



*“No other conifer surpasses hemlock in grace and beauty.”*

*Charles Sprague Sargent, American Botanist and Director of Harvard University's Arnold Arboretum*

This year's 50/50 Raffle supports the Huyck Preserve's continued efforts to save its hemlocks.

Hemlock is so important that it is considered a foundation species, meaning it controls ecosystem processes and helps to structure the ecosystem where it is found. Today hemlocks cover 350 acres of the Huyck Preserve's land. These dark, cool forests are composed of some of our oldest trees and serve many important functions including providing habitat for some of our most charismatic inhabitants (like porcupine, fox, coyote, black bear, deer, and barred owls) and protecting water quality and fresh water habitat along the shores of Lincoln Pond, Lake Myosotis, Trout Creek, and Ten-Mile Creek (including at the Rensselaerville Falls).

Hemlock woolly adelgid (HWA), an invasive aphid-like insect pest, is now present across the Preserve including in the hemlock stands that we have deemed most important to protect. Left untreated, hemlock woolly adelgid kills entire hemlock forests within a matter of years. The world's forests are increasingly critical in the fight against climate change because of their ability to sequester carbon, and the Huyck Preserve is committed to protecting them from forest pests and other threats. Because they build a soft and springy organic duff on the forest floor, hemlock forests are unusually good at locking up carbon on the ground – the loss of a stand of hemlocks, therefore, releases more carbon than a similar loss of other types of forests.

This year, the Huyck Preserve is partnering with the NYS Hemlock Initiative to explore the feasibility of using two species of silver flies for biological control of HWA, an important step toward landscape scale conservation of hemlock forests. We have also treated HWA below the Rensselaerville Falls and along Lincoln Pond. This long-term project requires commitment and resources. Won't you help? The Huyck Preserve's portion of the 50/50 Raffle earnings will be dedicated to the treatment of hemlock woolly adelgid to ensure the long-term survival of these majestic and valuable trees.