

SOME SUCCESS IN NON-NATIVE BEETLE FIGHT

Shawn Allee
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The City of Chicago and the U.S. Department of Agriculture are celebrating a small victory in their battle against an invasive pest. The Asian Longhorned Beetle arrived from China and is responsible for destroying thousands of hardwood trees in North America. The Great Lakes Radio Consortium's Shawn Allee has more.

Chicago saw its first Asian Longhorned Beetle back in 1998. USDA and Chicago officials quickly destroyed more than fifteen hundred trees to stop the infestation. They also slapped a quarantine on the historic Ravenswood neighborhood, which prevented residents from removing tree cuttings from the area.

Now officials are lifting those restrictions, saying no one's seen the bug in the area's stately tree canopy for nearly two years. Joe McCarthy is the City of Chicago's chief forester. He says a beetle hotline and a diligent press made the difference.

"There's so much coverage of this thing, that the beetle is on TV, out in the papers, on front pages. And that's how all the main infestations were found in the Chicago area."

McCarthy points out that another Chicago neighborhood is still under quarantine.

The USDA is also fighting the Asian Longhorned Beetle in New York City and parts of New Jersey.

For the GLRC, I'm Shawn Allee.