

EAB Threats to First Nations Culture

The Emerald Ash Borer threatens Ash trees and will have a devastating impact on First Nations, tribal and culture groups in Canada and the United States. Ash, Black Ash in particular, is considered to be a “sacred tree” because of its many properties and uses.

1. Basket making, a centuries old cultural and economic tradition, is based on the availability of Black Ash (*Fraxinus nigra*). The EAB infestations make it difficult for basket makers to find, healthy, basket-quality trees. Thus fewer people will be making baskets.
2. The pipes and flutes, used for ceremonial and special event, are carved from many kinds of trees including Black Ash.
3. Medicinal remedies are made from different parts of the ash tree. Some uses are: to treat external skin growths; use as an antiseptic, an aphrodisiac, a diuretic, an appetite stimulant, and a treatment for fevers.
4. The game of Lacrosse has ceremonial origins and brings First Nations/tribes and families together. Traditional lacrosse sticks are crafted from ash wood, an irreplaceable component.

People of the Dawn

The First Nations and tribes of the eastern provinces and states tell us that Glooskap took his bow and arrows and shot at the Black Ash. When the bark and wood split, out stepped strong and graceful women and men. We call these women and men “People of the Dawn,” the Wabanaki.

<http://www.indians.org/welker/hispeopl.htm>

