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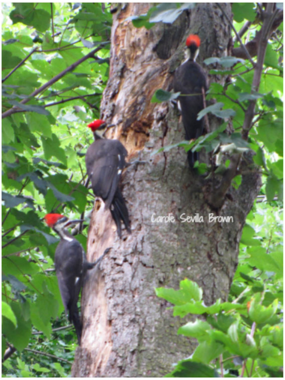
The Demise of the Norway Maples

BY CAROLE SEVILLA BROWN

20 COMMENTS

Those of you who've been reading along for a while now know that the abundance of invasive Norway Maples in my neighbor's yard have been causing some issues for me in my wildlife garden for quite some time now.

About the only good thing I have to say about the invasive Norway Maples is that they have hosted many different woodpecker nests over the years, including Downy Woodpeckers, Hairy Woodpeckers, Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Northern Flickers, and Yellow-bellied Sapsuckers. And we've even had Pileated Woodpeckers stop by to feast on the bugs under the loose bark!



Over the years my wildlife garden has become my special haven, a quiet place to get away from the cares of the world and relax in the beauty and calm of the birds, butterflies, bees, and other wildlife who have chosen to take up residence here in my garden.

This is my safe spot, and that safety is inviolable.

The property next door has been abandoned for about 5 years now, and the previous owner had no interest in caring for these trees, or even fixing the roof problems causing severe water damage to his house.

Last summer my nephew Lucas came and helped me clear a 20 foot wide buffer zone on this neighbor's side of the fence which we then planted with hardy (and beautiful) native plants to create some beauty for us, some habitat for the birds and butterflies, and to hold at bay all of the invasive plants that were growing with wild abandon over there.

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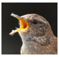

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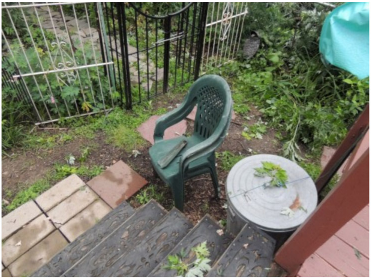

Earl Ross smashed my garden chairs

Imagine my surprise when I returned from my trip to Albuquerque to find a contractor driving a huge crane and a backhoe onto this property.

My two Plott Hounds were going nuts, so I went outside to see what was going on.

Earl Ross of Goodman and Ross Trucking in Philadelphia introduced himself and informed me that the house had been sold at sheriff sale to someone who wanted to flip it at an enormous profit, and that he was there to take down the Norway Maples and other trees for the new owner of the house. He asked us about the things we had planted and assured us that he wanted to be careful not to remove anything that we wanted.

Little did I know at that time that Earl V. Ross, Jr would become a frightening nightmare who cared very little for his own safety or that of his crew, nor did he care one whit for my home, my garden, my neighbors homes, or power or cable wires (he reminds me of the frightening situation I faced with John Carson and Sons Roofing, and that is terrifying!)

Here's an example of his work which shows he should be nominated for a Darwin Award:

We have not been able to archive the video associated with this YouTube page.

Earl Ross is a danger to all around him. He used no safety ropes on any of the tree limbs, instead allowing giant tree trunks to free fall on top of the power and cable lines and smash into the street. He thinks it's safe to use a chain saw with one hand.

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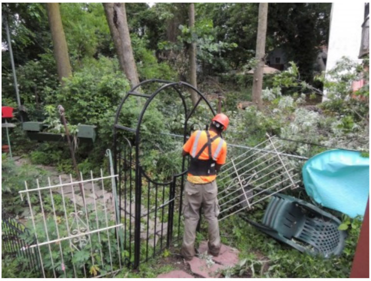
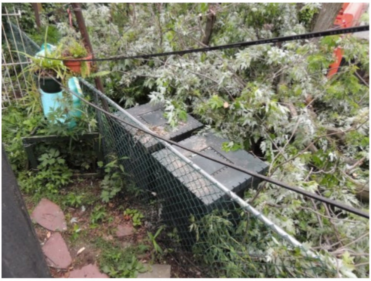


Earl Ross smashed my garden gate

After he let a huge Norway Maple limb free fall into my garden and smash my brand new garden gate, destroy 2 chairs, and take out my cable service, I was rightfully upset about the danger he posed to my home and garden.



Earl Ross tree removal wipes out my cable and phone service

The response I got from Earl Ross when I expressed my displeasure about his destruction of my garden?

He said “Now you’re just going to whine about every little thing?”

He then continued, “Accidents happen. You know that guy that caused that building to collapse in Philadelphia, he didn’t mean to hurt anyone, it was just an accident. So stop your whining and leave me alone.”

And then the clincher, “You didn’t have anything of value in your garden anyway.”

