

Welcome to the new DAKOTA ISA Associate Organization (and soon a chapter).....

To the Members of the North Dakota Urban and Community Forestry Association and the South Dakota Arborist Association

John Ball, Interim Executive Director, Dakota ISA

The two state associations, the North Dakota Urban and Community Forestry Association and the South Dakota Arborists Association, decided to combine resources and membership and apply to become a new chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). This change will allow us to tap the resources of the ISA to increase our educational programs across both states.

You do not have to join the ISA to continue your membership in the Dakota Chapter! You can continue to pay the same dues, \$35, and the funds will stay with the chapter. However if you are already a member of ISA and a current member of the Midwestern Chapter of ISA (or the Rocky Mountain Chapter) you can shift your chapter membership to our new organization. This means that some of the dollars from the dues you pay for your ISA membership will stay here to support educational programming in our states! This is a win for everyone, regardless of whether they elect to remain only a member of the chapter or decide to join the ISA as well.

The new board to this organization (see board members on page 4) have plans to provide more training opportunities once the COVID restrictions are lifted. We will be offering the TRAQ program (Tree Risk Assessment Qualification) for those that want to become qualified or need to re-qualify. We also are planning a climbing clinic and our first climbing competition with the winner representing us at the international competition. And we have our virtual conference coming up in February—see inside for more details on all this news!

John Ball



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Special points of interest

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A Message from the President of the Dakota ISA

Aaron Kiesz
ISA Dakotas Chapter President
South Dakota Arborist Association representative



I want to welcome everyone involved with tree care in North Dakota and South Dakota to a new opportunity. The North Dakota Urban and Community Forestry Association (NDUCFA) and the South Dakota Arborists Association (SDArA) have joined forces and merged into a single Associate Organization with the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA). Our new name will be Dakotas Chapter of ISA.

Many of you might be thinking, how this will affect my business or myself? By merging both groups, we will be in a better situation to offer more and better programming equally in both states. We will be able to keep costs for memberships, workshops, conferences, etc. in the same affordable price range as in the past. The most notable changes that you will see is larger event attendances, larger vendor/sponsor gatherings at events, more networking opportunities, more certification and qualification opportunities.

Overall, we feel this merger into one Dakotas ISA Chapter will be beneficial to everyone involved in Tree Care. Although Covid19 has disrupted many of our normal functions, we are hosting a virtual conference with a great lineup of speakers February 16-18, and hopefully back to in-person functions starting this summer.

We need to diversify our community forests beyond ash, elm and maples.



Dakota communities invested too much in ash and elms. These are tough, fast growing trees so their popularity in 1900s is not too surprising. The problem was too much reliance on too few species and genera. First, the loss of our North American elm, mostly American (*Ulmus americana*) and slippery (*U. rubra*) elm to Dutch elm disease and now green (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*), black (*F. nigra*) and white (*F. americana*) ash to emerald ash borer means we need to diversify our community forests.

Unfortunately we seem to be just switching problems and now maples are increasing in popularity—too popular in many towns with ‘Autumn Blaze’ maples and closely related cultivars being planted to the exclusion of others. We need to start considering others and will do so in every issue of this newsletter.

A Message from the Vice-President of the Dakota ISA

Scott Liudahl
ISA Dakotas Chapter Vice-President
North Dakota Urban & Community Forestry Association
representative

As many of you know, NDUCFA has been working with the South Dakota Arborist Association (SDAA) to combine membership into one group. Dakotas Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) will become one of the newest Associate Organizations.

This merger will bring additional benefits to the area and allow our associations to work together with the support of ISA to bring high quality educational opportunities to the Dakotas. NDUCFA and SDAA will no longer exist and its members will be part of the ISA Dakotas Chapter. Annual membership/chapter fees would be the same as they currently are for both NDUCFA and SDAA, but with greater benefits. If you pay dues for ISA credentials, you will now be able to receive additional benefits as our new chapter will receive a portion of those dues to promote workshops and educational opportunities.

Committees (we will be looking for members to assist) will soon be developed, and could include – Outreach, Conference, Communications, Sponsorships, Membership, Elections, Awards, Scholarships, ISA Certification, and Tree Climbing Competition.

