

# SWPWO



November 2007

## *Southwestern Pennsylvania Woodland Owners*

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### **Successful Management of Woodlands through Low Impact Logging Wednesday, Nov 14 7:00 PM**

**at the Courthouse Square Bldg in  
Washington**

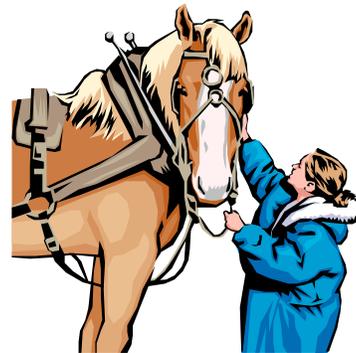
Dr. Jim Finley from Penn State University School of Forest Resources will speak to us about managing our woodlots with harvesting techniques that do not limit our future forest options. He will illustrate some of the best management practices for sustainable forestry. Dr. Finley has spoken to us before and his talks are very informative. He has been of great assistance to our organization throughout the years. Andrew Baker, a Forestry student at Penn State will speak briefly about his experience this summer serving as an intern on John Burnham's tree farm.

Ralph Campbell, DCNR Service Forester will speak on signs of Emerald Ash Borer infestation. This beetle has been located as close as Allegheny County and could be the demise of all the ash trees in the northeast.

Parking for the Wednesday evening meeting is free: enter through the Beau Street B-Level

entrance at the base of the Courthouse Square Building.

A field trip will follow this meeting on Saturday, **November 17**. This field trip will demonstrate low impact logging techniques that help us fell selected trees in our woodlots and remove them without disrupting the surrounding wooded area. Gary Winn of Prosperity will demonstrate horse logging techniques. SWPWO member and graduate of Game of Logging, Bob Brown will demonstrate directional tree felling techniques. These activities will take place at John Burnham's tree farm. Directions will be provided at the Wednesday meeting. The fun will begin at 1:00 and continue until about 4:00. Wear proper walking shoes and dress.



## Last Meeting of Year

The November meeting concludes our year of programs. There will be a short business meeting as part of this month's program in order to elect new officers for the 2008 year. The SWPWO bi-laws mandate term limits for our officers. Each term is two years and an officer can serve for a maximum of 2 terms. We want to thank Harold Thistle for his time served as our President, Nadine Obermiller for time served as Secretary, and Max Loughman for his time on our Board of Directors. We appreciate the time, effort and support given by these individuals.

Just a reminder, that dues for the 2008 year are collected at this time. Please bring your payment to the November meeting or send it to the High St. address listed below by January 1, 2008 to ensure that you are sent the first 2008 newsletter and calendar of events. Our first meeting of the 2008 year will be March 12, 2008.

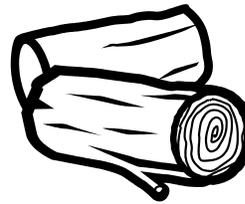
## Membership Information

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

## Thanks to Member John Burnham

We were blessed with beautiful weather for our annual SWPWO picnic. Please thank John Burnham for hosting us at his award winning tree farm. We had good attendance and great food. The pig did not catch on fire and was quite tasty also. Only two potato guns appeared on the scene. We had no new designs this year and SWPWO member Brian Thistle still hold the title for the farthest launch in the competition. Arlyn Perkey took the time to set up the tree identification contest. Each team had 60 trees to identify. No half credit was awarded this year for just listing "hickory" or "oak". Both teams needed to evolve. Once again the Thistles were pitted against each other. And once again, Gay's team was victorious. (Good work team!) There should be photos of the victorious team posted on the website. Thanks to everyone who helped put this picnic together.



## Calendar of Meetings for the 2007 Year

- **November 14 Meeting  
Successful Management of  
Woodlands Through Low  
Impact Logging**  
Jim Finley  
Time: 7:00 PM  
Place: Courthouse Square  
Building Washington, PA
- **November 17 Field Trip  
Tree Felling, Horse Logging,  
and Timber Sawing**  
Burnham's Tree Farm
- **2008 SWPWO meetings will  
resume March 12, 2008.**

## **REAP: Tax Credits for Farm Improvements in PA**

In September, Harold and I traveled to State College to participate in a meeting about forest land taxation. Members of our group have been attending these committee meetings since they began. At the meeting we learned of a new program that could benefit our members. It is outlined briefly below. More information can be found at the website for the Chesapeake Bay Foundation ([www.cbf.org/reap](http://www.cbf.org/reap))

