

# SWPWO



Mimosa Leaf

**Southwest PENNA Woodland Owners Assoc.**

**Sept 2014**

[busybeaver.cs.pitt.edu/swpwo/](http://busybeaver.cs.pitt.edu/swpwo/)

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*Observing our 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*

## **NEXT EVENTS**

**Sept 17 Meeting**  
**WED, 7 PM**

### **Strategies for Managing our Forests**

Woodland owners have long lists of goals and management tasks to complete on their grounds. We all manage our time and efforts differently depending on many factors, including ages of our children, whether we're working or retired, resources available, experience, etc... In this program you will hear contrasting strategies and styles of how three SWPWO members—the Burnhams, the Thistles, the Perkeys—oversee their tree farms. This is a good forum to pick up practical tips for your management plans and to learn about available resources. Come prepared with questions and challenges from your own situations and points of view. We are hoping for a lively discussion.

**Washington County, Old Concord Presbyterian Church**  
**Between Prosperity and the Greene/Wash County Border just off Rte #18**

**Sept 20 Field Trip**  
**SAT, 1- 4 PM**

### **Up Close Look at Woodland Practices**

A hands on tour of two of the three tree farms presenting at the Wednesday meeting. Starting at the Perkey farm, we will observe the results of successive crop tree thinning, and visit sites where Forestry assistance programs have been utilized. Moving a few miles southeast to the Thistle farm, the topics will be tree plantation establishment and deer protection measures.

**Meet by 12:30 at Greene County Fairgrounds, Bldg #10**  
**or, Go Directly to Perkey Tree Farm, near Rutan, Greene County**

## **AUGUST FIELD TRIP**

Our August 9 outing to **Hunting Hills Sporting Clays**, in SE Greene County near the Monongahela River, was an entertaining tour de force led by Mr. Ras Sisler. Caravanning on golf carts, we were treated to a spirited ride, with running commentary, over 750 acres of gently rolling hills, which is managed primarily as pheasant habitat. (There are also impressively constructed catfish ponds and a well-appointed lodge.)

Beginning in 1967, the Sislers, father and son, have been proactive in contouring the property to enhance wildlife presence and hunting opportunities. This entails maximizing edge habitat, which is attractive to wildlife, and also creates lanes and sightlines for the hunters—as well as more passive observers—to utilize. A favored technique is to “hinge cut” a strip of woodland between meadows, dropping smaller trees a few feet above ground level, but leaving an attachment to the stump. Such trees—now more horizontal than vertical—usually continue branching, and a natural lean-to/ shelter is created for fowl and other fauna. The facility is also very active in planting warm season grasses, sorghum, and “wild peas” to provide ground cover and food for the wildlife.

This is not to say that trees are not appreciated at Hunting Hills. There are some sections of mature woods that are untrammelled by bulldozer or chain saw, and founder Roy Sisler Sr. is especially fond of red oaks! One take away is that we can manage sections of our woodlands for diverse purposes. What the Sislers are doing across the breadth of their acreage—they are, after all, a full bore business and had hosted 300 folks from the Natural Gas Industry the day before our visit—we can attempt in a corner or neck of our woodlot.

## **‘TIS THE SEASON**

*One topic sure to surface in this month’s programs is the spread of invasive species, and the consideration of herbicides as a means of control. While some of us would prefer not to use chemical agents, the sheer force and persistence of multi-flora rose, honeysuckle, autumn olive, and barberry (to name but four) necessitates that we at least consider the option. Glyphosate has emerged in recent years as the chemical of choice, has been shown to have minimal deleterious environmental effects, and is now available—competitively priced but by no means inexpensive--in concentrate at Agway, Tractor Supply, Lowe’s and the like, which also are much more likely to stock backpack sprayers than they were a few years ago. But this can be a tricky business: proper mixing and the timing of application are considerations.*

*The following was written by Arlyn Perkey 5 years ago; the comments [in italics] are the editor’s, to illustrate changes, mainly incremental, as time has gone by.*

### **Mixing Herbicide Solutions**

It is usually much cheaper to purchase herbicide in a concentrated form and mix the solution that is needed for specific applications.

For example, my last herbicide purchase, via the internet, was for 2.5 gallons of glyphosate that has the brand name Ranger Pro. It has a concentration of 41%. [*I recently purchased 50% glyphosate “Roundup”, over the counter.*] I can use this one product to accomplish the two applications I most commonly use on my tree farms. I apply herbicide to the cambiums of cut stumps to prevent re-sprouting. I also do foliar application of this same herbicide. The cut stump treatment requires a much higher concentration than the foliar application to the leaves. Since I mix my own solutions, I have the flexibility of using one product to do two tasks.

To mix any herbicide solution, it is important to read and follow the directions on the LABEL. This label is attached to the container of herbicide, or in my case, was also available on the internet.

## CUT STUMP/ STEM TREATMENT SOLUTION

The label for Ranger Pro recommends a 50 to 100% solution of the 41% concentrate. For years, I mixed a solution that was 50% concentrate and 50% water. With most targeted species, I have achieved satisfactory results. However, recently I have encountered some species (sycamore) where I have not achieved the desired level of control with this mixture. I may need to move closer to using 100% concentrate on plants that are less susceptible to glyphosate applied to the cambium.