Additionally, planning for a virtual conference in 2021 hosted by the Dakotas Chapter is in the works. The conference is currently scheduled for February 16-18, and will take place over three mornings. Presentations will be available on-demand for about a month after the conference for those who are unable to tune in on the scheduled dates and times. CEUs will be available for credential holders. See this issue for more information on the virtual conference.

We are excited for this new partnership and the benefits the larger organization will provide. Stay tuned!

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John Ball, South Dakota
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Forest Health Care Note

Squirrels chewing bark off trees

This is a phenomenon that occurs throughout much of the country and almost every year. It's not hard to see reports from alarmed elm tree owners



from North Dakota to Florida concerned with squirrels chewing the bark from their elm trees. While elms seem to be a preferred food, you can also find squirrel damage on basswoods, hackberries, and maples. This past week I have had several calls and text messages from tree owners wondering why squirrels are stripping bark from their trees!

No one knows the reason why squirrels strip the bark off these trees. The most likely reason is they are looking for a sweet treat. Down south in Texas, the squirrels are after the cedar elms (*Ulmus crassifolia*), in Missouri the American (*U. americana*) and slippery (*U. rubra*) elms and up here the American and Siberian (*U. pumila*)

elms. It does not appear they have a favorite elm; it is just whatever is available.

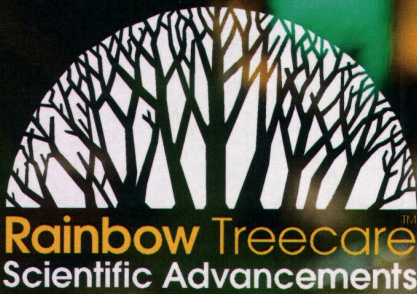
But what they all have in common is sweet (to a squirrel) inner bark. The sweetness is usually highest in the spring, just before bud break but the sugars also seem to concentrate in long dry warm Autumns. Combine that with the drought reducing the fruit and nut crop on many trees this year, common winter food resources for squirrels, and you have the perfect conditions for stripping elms.

There is not much that can be done to stop them. Some recommend setting another food source out to appease the squirrels, but this can just bring in more squirrels and some still prefer your trees. Another tactic is to place a smooth tin sheet around the trunk of an isolated elm so the squirrels cannot climb the tree. The recommendation is the sheet must be at least 2 feet wide and the base of the tin sheet be about three feet from the ground. The sheet must be removed before the tree starts to grow in the spring, otherwise it can choke and girdle the trunk.

John Ball
Forest Health Specialist
South Dakota Department of Agriculture



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Dakota ISA Virtual Conference February 16-18, 2021

Our first conference, as with almost every professional gathering include TCI EXPO and the ISA Annual Conference, is going virtual.

While we will miss the opportunity to see everyone and visit, we have a great line up of topics and speakers for this conference. The topics range from pruning to soils management and the all important subject of safety. The speakers are among the top speakers in their fields and speak often at regional, national and even international conferences.

The conference will be available live via zoom Sessions are available at the date and time listed below; but for those that are unable to log in at these times, sessions will be recorded and available from February 19 to March 1. ISA CEU's available.

All times are Central Standard Time.

February 16 Program

8:30 am- Welcome and Intro

A welcome from our president , Aaron Kiesz, and vice president Scott Liudahl and an introduction to our new association.

9:00 am- Tree Selection for the Dakotas (Todd West)

Todd West is a Professor in the Department of Plant Science at North Dakota State University. Todd leads the woody plant improvement program and has been instrumental in the development and release of new tree and shrub cultivars adapted to the Northern Plains. He will share his top choices for planting in the Dakota as well as new releases.

9:50 am- Break

10: 00 am- Tree Roots and Urban Soils (Tom Smiley)

Tom Smiley is a well-recognized authority in arboricultural profession. He is a plant physiologist and soil scientist with the Bartlett Tree Labs. Today Tom will talk with us about the problems for tree roots imposed by urban soils and specific address barriers such as sidewalks and other paved environments..

