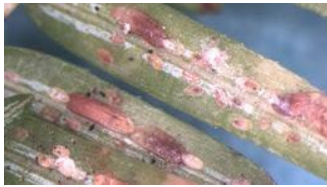




Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association  
Creating tomorrow's woodlands today

## Kick Off Your Week by Learning Something New: Importance of Verifying Nursery Stock

This special Learn Something New is a reprint of an article from the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP). They have permitted us to do so, as we wanted it to serve as a cautionary tale for members to stay diligent and ensure that they know precisely where nursery stock purchases come from, especially when ordering from outside our region.



Elongate Hemlock Scale with Crawlers, DATCP M. Lannan



Settled Hemlock Woolly Adelgids, DATCP M. Lannan



### Hemlock Woolly Adelgid and Elongate Hemlock-Scale Intercepted on Hemlock Seedlings from Out-of- State

On April 30, 2025, DATCP staff became aware of a report of [elongate hemlock scale \(EHS\)](#) on a hemlock seedling in Wisconsin. The report was submitted by a UW-Stevens Point (UWSP) student on iNaturalist, a social network for sharing observations of biodiversity.

*Image Left: hemlock planted at UWSP, credit: iNaturalist*

Because EHS is an invasive, non-native pest that Wisconsin has an exterior quarantine for, DATCP immediately investigated the report. DATCP learned Schmeckle Reserve, a 280-acre conservancy area on the UWSP campus, had planted 50 hemlocks on April 27 which they had recently obtained from a Wisconsin nursery. On May 1, DATCP and UWSP staff worked together to remove all seedlings from three areas at Schmeckle, finding most infested with EHS, including live immatures (known as crawlers), as well as 10% that were also infested with live hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA).

DATCP followed up with the Wisconsin nursery that sold the seedlings and learned the nursery had purchased 2,200 hemlocks from a nursery in Warren County, Tennessee. Although the Wisconsin nursery had a compliance agreement to import hemlocks from Michigan, they switched suppliers when the Michigan nursery couldn't fill their order. The Wisconsin nursery surrendered for examination and destruction 275 remaining unsold seedlings to DATCP. They also provided information for 34 customers who purchased hemlock seedlings and immediately reached out to those individuals with instructions to quickly remove and destroy infested seedlings and to offer a credit or refund. DATCP also contacted these customers to share information on HWA and EHS and offered to pick up or help remove any hemlocks that were planted. DATCP tracked and verified all plant material customers destroyed on their own. Material picked up by DATCP staff was examined and found to have a much more significant infestation of HWA, along with the EHS.

DATCP issued a rejection notice to the Tennessee nursery after determining these wild collected hemlocks were not shipped in accordance with State of Wisconsin EHS or HWA exterior quarantine requirements. These quarantines require plant material be officially inspected and certified to be free of regulatory pests, or effectively treated to kill these invasive, non-native insects. EHS and HWA are not known to be established in Wisconsin. Fortunately, no other hemlocks were shipped from this Tennessee nursery to Wisconsin.

As of May 12, a total of 2,185 hemlock seedlings, or 99.3%, have been recovered from the field. DATCP staff are considering this to be a successful "regulatory interception" in which infested material is brought into the state but destroyed before the pest has a chance to establish. Notably, most of the hemlock seedlings were in very poor health. As is standard protocol, DATCP plans to work with partners in coming months and years to perform follow up surveys at sites that received infested stock and have significant amounts of hemlocks or other conifers that may be at risk.

This “close call” highlights the importance of following terms of compliance agreements and quarantines to protect Wisconsin’s native hemlocks, other conifers, and the green industry. DATCP is grateful for the people and actions that led to the early detection and rapid response to this situation, including UWSP students and faculty, the Wisconsin nursery, their customers, and DATCP staff who went above and beyond to track down source information and recover hemlocks from the field.

*Image Right: DATCP forest entomologist collecting an infested hemlock, credit: DATCP J. Oestreich*



---

Please note that this is the *first and only* sighting of Hemlock Woolly Adelgid in the State of Wisconsin to date. As mentioned in the article, this pest has not been established here. We're lucky to have organizations like the DATCP nursery program, which can respond to potentially detrimental situations like the one presented above. If you would like to receive monthly updates from our friends there, [subscribe](#) to their [What's Growing On?](#) e-newsletter. Past issues of the e-newsletter can also be viewed at the "What's Growing On" link.

If you would like to learn more about the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid, Wisconsin DNR has more information on this [webpage](#) or via this forest health [fact sheet](#).

---

Click the [green text](#) to learn more information

Questions? Contact the office at 715-346-4798 or [wwoa@uwsp.edu](mailto:wwoa@uwsp.edu)

Created by Kristen Summers, AmeriCorps Member

[Visit our website!](#)

