

SWPWO



Southwest PA Woodland Owners

February 2018

It is shaping up to be another exciting year of programs and field tours for SWPWO. An expanded version of our calendar is included in this newsletter. Put the dates on your calendar and stay tuned to future newsletters for up to date information on each event. This year, SWPWO, will be helping to host a few events that would be great to share with friends and family that might be wondering what are doing with your woodlot or with anyone who is interested in spending quality time in the woods. First, we are celebrating yet another PA Tree Farm of the Year from our group. Arlyn and Marial Perkey are busy planning their field day in May. Registration will be required for the event so stay tuned for more details. And once again, SWPWO will be hosting a tree farm tour for the 2nd Annual statewide Walk in Penn's Woods at Mark and Debbie Fajerski's place in Claysville in October. These are only two of the many interesting events we have planned- so hope to see you in the woods!

SWPWO Calendar of Events for 2018

Wed. Apr. 18 – **Hunting Lease for Income from Your Woodlot** Speaker, Doug Petro from [Base Camp Leasing](#)- The talk will be about leasing your land for hunting. This company organizes hunting leases on land from New York to Texas and includes all of PA. Woodland owners might consider using hunting leases as an income source, as well as to help control deer populations. Learn about how this can be done and get your questions answered. 7 PM at the Concord Presbyterian Church basement, 155 Old Concord Rd, Prosperity, PA

Sat. Apr. 21 **John & Melissa Gregor Farm Wildflower Tour and Virtual Tour-** Join the Gregors in eastern Washington County for a wildflower walk in the woods near their house and along a small stretch of Ten Mile Creek. The Blue-Eyed Marys have been abundant in previous years and hopefully won't disappoint this spring! Will follow with a drone tour of other areas of our property and refreshments on the porch. Walking conditions are likely to be somewhat wet so please wear appropriate footwear. 1-4 PM. Meet to carpool at 12:30 PM at the Greene County Fairgrounds, Building #10 parking lot.

Wed. May 9 – **Invasive Species – Why bother? – Advantages of Early Identification**
Speaker Cynthia Huebner, PhD, Research Botanist for the US Forest Service Northern Region Research Station- The talk will cover the use of strategic management to make invasions by exotic plants less likely to occur. Such management involves maintaining ecosystems that are relatively resilient to disturbance. Discussion will also include how land managers may restore invaded land such that it is less likely to be re-invaded. 7 PM at the Concord Presbyterian Church basement, 155 Old Concord Rd, Prosperity, PA

Sat. May 12 – **Perkey PA Tree Farm of the Year Field Day** Join SWPWO for a full day in the woods and visit a few or all of the eleven mini-tour/topics that will be covered. Topics include growing black walnuts, seedling protection, native vs invasive plants, benefits of frog ponds, uses of Norway spruce in your woodlot, crop tree management for pole size and saw timber size plots, managing oil and gas development, and road construction and maintenance. Lunch will be included and registration will be required. More information will be published in later newsletters. 9:30 AM-3:00 PM

Sat. June 9 –**SWPWO Picnic**– Burnham farm in Washington County – a program is being developed

Sat. July 14 – **Wayne & Rose Marie Kraeer Farm Tour** in the Avella area. We will be touring their efforts to raise beef cattle along with maintaining the quality hardwoods, their procedures to combat invasive plants, and maintain a small cherry stand. Tour is 1-4 PM. Meet at 12:30 PM to carpool in the parking lot in front of the garage doors of the Sears store in Washington, PA. Wear proper shoes for hiking.

Sat. Aug. 11 – **Bob Brown Farm Tour: One Year After the Harvest.** We toured Bob's farm in Greene County last year during a timber harvest. We will return to his farm to see what it looks like one year after the harvest. The Forest Consultant for this harvest, Jim Elze, along with owner, Bob Brown will guide us through the area. 1-4 PM. Meet to carpool at 12:30 PM at the Greene County Fairgrounds, Building #10 parking lot. Wear proper shoes for hiking.

Wed. Sept. 5 – **New Tools for Tree Identification** – Tony Knaus, SWPWO member, will introduce the use of the app iNaturalist.org as a tool for tree and plant identification. iNaturalist.org is a citizens science project and social network of naturalists, citizen scientists, and biologists. iNaturalist is built on the concept of mapping and sharing observations. In the Wednesday meeting, he will give an overview of the iNaturalist project and how you can join the social network, share your observations and knowledge and learn from many of the others on the network. Bring your phone or wireless device that is connected to your cell data (you will be using your own data for this). 7 PM Location to be announced.

Sat. Sept. 8 – **On the Ground Tree ID** with Tony Knaus and Mark and Debbie Fajerski. This tour is a follow-up to the September 5th meeting. The iNaturalist app will be put to

use at Maple Hills Tree Farm near Claysville, Washington County. We will tour the property and use the app and the more traditional way to identify the many types of trees. Tony will demonstrate the use of the iNaturalist smartphone app for taking and posting observations to iNaturalist.org for tree and plant identification. Tour is 1-4 PM. Meet at 12:30 PM to carpool in the parking lot in front of the garage doors of the Sears store in Washington, PA. Wear proper shoes for hiking.

