

SWPWO



Bigtooth aspen

Southwest PENNA Woodland Owners Association

May 2012

NEXT MEETING AND FIELD TRIP

May 9 Meeting

WED, 7 PM: Waynesburg, PA

Forest Succession

Arlyn Perkey addresses the nature of change in the woodlands setting. He will discuss early, middle and late succession vegetation, as well as the role of natural seed sources and artificial regeneration in the developing forest, touching also on degrees of shade tolerance and the longevity of some of our most common local tree species. Arlyn will use images from the Perkey Tree Farms and the Cooper's Rock Crop Tree Demonstration Area, and surroundings, to illustrate how our forests grow with and without human activities.

Location: Building #10, Greene Country Fairgrounds, Waynesburg

May 12 Field Trip

SAT, 1 to 4

Cooper's Rock State Forest, east of Morgantown, W.Va. via I-68

We will visit Cooper's Rock with the recently available publication, *Cooper's Rock Crop Tree Demonstration Area, 20-Year Results*, in our hands. In addition to reviewing the growth rates of individual crop trees, we will consider yellow poplar in relation to red oak and the effect on forest succession. We will examine any regeneration currently present and discuss how it does or does not relate to the future of the forest in this area.

Meet at the Greene County Fairgrounds, Building #10 to leave at 12:15 PM

REVIEW OF APRIL MEETING AND FIELD TRIP

On April 11, Russ Gibbs— rugibbs@pa.gov ---Washington & Greene County Service Forester, talked to us about the Pennsylvania Forest Stewardship program, as well as the importance of devising a Stewardship Plan for your property. The Newsletter will address these topics in a future issue; information on them can be found via our web site (see below).

Eleven SWPWO members gathered near Eighty Four, PA for a tour of an operating farm on April 14. This property is slated to be strip-mined and then restored. The tour was led by Jim Patterson and conducted in a hay wagon as

we moved around the 100+ acres. The Patterson family has always practiced forest management and timber harvesting, along with farming small grain crops. The tour began by inspecting harvested logs. These logs had been sorted by species and the property has already yielded a number of veneer grade logs. (The timber harvest has only just begun.) We then headed to the forest with attention to the anticipated timber harvest, the proposed layout of the strip mine, and the subsequent restoration of the farm and forest. The coal seam of interest is generally between 25' and 5' underground, though the coal does 'blossom' to the surface here and there. We finished the tour on a neighboring property where strip mining has begun and looked down into a pit about 50' wide and 30' deep. At the bottom of this pit was the coal seam, where 30' of overburden had been removed to access a 3' thick coal seam! The Pattersons are watching carefully as the neighboring property is mined and reclaimed.

---Harold Thistle

WALKING IN THE WOODS (April Fools' edition)

April is the cruelest month, breeding lilacs out of the dead land. --T.S. Eliot

If Eliot, the old crank, was still with us, he might want to change that to March. After the mild winter, the 2012 growing season, by many measures, is a good three weeks ahead of established norms. Checking field notes from past years, I see that the tent worms were setting up in the black cherry trees about April 22 in 2006. This year it was March 22, and in force! Could this be a banner year for bugs and pests of all types? In multiple years—1997, 1999, 2006—I have the dogwoods reaching their snowy peak at the end of the first week in May. In 2012, they were creamy and stunning by April 15. (It is heartening to see the comeback these beauties have made from the blight of the mid-90's.) I observed Fire Pinks and Trillium in the first week of April, again close to a month ahead of past debuts. Red oaks are leafing out noticeably earlier too.

The bad news is that the invasives—autumn olive, honeysuckle, and garlic mustard most prominently—are massing like Longstreet's Division on the second day at Gettysburg. By April 15 many were in full flower, and they are ROBUST, poised to completely overtake neglected fields, edge habitats, and woodland clearings. An old fence line, between two hayed fields, that I painstakingly cleared sans herbicide some years ago, leaving a pleasing row of saplings, is now goonishly overgrown once more. The good news is that the barbed wire has not regenerated, at least not yet.