11:00 am- Conserving Mature Trees (Chad Giblin)

Chad is the director of operations for City Forestry LLC and a former member of University of Minnesota. We will round out the morning with a presentation on the importance of preserving mature trees in our communities. This process requires tree risk assessment, root system protection and enhancement, retrenchment pruning, and in some situations, supplemental support . Chad will take us through this entire process.

Noon Adjourn for the day

February 17 Program

9:00 am - Training young trees

Chad will continue his discussion with today's focus on properly training young trees to ensure they do become value assesses as they age. Chad is widely known for his training techniques for obtain the proper

structure on these trees as well as other common species.. This is a very interactive presentation with plenty of discussion and short video clips to illustrate the techniques.

10:20 am -

Break

10:30 am

Field Diagnosis of Tree Problems (Joe Zeleznik)

Joe Zeleznik is the Extension Forester for North Dakota State University. He, as with many of us, has to answer one of the most frequent questions from tree owners "What is wrong with my tree?" Joe will walk us through the process of investigating what may be the stressor or stressors that are impacting the tree.

11:30 am-

Emerald Ash Borer : Coming Soon! (John Ball)

John Ball is the Forest Health Specialist for the SD Department of Agriculture and the Extension Forester for South Dakota State University. John will cover the current situation of emerald ash borer in the Dakotas and the region. He will cover the common symptoms and signs of an infested tree as well as the life cycle of the insect. Treatment methods and timing will also be covered.

Noon

Adjourn for the day

February 18 Program

9:00 am-

Tree Removal Basics and Safety

Philip Kelly is a Certified Arborist and Safety Trainer for Wrights Tree Service. He is also one of the "cutting edge" speakers in the arboricultural industry. We all have trees to remove, either by felling or dismantling, and there will be many more as emerald ash borer continues to expand in our states. Phillip will cover all the tricks of the trade for safe felling and rigging.

10:20 am -

Break

10:30 am-

Chain Saw Safety (John Ball)

Chain saws have been one of the most basic tools of the production arborist for more than a half century. But today's saws bear little resemblance to the 1949 McCulloch 3-25, in maintenance or operations. This session will address today's chain saws, including the rapidly expanding array of cordless electric chain saws and the standards for their safe operation.

11:00 am-

**Urban and Community Forestry Update
(Rachel Ormseth and Gerri McKay)**

Our two state urban and community forestry specialists will provide an update on what the SD Department of Agriculture and the North Dakota Forest Service are doing for community forestry in our states including current project and future grant opportunities.

11:40 am -

Jr Arborist Program—training the next generation (Christina Lind)

We are always in need for young folks to decide to follow in our footsteps and become arborists or urban foresters. The challenge is few students know that our profession exists! This is an exciting new program at McCrory Gardens, funded by an ISA grant, to introduce kids to our profession. Christine Lind, McCrory Gardens Education Coordinator, will discuss the program and the experience of teaching eight and ten year old kids how to climb!

See the North Dakota Urban and Community Forestry Association or the South Dakota Arborist Association websites for registration details

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Kentucky coffeetree (*Gymnocladus dioica*) is one of our most underappreciated ornamental



trees. The tree is a 'solar friendly' species meaning it leafs out late (around mid-May) and begins to drop its leaves early in autumn (late September) so little winter shading. The open branching pattern creates a light shade during the summer and grass will grow fine beneath this tree.

Kentucky coffeetree has almost no pests on the Northern Plains. It is also tolerant of slightly alkaline soils. Its greatest limitation is our winters which limits it to South Dakota and southern North Dakota

There are several male cultivars available since most people find the pods objectionable. The following cultivars do not usually produce pods. However, don't be surprised if you see a few pods on these trees.

Espresso™ (*G. dioica* 'Espresso-JFS') has an arching form, almost elm-like appearance.

Prairie Titan^R (*G. dioica* 'J.C.McDonald') is a tree from Illinois that is noted for its upright, slightly spreading form. Limited hardiness on the Northern Plains.

Stately Manor (*G. dioica* 'Stately Manor') is a University of Minnesota introduction with a narrow, upright form at maturity.

True North™ (*G. dioica* 'UMNSynergy') is another University of Minnesota cultivar with a very narrow form, often the width is less than half the height.

Dakota ISA

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