

# SWPWO



September 2008

## *Southwestern Pennsylvania Woodland Owners*

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### **Next Meeting: Sept. 10 Timber Harvest: Planning and Execution**

Professional Consulting Foresters, Robert McColly and Tony Quadro, will be speaking on how to plan and manage a timber harvest operation. There are many items to think about as you plan for a harvest of trees on your land. We all value our land and planning is critical so that there are no surprises during and after the harvest. SWPWO always recommends hiring a professional consulting forester to help you get the best price, and to help you hire the best operator to harvest your trees. Join us for an evening to hear about the process. The meeting will be held Wednesday, **September 10, 2008 at the Greene County Fairgrounds, Building #10, starting at 7:00 PM.**

A field trip to the Obermiller's tree farm will follow on **Saturday, September 27**. The Obermillers reside in central Greene County. They completed a tree harvesting operation on their property last year with the help of Professional Consulting Forester, George Klein. The field trip starts at 1:00PM. Meet at the Greene County fairground, building #10 at 12:30 to follow or car

pool. Wear appropriate clothing for the weather and proper shoes for walking.



### **Calendar of Events for 2008**

**September 10 Meeting: Timber Harvest: Planning and Execution** with Robert McColly and Tony Quadro, Professional Consulting Foresters. 7:00 PM at the Greene County Fairgrounds, Building #10

**September 27 Field Trip: Timber Harvest Site Visit.** We will visit the Obermillers tree harvest site in western Greene County.

**October 18 Picnic with Plant Identification Competition and Potato Gun Competition** (Members, Friends and Family) Time and place to be determined. Save the date.

**November 12 Meeting:** Forest Land Taxation Issues with speaker Lloyd Casey, retired USDA Forest Service. 7:00 PM at the Washington County Courthouse Square building.

**November 15 Field Trip: Creating an Inventory of Your Forest.** 1:00 PM, Lloyd Casey's Tree Farm in NE Greene County. Meet to carpool or follow at 12:30 PM at the Greene County Fairgrounds Building #10

Find most recent updates and links for directions on our website

[www.cs.pitt.edu/~daley/swpwo](http://www.cs.pitt.edu/~daley/swpwo)

## **Ex-Steeler Courson dies Crushed felling a tree on his Fayette County Property**

*Decades removed from the roaring football arena in which he won two Super Bowl rings with the Steelers, Steve Courson lived in seclusion with his two beloved black Labrador retrievers, Rufus and Rachel, in the Fayette County mountains. He devoted his life to teaching kids about the perils of steroid use and other risky behavior.*

*Mr. Courson, 50, died yesterday in a tree-cutting accident outside his home in Farmington, about 12 miles east of Uniontown, apparently while trying to save one of the dogs, who was endangered when a gust of wind changed the direction in which the tree was falling.*

*A neighbor along Herb Hollow Road in Henry Clay Township became curious when the growl of Mr. Courson's chainsaw fell silent at about 12:40 p.m. Mr. Courson was found pinned face-down by the tree with one of the dogs tangled under his legs.*

*The tree's weight was such that neither the neighbor nor the emergency crews who responded to a 911 call could move it without sawing the trunk into sections.*

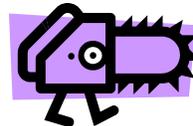
*Mr. Courson was pronounced dead at 2:20 p.m. of crushing injuries to his chest. The injured dog was taken to a humane facility for treatment.*

*The dead tree being cleared from his property was five feet in circumference and 44 feet tall.*

*"The theory is that the dog was with him, and the tree started to go in an unintended direction," said Dr. Phillip E. Reilly, the Fayette County coroner. "The dog was in the path. [Mr. Courson] was bent over and the tree came down and pinned him to the ground." Friday, November 11, 2005. By Robert Dvorchak and Cindi Lash, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

chainsaws to manage our property. If you learned how to chainsaw from your Daddy, you will find that there are new methods out there that are proven to be safer. On that note, SWPWO has organized a Chainsaw Safety course for our members who need a refresher course or would like to learn more about the new technologies, methods and equipment available. **A chainsaw safety and hands-on training course will be offered over the weekend of Oct 24 and 25, 2008.** Lee Stover will instruct the class. He works for the Forestry Dept of Penn State, training the students in the program. There will be a cost for the course- depending on the number of people who sign up. It should average around \$60.00. You will be required to provide your own safety gear which includes Kevlar chaps or Kevlar pants, hard hat, safety glasses, chainsaw gloves, ear protection, and sturdy boots. Please contact Bob Daley by **September 10** if you are interested in taking the course. He can be reached: [daley@cs.pitt.edu](mailto:daley@cs.pitt.edu).