Nothing of value in my garden? Are you kidding me? My garden itself is a huge value to me, as I’m sure would be the case with any gardener I know.

And then I found out that Earl V. Ross, Jr. of Goodman and Ross Trucking in Philadelphia is not only extremely dangerous when doing tree work, he’s also spiteful and vindictive as well, because he then proceeded to cut down and destroy everything that I had shown him that we had planted over there.

Earl Ross destroyed the safe place that was my wildlife garden haven. And I’m not at all happy about that.

Earl, the owner of Goodman and Ross Trucking, should have known that driving large construction vehicles would rip up the ground, making landscaping extremely difficult, and any reputable

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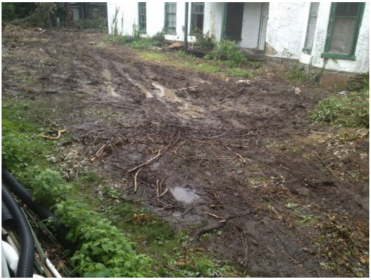
arborist would have used turf protection mats to limit this damage, but this is obviously not a reputable contractor.

Check out the mess he's left behind:



If Earl Ross is any indication of the quality of workmanship that this new owner is going to hire to fix up this house, I hold out little hope that he's interested in quality work. Obviously he's more interested in the cheapest price he can get regardless of safety or the damages to anyone else's property.

If you need to have tree work done on your property, please take the time to check out the credentials of any contractor before you hire them. A certified arborist is your best choice. Don't hire some guy with a chain saw. He'll put your home, your garden, your property, and your life in danger. I mean, you wouldn't hire a plumber to do open heart surgery, why would you hire a trucking company like Goodman and Ross to work on your trees?

Sean Duffy and Joanne Donohue of Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education planting my new Redbud tree

Happily, this story has a much more positive ending. I had gone to the native plant sale at Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education back in May and purchased a raffle ticket to win a good sized native Redbud tree, thinking that it was a nice way to make more of a contribution to the good work they are doing.

Imagine my surprise when they called to tell us that we had won that tree!

Canada Native Plants

Removing the wire cage and pulling back the burlap

This week I had the pleasure of meeting Joanne Donohue and Sean Duffy who manage the nursery at the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education when they came to plant my new tree.

I asked them to plant it along the fence line where the tree massacre had just taken place to serve as the start of a screen to block out the bad memories inflicted by Earl Ross.

Joanne Donohue and Sean Duffy in front of my new Redbud tree

My new tree makes me very happy, and has gone a long way in restoring my sense of safety in my wildlife garden haven.

If you're in the Philadelphia area, please stop by the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education, also stop by and give the SCEE Facebook page a "like"

Also see *Norway Maple I'm Stuck With You* for another perspective on this invasive tree

Follow the make-over in my wildlife garden:

- Where's My Wildlife Garden?
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- Starting a Wildlife Garden From Scratch
- Starting Over: What Can Stay and What Must Go
- Birding View from my Office on the Deck
- New Wildlife Garden Update
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Check out my new free online course Ecosystem Gardening Essentials, 15 free lessons delivered to your inbox every week, teaching you to garden sustainably, conserve natural resources, and create welcoming habitat for wildlife in your garden.

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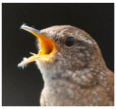

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About Carole Sevilla Brown

Carole Sevilla Brown is a Conservation Biologist who firmly believes that wildlife conservation begins in your own back yard. Carole is an author, educator, speaker, and passionate birder, butterfly watcher, and naturalist who travels around the country speaking about **Ecosystem Gardening**: teaching people to garden sustainably, conserve natural resources, and create welcoming habitat for wildlife so that you will attract more birds, butterflies, pollinators and other wildlife. She gardens for wildlife in Philadelphia, zone 6b. Watch for her book *Ecosystem Gardening*, due out soon. Carole is founder and managing editor of **Beautiful Wildlife Garden**, and also founder and managing editor of **Native Plants and Wildlife Gardens**. Due to the overwhelming desire of readers to locate native plants, Carole created **Find Native Plants** to help wildlife gardeners locate native plants and other native plant resources for their region of the country. Carole also created the **Wildlife Garden Academy** to create a community for wildlife gardeners to learn more.
Follow Carole on Facebook, and Twitter, and Flickr, and on Google+

COMMENTS

Donna@Gardens Eye View says
06/17/2013 at 7:38 pm

What a jerk…I do hope you reported him to many organizations as he is a danger and needs to be shut down. Good to hear you had a happy ending.

Donna@Gardens Eye View recently posted..Grow Great Grub

Reply

Arthur in the Garden! says
06/17/2013 at 8:08 pm

Nice! Love Pileated Woodpeckers!