The correction has already begun. We burned the woodstove more days in April than in March, and the creeks, usually affording good kayaking opportunities this time of year, are spotty. I'm willing to bet the summer weather will prove abnormal as well. As Vince Lombardi, the iconic ball coach and force of nature, was overheard proclaiming so long ago, "What the hell is going on around here?"

--Carl R. Douglas

2012 Remaining Calendar of Events

All meetings, field trips, and tours are free and open to the public

June 9 Summer Member Tour SAT, 1 to 4

Debbie and Bob Hanes's Property

A visit to the Hickory area in central Washington County.

July 14 Summer Tour SAT, 1 to 4

W.A. Young & Sons Foundry in Rice's Landing, PA

Our group will receive a private tour of this historical gem in Greene County. The Foundry is a well-preserved machine shop on the Monongahela River that serviced the boating traffic from 1900 to 1965. A step back in time.

Aug 11 Summer Member Tour SAT, 1 to 4

Becket's Run Woodlands

Janet Sredy's and Raul Chiesa's 110 acres near Monongahela PA is part of a biodiversity area recovering from the 1948 Donora smog incident and the fragmentation caused by three active gas pipelines and a State Highway. Raul & Janet will focus on their Forest Stewardship Plan and the opportunities they found to meet this forest's challenges.

September 12 Meeting WED, 7 PM: Waynesburg, PA

Herbicide Use 101

Christina Becker, Extension Specialist with the Pesticide Education Program at Penn State University, will speak about the safe use of herbicides on common woodland invasives. She will demonstrate proper techniques, tools, and best practices for herbicide use, and will touch on the benefits of becoming a certified pesticide applicator. **Location:** Building #10, Greene Country Fairgrounds, Waynesburg, PA

September 15 Field Trip SAT, 1 to 4

War in the Woods: Controlling Invasives

A field demonstration of spraying techniques, and a practical consideration of attendant issues, in the control of multiflora rose, honeysuckle, barberry, grapevine, olive, et.al. Site: To Be Determined

October 6 Family Picnic SAT, 1 to.....

Rain or shine, the annual SWPWO Pig in a Poke. With Field Events.

October 24 Meeting

WED, 7 PM: Washington, PA

Hobby arboretums: Planting a Sampling of Trees on a Small Plot

Guidance for the property owner of limited acreage who nevertheless is interested in tending and presenting a pleasing variety of trees and woody plants.

Location: First Floor Meeting Room, Courthouse Square Building, 100 W. Beau Street, Washington, PA. **Free Parking:** enter through the Beau Street B-Level entrance at the base of the Courthouse Square Building

October 27 Field Trip

SAT, 1 to 4

The Urban Wood-scape

We will venture to the city of Pittsburgh to take in either Shenley or Frick Arboretums. Philip Gruska, Director of Park Management, Maintenance & Policy with the Pittsburgh Parks Conservancy, will lead the tour.

Executive Committee for the year 2012

Officers

- Gay Thistle - President
- Mike Irvin -Vice Pres.
- David Cressey- Secretary
- Maria Piantanida - Treasurer

Board of Directors

- Mark Fajerski
- Russell Orme
- Raul Chiesa

Advisors

- Bill Wentzel Arlyn Perkey
- Russell Gibbs - Service Forester, PA Bureau of Forestry

Past Presidents

- John Burnham, Harold Thistle, Bob Daley

www.busybeaver.cs.pitt.edu/swpwo

<p style="text-align: center;">Our Purpose</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Southwestern Pennsylvania Woodland Owners (SWPWO), a not for profit association, is an organization of individuals interested in sound woodland management practices which encourage the diverse use of forests for timber production, wildlife habitat, watershed protection and recreation and to promote this multiple-use philosophy through education and technical assistance for the benefit of the membership and general public.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Membership Information</p> <p style="text-align: center;">For 2012</p> <p>Membership dues for 2012 are due by January 30, 2012 and will be collected at meetings or can be sent to:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SWPWO 2506 Hollywood Dr. Pittsburgh, PA 15235</p> <p>If sending in dues, please include name, address, phone number and an e-mail address. Membership to the Southwestern Pennsylvania Woodland Owners Association is \$10 per year for an individual and \$15 per year for a household.. Keep your membership up to date to receive a calendar of the 2012 programs and to continue to receive the newsletter.</p>
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