**JOIN US FOR A CHAINSAW  
SAFETY COURSE**



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Many of you may remember reading this story and many more just like it about not so famous people. Chainsawing is a dangerous job. Lumbering has the most fatalities per capita than any other profession. We members of SWPWO are not professional lumberjacks but we do find many occasions to use our

## RED OAK DIRECT SEEDING WORKSHOP

On Saturday, October 25, 2008 from 1-4 pm, a red oak direct seeding workshop will be held at Perkey Tree Farm near Daybrook, Monongalia County, West Virginia. Arlyn Perkey will share his experiences gathering, testing, and storing red oak acorns. Attendees will be exposed to the advantages and disadvantages of direct seeding as an alternative to planting nursery stock. A variety of sites will be visited. They aren't all the same.

Discussion will include tree shelters and accessories. How tall must shelters be on heavy deer browse sites? Should tree shelters be vented? What releasable ties work best? Does tree shelter color matter? What about stakes to support the shelters, how strong must they be? How do you control the vegetation in competition with vulnerable seedlings?

October 1-15, is the prime time to collect red oak acorns in this area. Collect a supply prior to the workshop. Keep them cool and moist. Join us at the workshop and learn how to turn acorns into established seedlings. These questions and others will provide the basis for discussion.

Following are directions.

DIRECTIONS TO: PERKEY TREE FARM,  
CATHERINE'S KNOB UNIT  
NEAR DAYBROOK, WEST VIRGINIA

FROM: GREENE COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS,  
WAYNESBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

From Building 10 at the Greene County Fairgrounds, go west on Route 21 toward downtown Waynesburg. At the junction with Route 218 (Morgan St.) turn left and go south on Route 218 to Blacksville, West Virginia.

In Blacksville, Route 218 junctions with Route 7. Turn left (east) for a short distance on the highway that is both Route 7 east and Route 218 south. At the edge of Blacksville, Routes 7 and 218 separate. Follow 218 South to Daybrook, West Virginia.

In Daybrook, you will notice the Daybrook Elementary school on your left. The highway then curves sharply to the left. On your right, notice a circular sign that says "the Daybrook Church of Christ meets here." Turn right (leaving Route 218) onto the Upper Days Run Road. Travel 3 miles, remaining on the main road going up the drainage.

At the end of the blacktop road you will see a white house on the right and a large turn around on the left. You will see a Tree Farm sign and a Forest Stewardship sign that let you know you have arrived. If you need any confirmation, notice the tree shelters in the old field. Park your vehicle on the grass. Please do not block the turnaround. This is where trucks do their reverse direction.

*Submitted by Arlyn and Marial Perkey*

## 2008 SWPWO

### Officers

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**Gay Thistle- Secretary**  
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## Membership Information

Membership to the Southwestern Pennsylvania Woodland Owners Association is \$10 per year for an individual and \$15 per year for a household. Dues are expected to be paid by January in order to ensure a timely receipt of the newsletter and notice of the next meeting. To join, please send name, address and phone number to: SWPWO,

195 E., High St  
Waynesburg, PA 15370

## **What's Happening to the White Oak and Yellow Poplar Trees?**

*By Sherri Hutchinson, Assistant Director, WV Dept. of Agriculture Plant Industries Division*

The West Virginia Department of Agriculture has been receiving reports of damage to white oak and yellow poplar trees. White oak foliage is turning brown due to jumping oak gall wasp and yellow poplar leaves have lots of odd shaped, patchy-looking areas from feeding damage by yellow poplar leaf-mining weevil. In some areas of the state, the damage is heavy enough for residents to spot the discoloration on trees as they drive down the roads.

### **Jumping Oak Gall Wasp**

This tiny wasp, *Neuroterus saltatorius*, lays eggs on buds in the spring that cause the formation of small button-shaped galls on the under sides of the leaves. The first generation completes its life cycle by mid-May. The second generation reaches the gall stage by June. The young galls are green and turn brown as they mature and each gall has a single immature wasp inside. When they mature, the galls fall off the foliage leaving small pits in the undersides of the leaves where they were attached. The galls drop to the ground where pupation occurs. Second generation adults overwinter inside the galls and emerge the following spring. The wasps are very tiny (1.0-1.5 mm long) and do not sting. Lightly infested trees have discolored foliage. Severely infested foliage turns brown and may prematurely drop from the trees. The trees might put out a second set of leaves, but defoliation this early in

the season will distress the tree and retard growth.

Once galls have formed, control measures are not effective or necessary. Small nursery trees or yard trees could be sprayed in mid-May next year with a systemic insecticide labeled for such use, but this is not practical in a forested situation.

### **Yellow Poplar Leaf-mining Weevil**

This weevil- *Odontopus calceatus*, feeds on the buds and foliage of yellow poplar, sassafras, and magnolia. The weevils are small (often referred to as "flying ticks") and dark colored. Damage occurs when adult weevils feed on leaves causing rice-sized patches where part of the leaf tissue has been chewed off, when females lay eggs in the mid-ribs of the leaves, and when immature grubs mine between the upper and lower leaf surfaces. Light infestations cause unsightly foliage, but heavy to severe infestations may result in premature defoliation. Young, newly planted trees with heavy leaf loss may have growth loss and twig dieback, especially during periods of drought. Since large, established trees normally retain enough of their foliage throughout the growing season, damage is considered to be cosmetic. If you have yellow poplar leaf-mining weevil damage on a small yard tree this year, watch it closely next spring and if ten percent of the foliage becomes damaged it may be possible to obtain some control with an insecticide labeled for such use. One application may not be enough, so monitor your tree and reapply, if needed. Treatment for large trees is not recommended.

