

[North Georgia Blue Ridge Mountains - Georgia's Graceful Giants are Dying](#)

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Georgia's Hemlock Trees - Our Graceful Giants are dying



Our native [Eastern](#) and [Carolina Hemlocks](#) are being attacked and killed by an invasive insect pest, the **Hemlock Woolly Adelgid**.

The hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA) is a serious pest of hemlock trees in Georgia. It is an aphid like insect that feeds on eastern and Carolina hemlock trees. The result of this feeding is eventual tree mortality. The very existence of the eastern and Carolina hemlock species is greatly threatened by HWA. It was accidentally introduced to the U.S. over fifty years ago and has been spreading up and down the entire Appalachian Mountain chain ever since. The infestation into Georgia has been steadily gaining momentum.

Hemlocks are found throughout **north Georgia**, and you may have them on your property. Almost all of these beautiful trees will die in the next few years unless action is taken soon.

BUT GOOD NEWS - HELP IS AVAILABLE !

[Save Georgia's Hemlocks](#), a recently formed volunteer organization, is implementing a new Hemlock Help for Homeowners program with the goal of helping north **Georgia property owners** save as many of your **Hemlocks** as possible for the lowest possible cost. Launched first in [Rabun County](#), the program is being deployed across **north Georgia** on a county by county basis.

Hemlock Clinics are free and open to the public unless specifically noted in the schedule below. They typically last about 90 minutes and include:



Slide presentation on the problem with the Hemlock woolly adelgid, the options for homeowners to save their Hemlocks at the lowest possible cost, and the services available through the Hemlock Help for Homeowners program for all of north Georgia

- Hands-on demonstration on using a soil injector to treat Hemlocks
- Educational hand-out materials that you are welcome to reproduce and share freely
- Plenty of time for questions and answers

Save Georgia's Hemlocks will be glad to schedule special presentations for homeowner associations, conservation and recreation organizations, schools, churches, and other community groups. Call the Hemlock Help Line 706-429-8010 to set up a time.

Date	Activity
Thursday, 7 p.m., Oct. 15	Hemlock Clinic -- free and open to the public. Location is County Courthouse, 48 River Street, Hiawassee in Towns County.
Saturday, 10 a.m., Oct. 17	Hemlock Clinic -- free and open to the public. Location is Pearson Pond Llama Ranch, 242 Llama Lane (Charles Lane), Ellijay in Gilmer County. For driving directions, visit www.pearsonpond.com .
October/November	A Hemlock Clinic will be scheduled in Fannin County. Notice will be posted here and in the local newspapers.
November	Follow-up Hemlock Clinics will be scheduled in Rabun, Habersham, and White Counties. Notice will be posted here and in the local newspapers.

Why Care?

- Aesthetically: These gorgeous trees are a major contributor to the enjoyment of all of us who live, work and play in the **North Georgia Blue Ridge Mountains**.
- Environmentally: Hemlocks play a vital role in providing natural habitat and source of food for hundreds of species such as vertebrates and birds and they provide shade for native plants, cool temperatures for **trout streams** and protection for watersheds and water quality. See [Trout Unlimited](#) information on conservation and more regarding our treasured trout streams. See [Science News](#) on the affects of water dynamics for the **Southern Appalachian Mountains**.
- Economically: Mature Hemlocks may add 7 - 10% to a homeowner's property value, filters pollutants from the air, produces oxygen, and can have a net cooling affect of 10 room sized air conditioners.

(as of October 4, 2009) Source: [Donna Shearer](#) (with her permission to copy)

This is a very serious issue in **North Georgia** with broad **environmental** and **economical** implications. This infestation has the potential to affect every personal property owner and our beautiful **National Forests**. It's an issue that really warrants attention from anyone who loves the **North Georgia Mountains**. We cannot afford to lose these graceful giants. They are crucial to the ecology and hydrology of **mountain ecosystems**. By all reports, these beautiful trees are declining much faster than expected.

[**Hemlock Trees Dying Rapidly, Affecting Forest Carbon Cycle**](#)
ScienceDaily (Mar. 10, 2009) - New research by U.S. Forest Service Southern Research Station (SRS) scientists and partners suggests the hemlock woolly adelgid is killing hemlock trees faster than expected in the southern Appalachians and rapidly altering the carbon cycle of these forests. SRS researchers and cooperators from the University of Georgia published the findings in the most recent issue of the journal Ecosystems.
 Source: Science Daily



Whether you have property here or just come for a short visit to enjoy the natural beauty of the ancient **Appalachian Mountains**, this issue is important to everyone. Property owners can help by taking care of their own hemlocks, be alert to signs of infestation; help neighbors save their trees and join the fight. This is going to require a unified effort to solve the problem. For those nature lovers who do not own property here, you can still help by joining the fight, spread the word through your email contacts, friends and family, volunteer or even get training to treat trees professionally and/or make a donation. Contact Dr. Mark Shearer or Donna Shearer at 706-429-8010

More Information on [Save Georgia's Hemlocks](#) can be found by clicking the links below:

[Hemlock Photos](#)

[Hemlock Help](#)

[Trout Unlimited Blue Ridge](#)

[Hemlock Doctor](#)

[AdelRid](#)

[Grow It Green](#)

[J. Wendell Snow](#)

[Young Harris College Hemlock Project](#)

[University of Georgia](#)

For information on professionally treating your Hemlocks call the Hemlock Help Line at 706-429-8010.

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around the mountains with Donna