



Please Note: Our May 16th and June 19th meetings are cancelled due to the precautions put in place for Covid-19. We wish good health and encourage you to stay safe.

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If Trees Could Talk,

They Would Have an Amazing Story to Tell

Estimating the age of trees based on their species and diameter (DBH) can be interesting and rewarding. Measuring trees gives a sense of the dynamics of the forest and puts perspective on the human interaction with the forest. For information on estimating the age of trees go to:

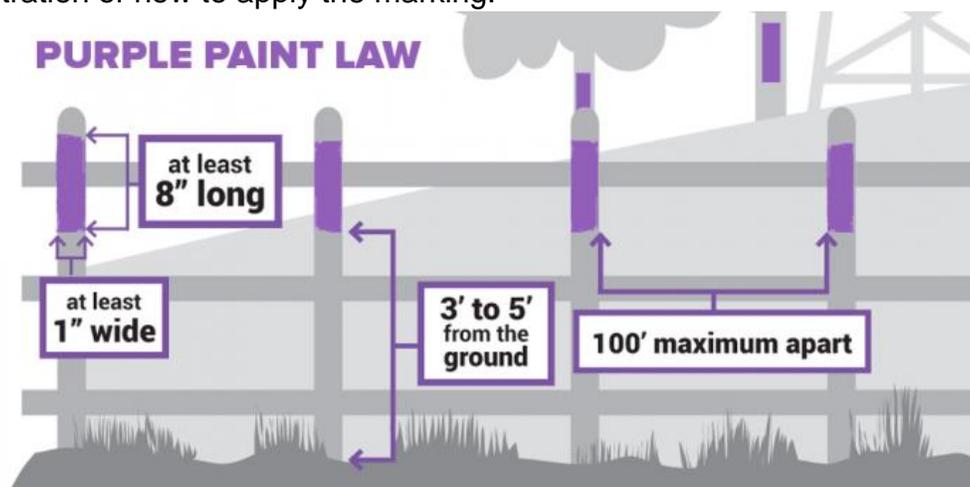
http://www.dumontshadetree.org/formulas_for_guessing_tree_ages.htm



This white oak behemoth measures 60 inches in diameter and is estimated to be between 300 and 350 years old and is believed to be the largest and oldest tree on the Burnham farm. It is named the William Penn Tree. This germinating acorn saw Pennsylvania territory given to William Penn by King Charles II of England in 1681. This survivor escaped the massive logging in Pennsylvania that occurred in the mid to late 1800s. It likely survived because it was a property line marker. More than 100 generations of squirrels devoured acorns from the William Penn Tree. This tree was witness to the rise of wool production in Washington county that made it one of the wealthiest counties in the US. This tree also witnessed the decline in wool prices as cotton grown in the south replaced wool. This tree survived a 3 foot drop when it was undermined with a long wall coal mine in 2003. This tree was about 13 inches in diameter in 1748 when William Blakeway, an early nearby settler was born and 27 inches in diameter (less than half its size today), when he died and was buried on the property 78 years later. This tree lost half of its root system when the township road was built. This tree was 14 inches in diameter when it saw Christopher Gist as he explored a trail for the Ohio Company in 1752. This tree likely saw young Major George Washington following Gist's trail as he lead the Virginia militia through the Ohio River Basin and there by launching his military career at the beginning of the French and Indian War. This tree saw the division of the land into family farms of approximately 100 acres where horses were the motive power. Fortunately, horses were well adapted to farming the steep hillsides in southwestern Pennsylvania. This tree saw the advent of tractor use in farming. Unfortunately, tractors are not well adapted to the steep hillsides and many fields were abandoned to wild growth resulting in trees. This tree saw further conversion of agricultural fields to growth succession into trees as the coal mines and natural gas developers acquired the land and ceased agricultural production. This tree saw the movement from 100% trees when the original settlers arrived to 20% trees after heavy logging and as family farms developed until the mid-1900s and back to 80% trees as agricultural lands were released to revert back to trees. And the last great feat is that this tree witnessed the demise of many trees around it with the chestnut blight, Dutch elm disease, and the Emerald ash borer. *Submitted by John and Maureen Burnham*

Purple Paint Law in Effect in PA

Landowners can now mark their land boundaries for no trespassing with purple paint slashes in all but Allegheny and Philadelphia counties. The particular color purple has not been specified by this new law. However, the suppliers offer very few choices of purple tree marking paint. Below is an illustration of how to apply the marking.



Source: <https://www.farmanddairy.com/news/purple-paint-law-goes-live-in-pennsylvania/599532.html>

Interesting Listening and Watching as We Shelter in Place

Here are some recommendations for fellow forestland owners.

