

Dutch Elm Disease - a reality on P.E.I.

BY KEN MAYHEW

If just one tree could be said to characterize the cities and towns of North America, then that tree must be the elm. Often taller than the surrounding structures, its branches and leaves spreading out among the highest buildings, this tree has lent its grace and beauty to many parks and streets.

The value of the elm was not purely aesthetic however. It provided wood for furniture, boat building, and barrels for dry goods. In fact, according to Native Trees of Canada, by R.C. Hosie, "in many a farm kitchen, the white, scrubbed, elm-topped table was a symbol of the housewife's insistence on cleanliness."

Unfortunately, this story has taken a sad turn, as in recent years this most graceful of trees has been struck down by a killer: Dutch Elm Disease. Today in many parts of its former range, the elm has all but

