



Lesson 1- Your Tree is Part of the Urban Forest

Key Points

- The urban forest is the collection of all the trees, shrubs, perennials, insects and animals working together as an ecosystem within our city
- The urban forest is managed by municipal staff, conservation authorities, environmental organizations, community members and homeowners
- The urban forest provides a number of benefits:
 - aesthetic- increase property values by up to 30%
 - intercepts rainfall resulting in reduced storm water runoff and improved water quality
 - improves air quality by trapping pollution particles that cause breathing problems
 - absorbs carbon dioxide and other gases and in return provides us with oxygen
 - reduces air temperature when water evaporates from the leaves
 - provides much-needed wildlife habitat
 - reduces noise pollution by acting as a sound barrier
 - promotes a sense of community
 - shades streets and yards, blocking out UV rays
 - shades our homes reducing electricity demand to run our air conditioners
- Threats to the urban forest include:
 - development practices in urban areas,
 - creating and enforcing protection policies,
 - exotic pests
 - Urban tree stresses
 - improper pruning
 - drought
 - vandalism
 - not enough growing space
 - pollution
 - road salt
 - lack of proper care