In July 2007, Pennsylvania enacted the **Resource Enhancement and Protection Act of Pennsylvania (REAP)** as part of Act 55. REAP is a statewide tax credit program for agriculture and participating businesses. REAP offers transferable tax credits for the establishment of riparian forest buffers, no-till planting equipment, barnyard renovations and other conservation "best management practices" (BMPs). REAP becomes effective on October 24, 2007. Only BMPs completed after that date will be eligible. REAP is capped at \$10 million for FY 2007-08 and tax credits shall not exceed \$150,000 per agricultural operation over the life of the program. To be eligible, all operations must have a current conservation plan, or an Erosion and Sediment Plan and Nutrient Management Plan, if required. The State Conservation Commission (SCC) will oversee and implement REAP, however guidelines are not yet available.

SCC, CBF, the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau and other organizations are working together to successfully launch the program. Refer back to the referred website site for updated information on how to apply, or call 717.234.5550.

## **September Meeting Review- Mushrooms**

Our meetings in September focused on the fungus among us. During the Wednesday evening meeting, John Plischke III from the Western PA Mushroom Club showed us his photographs of the different mushrooms in the area and, as a bonus, photos of all the meals and side dishes he has prepared with the edible mushrooms. (It was important to eat dinner before this particular meeting. Because the talk made everyone hungry) John has an extensive knowledge of the mushrooms found in our area. He clearly differentiated between edible and non edible. John himself has never become ill from eating a mushroom because he will not eat the mushroom if he is not 100% sure of its identification. The attendees were offered shitake mushroom inoculums that John had prepared. We were taught how to inoculate an oak log and care for the stock so that in one year's time we will have home grown shitake mushrooms. John's talk was really interesting.

On the following Saturday Denise Binion of the U.S. Forest Service led us on a hike in search of mushrooms in western Greene County. We found about fifteen different kinds of fungus despite the dry conditions. Denise showed us

the difference between pores and veins in mushrooms. Some of fungus we found included, *Phellinus everhartii*, *Oxyporus populinus* (Mossy Maple Polypore), *Laetiporus sulphureus* (Chicken in the woods), *Trametes versicolor* (Turkey tail), *Cinnamon polyporous*, and *Ganoderma spp.*. These are only some of the ones I could remember. Denise stated that as soon as it rains, there should be many more fungus, especially at the base of oaks.

Denise brought along some fungus guides that she likes and they were actually the same ones that John Plischke had suggested.

Christmas is coming so here are the titles of the suggested guides;

1. "Mushrooms of West Virginia and Central Appalachia" by William Roody- a good local guide
2. "Mushrooms of Pennsylvania and the Mid Atlantic" by Bill Russell- recommended by both John and Denise
3. "North American Mushrooms" by Orson Miller- more general, but good information
4. "Medicinal Mushrooms" by Hobbs, exploring the many uses of mushrooms
5. "Edible and Poisonous Mushrooms of the World" by Hall, Stephenson, Yun and Cole- again more general information
6. "Mycelium Running" by Paul Starrets – sounds like an interesting commentary on how fungus may be ruling the world without us really knowing?? or another nature book about how life on Earth is all connected in some way.
7. "Audubon Society Field Guide to North American Mushrooms" by

Gary Lincoff- again, a general resource. More information about the Western PA Mushroom Club can be found at:

[www.wpamushroomclub.org](http://www.wpamushroomclub.org)

*written by Gay Thistle*

### ***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*

### **SWPWO**

### **Committee for the year**

**2007**

#### ***Officers***

**Harold Thistle- President**

**Bob Daley - Vice Pres.**

**Nadine Obermiller- Secretary**

**Earl Novendstern- Treasurer**

#### ***Board of Directors***

**Joe McNaney**

**Max Loughman**

**Maria Piantanida**

#### ***Advisors***

**Bill Wentzel` Arlyn Perkey**

**John Burnham- Past President**

## Red vs. Sugar

There you are, leaning against a big maple in your sugarbush, drill and tap at the ready when you think, "Wait a minute...is this a red maple or a sugar maple?"

While maples in general are quite easy to distinguish from other forest trees (their twigs and buds grow opposite one another, unlike other common trees except ashes, whose twigs are fat and blunt), telling red maple from sugar maple can vex even a seasoned botanist on occasion.