## American Hornbeam

American hornbeam (*Corpinus caroliniana*) is a small tree whose common names include musclewood and blue beech. Both these common names refer to its smooth grey bark that appears to be like the skin of a fit human.

American hornbeam belongs to the family Birch (Betulaceae) family of plants.

The wood of the American hornbeam is very hard. Early settlers in New England made leak-proof bowls and dishes out of this tightly grained wood. Since the trunks are small in diameter, the wood is rarely sawn into boards, but is used for handles, wedges, mallets, burned as fuel, and used as charcoal. The wood rots quickly so it is not used as fence posts.

The tree does not grow very tall, only 10-30 feet high and its trunk grows only 8-10 inches in diameter. It is a fairly common component of the understory of oak-hickory and birch-beech-maple forests in our area. The American hornbeam is slow growing and short-lived. Many hornbeams fork at the ground and take on a shrub-like form. This tree is shade tolerant when young, but needs an opening in the canopy to reach its full size.

The fruit of the hornbeams is a nutlet and it provides food for songbirds, ruffed grouse, ring-necked pheasants, bobwhite quails, turkey, and squirrels. Chickadees and other small birds nest in cavities of dead hornbeams. *Written by Gay Thistle*

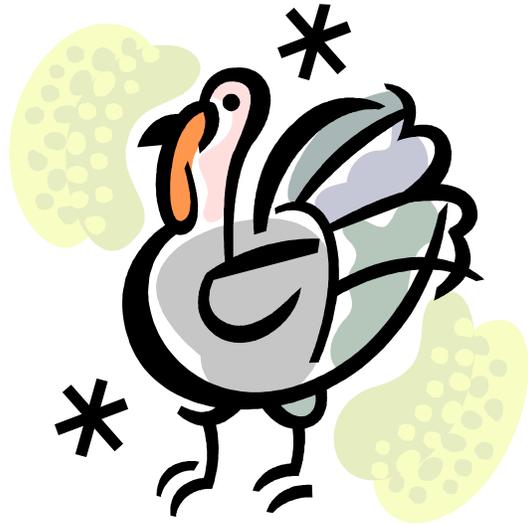
## Cost Share Program Available: Private Landowner Assistance Program (PLAP)

While it's true that Pennsylvania has vast acres of public land, still nearly 85% of Pennsylvania is held by private landowners, and nearly 70% of our forestland is privately managed. Private landowners obviously play a pivotal role in the conservation of species of concern, as well as all wildlife and their habitats. Recognizing the important role of private lands, the Pennsylvania Game Commission created the Private Landowner Assistance Program (PLAP) to provide free technical advice on wildlife habitat management. While the program focuses on species of special concern, all wildlife and their habitat are given consideration. This voluntary program provides a free consultation from a Regional Wildlife Diversity Biologist who will help landowners make targeted and educated decisions about wildlife habitat management on their own property. Since the program's inception in 2004, Regional Wildlife Diversity Biologists have written more than 450 plans for over 80,000 acres across the Commonwealth. Many of these plans center on forest and grassland habitats; examples of specific projects are heron rookeries, reclaimed strip mine sites, landscape-level conservation initiatives, and an oil spill on the

Delaware River. Oftentimes, you can do (or not do) little things to benefit wildlife habitat. For example, over 50 Pennsylvania species use cavity trees for nesting. Cavity trees can take half a lifetime to form naturally and can disappear in seconds during a logging operation or when cutting firewood. Standing dead trees (snags) provide cover and food (i.e., insects) for a variety of wildlife, and at least 80 species of birds and other wildlife eat wild grapes and/or use the vines for nesting or escape cover. By retaining and promoting cavity trees, snags, and wild grape you can greatly increase the value of your property for wildlife at little to no cost. Promoting old field and early successional habitat is another relatively low-cost wildlife management strategy. Of the 40 bird species associated with shrub land habitats in Eastern North America, over half are experiencing significant population declines. By allowing certain fields to revert under the appropriate management, you can provide critical habitat for many wildlife species. If you are interested in enhancing wildlife habitat on your property, consider contacting the Game Commission's Wildlife Diversity Biologist for your county. Once contacted, the biologist will schedule a time to walk the property with you to provide recommendations. A customized wildlife habitat management plan for your property will be provided, as well as contacts for applicable financial resources to assist with projects or for additional technical advice. Tammy Colt is our regions' Game

Commission's Wildlife Diversity Biologist. She can be contacted at 724-238-4034 if you are interested in more information on this program.

*By Mario Giazzan North Central Regional Wildlife Biologist, PA Game Commission. Printed from Forest Leaves, Summer 2008*



### **Our Purpose**

*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*

**Next newsletter will be sent shortly after November 5, 2008.**