1. **In Defense of Plants podcast: Episode 253, Earth's First Forests-** learn about the first forests on Earth where there was not much biodiversity of competition from plants or mammals. Subscribe from your podcast app or listen online here:
<http://www.indefenseofplants.com/podcast>
2. **The PA Conservation Heritage Project** has 9 documentaries about PA conservation leaders, and initiatives free for viewing online. <https://paconservationheritage.org/documentaries/>.
3. **Spotted Lanternfly Webinar- May 19th live webinar session. Register here:**
<https://extension.psu.edu/spotted-lanternfly-in-forest-ecosystems-spring-2020-briefing>

2020 SWPWO Calendar

<p>June 19 (Fri) Cornerstone Genealogical Society, Greene County Noon-2 PM 144 E. Greene St, Waynesburg, PA (park in back of log structure)</p>	<p>How to Conduct Research on the Historical Use(s) of Your Property with Dave Cressey, President of the Cornerstone Genealogical Society. Learn about the historical resources available to research the past uses, owners and information about your land. View historic land documents and learn how to use them to find information about past land uses of your property. Includes a tour of Greene County's original 1797 log courthouse.</p> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">Cancelled</p>
<p>July 17 (Fri) Greene County 181 Hunting Hill Rd, Dilliner, PA 1 – 4 PM</p>	<p>Tour wildlife habitat management of Hunting Hills Shooting Clays facility. We will visit a beautiful property in SE Greene County owned by Roy Sisler and his son "Raz". They operate the Hunting Hills Sporting Clay Shoot facility used each year by hundreds of youth and adults. The Sislers have developed a wildlife haven on an old strip mine by planting shrubs and trees, along with warm season grasses, and by creating several watering facilities. They have built many nature trails and roads throughout the property, which also includes a nice blend of forests and open areas. As an added feature to our tour, we will visit a beautiful hunting lodge the Sisters have built. Inside there are many educational wildlife displays as well as mounted animals.</p>
<p>Sept 16 (Wed) Greene County Fairgrounds, Building 10, lower floor meeting room 7 PM</p>	<p>Update on Carbon Markets for Woodlot Owners with Al Steele, Physical Scientist with USDA Forest Service. Carbon markets have been operating for more than a decade now. Despite that, few small landowners have benefitted from them. This talk will briefly discuss different types of markets and some of the challenges in participating in them. There will be a discussion on efforts to make markets more user friendly for small landowners. We'll conclude with a discussion of policy developments with respect to global efforts in the Trillion trees initiative and what it might mean for small landowners.</p>
<p>Sept 19 (Sat) 1-4 PM, Scenery Hill area, Washington County Meet at 12:30 at the Kopper Kettle parking lot to caravan 2 Kopper Kettle Rd, Washington, PA</p>	<p>Tour Wherry's Farm in Washington County: Larry George Wherry is the owner and operator of Wherry's Farm. The farm has been in the family since the 1800s. It consists of 270 acres with about 20 acres of trees and another farm of 90 acres that is mainly used for hay. The varieties of trees consist of oak, maple, ash, walnut and cherry. The view of the farm is breathtaking. Mr. Wherry has over 500 plus breeding ewes with also 15 head of beef cattle. His daughter, Lisa, helps out on the family farm. The tour will begin with a talk about the farm. An informal social dinner at the Scenery Inn will follow if there is interest.</p>
<p>Oct 4 (Sun) Fajerski Tree Farm</p>	<p>Walk in Penn's Woods at the Fajerski Tree Farm in Washington County. Celebrate Penn's woods with a tour of a tree farm. Over 80 tours will be offered</p>

	all over PA on this day . All tours are free and open to the public. Bring your friends, neighbors, grandchildren to learn about our special forests. For more locations and information visit: https://sites.psu.edu/walkinpennswoods/
Oct 17 (Sat) Thistle Tree Farm- tour at 1 PM, eat at 4 PM	SWPWO Pig Roast- pot luck picnic and a brief tour. Arlyn Perkey will take us on a trail for a tree ID review. This activity will be for both beginners and the veterans of his past tree ID classes. SWPWO will supply pork, bread, condiments, water, plates, and silver. Bring a dish to share and BYO drink of choice.
Nov 18 (Wed) Washington Jefferson College- Burnett Hall, room 103 7 PM	Old Growth Forests A presentation by Dr. Joan Maloof, founder and Executive Director of The Old Growth Forest Network. Learn about old growth forests in temperate climates and their importance as part of our ecosystems.
Nov 21 (Sat) Ohiopyle State Park Visitor Ctr., Rt 381, Ohiopyle, PA 1-4 PM	Tour an old growth forest Ferncliff Peninsula Natural Area - Ohiopyle State Park. A guided tour of Fern Cliff Old Growth Forest at Ohiopyle State Park. Meet at Visitor's Center in Ohiopyle Park. The tour will be led by Barbara Wallace, the Environmental Education Specialist.

We encourage all our members to share the story of their farm and forest experiences. Please email your write up to Maria at mecp1942@gmail.com

<p align="center"><u>Membership Information</u></p> <p align="center">Membership dues will be collected at meetings or can be sent to:</p> <p align="center">SWPWO</p> <p align="center">261 2nd St, Pittsburgh PA 15139</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 align="center">Our website:</p> <p align="center">http://www.swpwopa.com/</p>	<p><u>2020 SWPWO Officers (year elected)</u></p> <p>President – Mark Fajerski (2018)</p> <p>Vice President – John Gregor (2018)</p> <p>Secretary – Maureen Burnham (2020)</p> <p>Treasurer – Maria Piantanida (at large position)</p> <p>Director – Melissa Gregor (2018)</p> <p>Director – Harold Thistle (2019)</p> <p>Director – Wayne Kraeer (2018)</p> <p>Advisor-Bill Wentzel</p> <p>Advisor- Arlyn Perkey</p> <p>Past Pres: J. Burnham, B.Daley, H. Thistle, G. Thistle</p>
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Editors: Gay Thistle and Bobbi Cressey-Ideas for this newsletter are always welcome. Please send them to gaythistle@gmail.com .