and visitors.

For the Save the Hemlocks project, our goals are to:

- Increase public awareness of the Hemlock problem and promote action;
- Continue to support the efforts of all three labs in Georgia that raise predatory beetles to combat the HWA on public lands; and
- Assist private landowners and public agencies in managing the health of their Hemlock trees.

Lumpkin Coalition is a 100% volunteer 501(c)3 charity with no paid officers or staff. All donations are 100% tax-deductible.

For More Information on the Hemlock Problem and Solutions:

**Call the HEMLOCK HELP LINE
706-429-8010**

Or visit [www.lumpkincoalition.org/Save the Hemlocks.htm](http://www.lumpkincoalition.org/Save_the_Hemlocks.htm)