Reply

Ilona says
06/25/2013 at 9:03 am

While I'm not a huge fan of Norway maples, the demise of any tree, and especially the complete destruction you experienced is truly awful. For you personally and for the environment. Unfortunately your horror story with the contractor is not uncommon- too many louts are in the business. I wholeheartedly underline your advice, and found a good arborist through word of mouth in my community. It makes such a difference to have an expert work safely and with the good of the trees and property in mind!

You will love you redbud! So happy you had a silver lining to this fiasco.

Ilona recently posted..Buddleia Bushes, The Butterfly Magnet

Reply

Genevieve says
06/27/2013 at 3:20 pm

As a landscape professional, I'm horrified to hear about this. None of the things you describe are approved practice and he was operating in a very unsafe manner. Even when you alerted him to the danger he was causing, it not only didn't wake him up, but made things worse!

I would urge you to contact every local and state organization you can think of. Whomever issues business licenses, contractor's licenses, arborist's certifications, etc, should be aware that he is operating in this way. Whether or not he has a license, they'll be very interested in knowing that you have photos and video of his unsafe practice. I'm really beyond horrified and so sorry he put you through this. Totally unacceptable.

Genevieve recently posted..Edible Landscaping for Industrial Settings: Tips and Best Plants

Reply

Brenda Lynn says
07/16/2013 at 1:49 pm

I was drawn in by the picture that accompanies your story, only to be horrified by the tale. I sympathize, since I have a half-dead Red Maple on my property, which is host to countless species of woodpeckers. Granted, it's more desirable than the Norway Maple, but I've debated keeping it for the birds, vs. taking it down for safety reasons. I can't bring myself to take it down, so we'll see what nature brings!

Brenda Lynn recently posted..Tomato Trials

Reply

cynthia says
08/24/2013 at 9:16 am

Brenda,

Have you thought about just taking the dangerous branches off the red maple and leaving the trunk standing for the woodpeckers? This works best in a wild setting and might not be a great look in a suburban lot, but it might be a good compromise.

Reply

Marsia says
07/26/2013 at 8:08 am

I just realized we are in the same area. We bought a property filled with invasives , the Norway maple being the least of the problems, and I would love insight on local resources to help eradicate them.

Reply

Trackbacks

Norway Maple most hated invasive plants says:
06/17/2013 at 7:31 pm
[…] check out the scary demise of these Norway Maples by a dangerous […]

Invasive Royal Empress Paulownia Native Alternatives says:
06/17/2013 at 11:52 pm
[…] The Demise of the Norway Maples […]

Tree Massacre in the Wildlife Garden says:
06/19/2013 at 1:05 pm
[…] neighborhood watched in horror as a butcher with a chain saw started hacking down the 150 year old trees with no safety ropes and no turf protectors in the most dangerous way […]

Progress in My Wildlife Garden says:
06/19/2013 at 2:49 pm
[…] I'm so excited that I won a native Redbud tree when I was at the native plant sale at the Schuylkill Center for Environmental Education several […]

Wildlife Gardening need not be costly says:
06/19/2013 at 2:57 pm
[…] The Demise of the Norway Maples (the story of some very scary and dangerous tree removal) […]

The Demise of the Norway Maples says:
06/19/2013 at 4:47 pm

[…] what happened next at the Demise of the Norway Maples at Ecosystem […]

Seedbombing the Neighborhood says:

09/04/2013 at 12:35 pm

[…] cutting the whole mess back, then the nightmare portion began as he used very dangerous methods to cut down most of the invasive Norway Maples, such as not using any safety ropes, but just allowing large limbs to fall on our electric wires […]

Aster Yellows Disease on Echinacea says:

09/05/2013 at 3:55 pm

[…] out pulling the massive amount of weeds that had sprung up in my wildlife garden after over a month of rain storms every day, followed by over two weeks of very hot and humid […]

Seed Bombing My Wildlife Garden says:

11/13/2013 at 7:24 pm

[…] The Demise of the Norway Maples (the story of some very scary and dangerous tree removal) […]

Wildlife Garden Start Over Update: Spring says:

01/09/2014 at 8:25 pm

[…] out the demise of the Norway Maple trees by a dangerous […]

Ice Storm Beauty in a Wildlife Garden says:

02/05/2014 at 3:49 pm

[…] My new Redbud has (so far) not lost any branches during the ice storm […]

If I Just Stop Mowing, Can I Get a Wildflower Meadow? says:

07/02/2014 at 4:07 pm

[…] sale or tax sale, only to abandon it again, such as the time that a prospective owner sent a butcher with a chain saw to take down most of the […]

Saying Goodbye to All the Plants in My Front Garden says:

11/19/2014 at 12:44 pm

[…] The Demise of the Norway Maples (the story of some very scary and dangerous tree removal) […]