

What's wrong with my tree

Tree Diagnosis part II

The very beginning step in diagnosing any tree problems is to properly identify the species. There are many insect and diseases that are common problems for specific species. Knowing exactly what tree you are looking at can immediately begin to narrow down the list of possibilities. An example of this could be when a customer calls with concern about the top of one of their evergreen trees dying but they do not know which evergreen it is. This could be a type of bark beetle, damage done by a porcupine, and anything in between. If the customer was to call about the top of their Blue Spruce dying, I can narrow the problem down immediately within ninety percent accuracy to an insect. With almost certainty, I can diagnose the trees problem as having been attack by Spruce Terminal Weevil. This is a very common insect problem for many Spruce trees and kills the top leader in the tree in late spring to early summer.

Another important observation to know in diagnosing tree problems is what is normal for that tree. Perhaps what you assume is abnormal is normal and not an issue is not at all. An example of this is when a customer calls in early spring about their young Maple tree. They describe the new leaves as small and rusty red and not green. This is a normal pattern for immature leaves until they fully develop and produce chlorophyll. (the green pigment in leaves) Another example is for someone who is new to our area and might not realize that our native Western Larch are a deciduous evergreen. In other words, they turn yellow and drop their foliage in the fall. A person unfamiliar with this might be quite alarmed and suppose their tree is dying.

As an arborist, these two beginning identifiers are key foundational steps in diagnosing tree problems. Next week we will discuss more in-depth steps and processes when the obvious insect and disease has been ruled out.

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