



Mother Nature's Moment • October 2016

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Tired Leaves

During the months of August and often in September and October we receive calls from concerned clients that the leaves on their trees and or shrubs look “bad”. That they have shot holes or black spots or are tattered looking. Although unusual looking leaves can be a warning signal that there is a problem that should be addressed, often it is simply the “natural way of things”. At least in the later part of summer and into fall. During the months of May, June, July and into August, if it is not too hot, those leaves are HARD at work creating sugars from chlorophyll for their food from the sun's energy. Because our tree friends have a wisdom beyond our understanding, they over produce what they need as individuals in order to feed many other creatures and even plants, including us humans.

The insects, birds, fungi, and mammals that also use the trees for food have also been hard at work gathering what they need. So by this time of year, just before the leaves begin their amazing show of color they are rightfully looking a bit tired out. They may look a bit tattered or worn or have holes. Remember that in nature's give and take they are often giving. In a forest setting those trees are actually sharing their nutrients not just with feeding insects, birds and animals but also with each other by providing food for their neighbors and family members who are not as healthy as they might be. It is a wonderful system of community and a reminder of how the trees are able to communicate in what has been termed the “world wood web”.



Tattered Red Oak leaves photographed at sunset; by Lesley Bruce Smith