

A Night at the Victors

Characters

Announcer: If possible, dress up in suit and tie or evening dress. Try to talk with a “Hollywood” voice.

Emerald Ash Borer (EAB): Wear cape and headpiece over black pants and either black, magenta, or purple top. At the beginning, speak very timidly, but gain confidence as the speech progresses.

Setting

An “Oscar-like” stage with a podium and microphone would be ideal. Do what you can with what you have! You’ll need an envelope with a slip of paper inside. Use the included trophy as the “Victor.”

Script

Announcer: Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, welcome to the Victors, a night of glamour and glitz, an event to remember! Tonight we will honor the most successful plants and animals in North America. Living species that have demonstrated their abilities to outcompete, outlive, and outlast all others!

Without further adieu, let us commence.

In the category of *Most Invasive Forest Insect Pest*, the nominees are . . .

- Gypsy Moth for its role in defoliating trees since 1869.
- Emerald Ash Borer for its role in turning ash trees into firewood in Michigan, Ohio, and Ontario and threatening ash trees across the Midwest.
- and Asian Longhorn Beetle for its inspiring New York comeback after being ushered off the stage in the Midwest.

(open the envelope)

And the winner is . . . Emerald Ash Borer!

(pause)

And the winner is . . . Emerald Ash Borer!

(pause, look around)

Where is that EAB hiding now? Maybe a drum roll will draw him out of the woodwork!

The Emerald Ash Borer!

(EAB peeks from around corner and sheepishly approaches the podium.)

EAB: I just really don’t know what to say. I really never expected (or wanted) this kind of recognition.

But since I’m here . . . (chuckles nervously)

I’d like to thank my mother, Emmy. She did a great job of picking a delicious healthy ash tree to nourish me and my other 75 siblings. But to be honest it really wasn’t that hard of a job. This country is full of ash trees. Why, chances are good you have a beautiful ash tree right in your own yard.

And, of course, I’d like to thank the ash tree that nourished my brothers and sisters and me. What a sacrifice for my future that tree made! May her soul rest in peace. . . . (bow head reverently)

But most of all, I’d like to thank *people*! You humans are the greatest! Without people, emerald ash borers would still be stuck in Asia plagued by natural predators and diseases. But you brought us here to America, the land of opportunity. I know, I know, you didn’t *mean* to bring us, but I just want to say a big thank-you on behalf of myself and emerald ash borers everywhere. And now that we are here, you folks are just being great about helping us advance our careers. You’ve given us free rides to Ontario, Ohio, and Illinois. We’re really looking forward to moving into Wisconsin. We hear that Wisconsin has ash trees everywhere – backyards, front yards, streets, parks, forests. We’ll be waiting for the big break, but in the meantime thank you for this wonderful award.

Announcer: Well, it looks like we are out of time. The rest of the awards will have to wait until next week when we will be honoring the most successful forest plant. It looks to be a close contest between garlic mustard and buckthorn, but there are some recent stars appearing in their first forests that might take the prize. Until then, good luck and good night.