Sun. Oct. 7 – [Walk in Penn's Woods](#) - **Fajerski Farm** – Washington Co. This walk is part of a statewide event to get citizens out into the woods. This year, our group will offer a tour of Maple Hills Tree Farm near Claysville, Washington County. We'll visit plantings of maturing red oak and black walnut as well as new plantings of pitch x loblolly hybrid pines. We'll also view a small cemetery from the 1800's and one of the largest sugar maples in the state (Big Daddy) that's registered with the Champion Trees of Pennsylvania web site. This is a walking tour so be sure to wear appropriate footwear. Tour begins at 1 PM

Wed. Nov. 7 – **New Tools for Planning your Woodlot – My Land Plan** -Washington Public Library – Ryan Egidi and John Burnham, SWPWO members. This workshop will show landowners how to use [MyLandPlan.org](#) which is a free online tool used to map your land, establish goals and objectives, and plan for the future. MyLandPlan.org is a user friendly web site provided by the American Forest Foundation (AFF). This workshop will help landowners learn a new tool to explore different conservation and management opportunities. During the first class, we will meet in a computer lab where we work with all attendees to setup accounts, map your land and explore stewardship opportunities. Note different location: At the Washington County Citizens Library (55 S. College St, Washington, PA)

Sat. Nov. 10 – **Using GPS as a Planning Tool on your Woodlot**– Ryan & Sarah Egidi Farm in eastern Greene County. The follow-up meeting will occur in the field to discuss coordinate systems using GPS locations to more accurately map trails, property boundaries, roads, hunting stands, camps and other points for better integration into MyLanPlan.org. and for better management of your property. 1-4 PM. Meet to carpool at 12:30 PM at the Greene County Fairgrounds, Building #10 parking lot. Wear proper shoes for hiking.

Please visit our website, <http://www.swpwopa.com/> for more information and links to resources for woodland owners

Is Our Winter Killing Off the Ticks?

Pennsylvania led the nation in 2016 with more than 12,000 confirmed cases of Lyme disease, which is transmitted to humans from the bite of the black-legged (or “deer”) tick. Given the recent stretch of abnormally frigid weather, a common question posed to DCNR has been, “How will this affect ticks?” The short answer is, “somewhat.” Colder winters can cut down the number of ticks that survive through winter. However, studies show only around 20 percent of the population die off. Carefully controlled lab experiments, using freezers, show that ticks will die between -2 to 14 degrees Fahrenheit, but, there’s a catch. Lab conditions can never emulate the full range of conditions that can and will affect a population of ticks. In a freezer, there is no escape. In nature, conditions can be quite different.

Evidence shows that natural landscape conditions and physiological adaptations bring ticks a reprieve from winter mortality. Deep soils, leaf litter, and perhaps a blanket of snow all offer insulation from wildly fluctuating air temperatures. As temperatures fall, ticks naturally burrow deeper to escape the cold. Ticks boast physiological adaptations that allow them to overcome cold snaps. They are reputed to be able to take advantage of cellular processes that decrease the proportion of water in their cells, thus decreasing cellular freezing point. Scientists also hypothesize that ticks can manufacture a “cryoprotectant,” essentially natural antifreeze, which circulates in their cells. This is a well-known adaptation in some amphibians that inhabit colder climates.

Some scientific studies on winter tick mortality have shown that it is not necessarily the cold that kills them, but rather, the magnitude and frequency of temperature changes. Winters highlighted by a relative abundance of changes from warm to very cold seem to possess the greatest potential to substantially decrease tick populations. The applied rationale is that warmer temperatures lure ticks to the forest surface or onto vegetation, and the quick onset of cold then kills them before they can reach safe-haven in soil or leaf litter. Although the colder temperatures could possibly reduce tick populations, the theme remains the same when considering risk. The lesson here: TAKE PRECAUTIONS TO PREVENT TICK BITES, NO MATTER THE TIME OF YEAR. *Edited by Gay Thistle from DCNR website: <http://www.dcnr.pa.gov/GoodNatured/pages/Article.aspx?post=27> on 2/8/18*

SWPWO Purpose

Southwestern Pennsylvania Woodland Owners (SWPWO), a not for profit association, is an organization of individuals interested in sound woodland management practices to 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.

<p>Membership Information</p> <p>Membership dues will be collected at meetings or can be sent to: 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 continue to receive the newsletter and yearly calendar.</p>	<p>SWPWO Officers (year elected))</p> <p>President – Mark Fajerski (2018) Vice President – John Gregor (2018) Secretary – Ryan Egidi (2018) Treasurer – Maria Piantanida (at large position) Director at large – Melissa Gregor (2018) Director at large – Tony Knaus (2015) Director at large – Wayne Kraeer (2018) Advisor-Bill Wentzel Advisor- Arlyn Perkey</p>
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Editors: Gay and Harold Thistle- We always welcome content or ideas for this newsletter. Please send it to gaythistle@gmail.com