## FOLIAR APPLICATION SOLUTION

The label for Ranger Pro recommends solutions for several species commonly targeted in forest management treatments. For example, multiflora-rose can be treated with a 1% solution. Most species I treat have a recommended solution of 1 to 2% for foliar spraying. The label has a table that shows a 1% solution can be obtained by mixing 1 1/3 ounces of concentrate with 1 gallon (128 ounces) of water. Since a 1-2% solution suffices for most of the species I want to treat, I usually mix 1.5 ounces of concentrate with each gallon of water. I generally mix 2 gallons of solution at a time in a 2.5 gallon container. This gives me room to add 3 ounces of concentrate to 2 gallons of water, then swish it around to obtain good mixing. I pour the solution into my backpack sprayer to apply it to vegetation. If I am going to be treating a less susceptible species, I increase the solution to 2% by using 2 ounces per gallon (4 ounces/ 2 gallons). [*Arlyn has told me he is gravitating toward the 2% mix, and my 50 % Roundup label directs that 2 1/2 fl oz be added per gal. "for best results".*]

With any herbicide, it is important to find the label, read the instructions and heed all precautions. You can only kill the target species once. There is no reason to apply more herbicide than needed to accomplish that goal; no extra credit accrues for overkill.

*[There is also the need to use "good water" (avoid hard water or other chemical impurities) when mixing: see H. Thistle's article from the Oct 2012 Newsletter. And: the target plant must be growing, its' leaves still green. September is not too late to spray.]*

*From Arlyn: "I love applying this time of the year. Many of the native ephemeral plants have gone dormant. You are less likely to kill these non-target, desirable species. Also, this time of the year the plants are rapidly trans-locating to the roots. The above may not hold in very dry years, but this year that is not the case."*

## TURKEY VULTURES

## CATHARTES aura

**You may want to decline a Thanksgiving dinner invitation to dine with our turkey vultures. The adults' naked red heads are wonderfully crafted for a messy meal of carrion. Our vulture family ("Venue"-group of vultures) helps to keep the Burnham WOODlot clean. They are an interesting element of the woods; the good they do is an important part of the Burnham WOODlot.**

**The two young birds found on the floor inside an old sheep shed are beautifully wrapped in infants' white downy gowns. The juveniles will join their parents outside at 11 weeks of age. As their cuteness & beauty fades, brown feathers will begin to emerge; youngsters have black heads. They will continue to depend on their parents for a few months. Proud and weary parents mate for life (expectancy of 16-20 years) & breed every other year. A vulture lacks a syrinx, voice box; we have had a few hissing & grunting sessions with the newbies.**

The adult large birds are almost eagle-size & spend hours soaring in wide circles above the farm ("Kettle"-group of circling vultures in the air) at sunrise. Foggy, cloudy, & rainy days find our vultures ("Wake"-group of resting vultures") sulking on perch with their small heads tucked low into their adult 6 ft. wingspan feathers. The two downy babies hatched from white [with reddish-brown spots and blotched looking] eggs laid on the bare dirt floor/ground of the shed in April/May.

Incubation: 39-40 days with both sexes on nest

We enjoy our turkeys- They will have "nested" here for years. We anticipate a 2016 brood, if the shed site is not disrupted. Please do not venture inside. Plus, the parents may vomit on intruders' heads. I hear their aim is excellent with projectile defense.

-----Maureen Adair Burnham

**News & Notes....**The ironweed stands out this year, its purple particularly deep and eye-catching. Also, a very good year in the garden for the vines: gourds, pumpkins, and winter squash are proliferating and setting fruit exceptionally well. We even have a shot at some decent cantaloupes ...A well-sourced correspondent has news that Janet Sredy's & Raul Chiesa's *Beckett's Run Woodlands* will be named PA Tree Farm of the Year on Sept. 13. Much more on this in the next (Nov) Newsletter....Mile-a-Minute weed is encroaching noticeably in the West Greene area: new patches are appearing all over the Thistle and Cressey spreads. Be aware of this entangling menace which features small green triangular leaves, delicate white flowers, and blue berries....The Executive Committee is meeting Oct 13 to plan next year's activities. We welcome suggestions.

**REMAINING 2014 SCHEDULE:**

**Oct 18 (SAT)—Annual Picnic** (and a chance to poke around the Burnham Woodlot: Kite Boy gets lonely, y'know)

**Nov 12 Meeting** *Carbon Credits for Forestlands*, with Al Steele from the U.S. Forest Service  
**WED, 7 PM, Greene County Fairgrounds**

**Nov 15 (SAT) Field Trip** Woodlot measurement/ inventory techniques preparatory to participating in carbon markets. **Site TBA**

**SWPWO Executive Committee, Officers for 2014**

Gay Thistle - President

John Burnham -Vice President

David Cressey- Secretary, Newsletter Editor

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**Past Presidents**

*John Burnham, Harold Thistle, Bob Daley*

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