# A Weighty Situation

I sincerely get a kick out of people’s predictions of the coming winter by so called “indicators.” I have heard everything from more cones on the conifer, to bushier squirrel tails means we are in for a “Hard” winter. Define “Hard” for starters! Having grown up in the upper peninsula of Michigan, I have not seen “Hard” here yet. Then again, I am becoming kind of soft over the years. I now define hard if I can’t collect the morning press in my flip flops. Whether you consider our winters hard or not, and predict to what degree it will be by the farmer’s almanac, or the density of fur on forest animals, one thing is certain. Winter will follow autumn.

I have never found this to be any indication of the coming winter but every so many years the Mountain Ash trees around town seem to produce an overabundance in their little round red and orange berries. This is one of those years. (Check out the three pictures I posted under the “Stump” tab on our website.) What I have seen as a problem over my tree care history with these Mountain Ash is when snow does come. Mountain Ash berries hang on till next year and are usually available as a food source for migrating birds returning in the spring. This means these bent and burdened branches must not only support the trees fruit but accumulating snow. For this reason, we see plenty of damaged Mountain Ash in the spring. I suggest proper structure pruning for your Mountain Ash trees as with any tree. This ensures good form and structure. In turn, stronger branches to support their fruit. When we have years like this with bumper crops of Mountain Ash berries I also suggest some fruit reduction pruning to help give them a fighting chance. Clipping off some of these berry bundles can lessen the burden of weight when snow arrives.

As always, for further questions, quotes and consultations, give us a call today.