Mid-summer is the easiest time to tell red from sugar, assuming you can clearly see some of the leaves from the ground. The leaf margins tell the main story; sugar maples have smooth edges while red maples have toothed or serrated edges. The three lobes of the sugar maple's leaf are separated by smooth, u-shaped valleys-think U as in sUgar. The red maple's lobes are separated by V-shaped valleys. Overall, this makes the sugar maple's leaf broader and more rounded than the narrower, pointier leaves of the red.

But if you don't have leaves, which you don't for most of the year, including sugaring season, spring is the best time to get started. Red maples are distinctly red in all but their outer bark. The buds are red as are the stems that support the flowers and samaras (fruit or helicopters- as some call it). Sugar maple, by contrast, has a golden brown- honey- colored or medium amber hue that's very apparent on the buds and flower stems. Indeed, if you see these two species growing side by side from across a field, the

effect on a sunny spring day is pronounced- burgundy versus honey.

During the Fall and Winter seasons you can look at the buds and bark to help identify these two maples. The shape of the different buds is distinct. Red maple buds are short and knobby, almost like buttons sewed to the end of every branch and they are situated nearly perpendicular to the twigs. Sugar's are sleek and pointy, shaped more like bullets than buttons and are situated at about a 45° angle from the twig.

This pattern carries over into the geometry of the branchlets. Reds often grow 90° out from the main branches, sugars at more like a 45° angle. This effect can be very distinct while Looking up into the crown of a mature maple. The bottony buds of the red maple clearly show on the ends of the perpendicular branchlets. The sleek, pointy buds of the sugar maple often can't be seen at all, lying as they do, much closer to the narrow angle of the 45° branchlets. If you still are not sure which maple you are looking up into then it's probably a sugar, because the red's buds and branches are easier to identify.

Which brings us to bark- bark is the one characteristic that's easiest to see from ground level and one of the most likely to be inconclusive. The red maple's bark comes in a wide variety of textures, including one that can only be described as "sugar maple". Bark on a mature sugar is irregularly furrowed and ropey. It's rough without displaying any overall pattern or symmetry. It often has a touch of

chalky grayness, like young sugar maple saplings.

Red maple bark, if it varies from this at all, has a darker gray cast to it, with occasional dinner plate sized smooth patches that stand out, with some of these smooth patches having parallel vertical cracks that look a bit like bear scratches. If you see a round pattern of bark fissures that look like a target, look no further, it's a red maple. At other times, however, mature red maple bark can appear shaggy like hophornbean, really shaggy like shagbark hickory or crusty like elderly yellow birch. If the bark makes you think it is not a maple, but the pattern of opposite branching shows that it is, than it is probably a red maple. You may be in luck and be able to find leaves on the ground to observe some of these differences. You will be able to notice bark and branch arrangement at this time.

*Article submitted by Arlyn Perkey from the journal Northern Woodlands. It was written by Chuck Wooster and edited by Gay Thistle*

## SWPWO Website

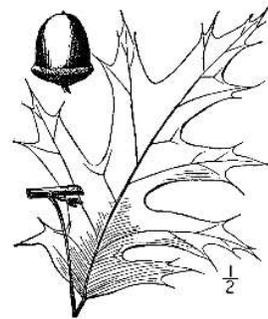
The SWPWO official website can be accessed at the following address [www.cs.pitt.edu/~daley/swpwo](http://www.cs.pitt.edu/~daley/swpwo).

This website is available to us because of the talents and time of webmaster and officer, Bob Daley. The SWPWO website has the calendar of events for 2007, current information about our group, and photos from our outings. If you find a website that may interest others in our group e-mail Bob Daley at [daley@cs.pitt.edu](mailto:daley@cs.pitt.edu)

and give him the web address. He is looking for interesting links and photos to post on our site.

## Some Interesting information on Northern Red oak (*Quercus rubra*)

Northern red oak is the most valuable timber species of the red oak group. It has been used in construction, flooring and furniture. The British Royal Navy once used it in shipbuilding. Northern red oak acorns are a source of food for wildlife. These trees are biennial (produce fruit every other year). It does not start fruiting until the age of 25. Native Americans utilized northern red oak as medicine for numerous ailments. The largest known specimen grows in Monroe County, New York. *Printed from "The Field Guide to Native Oak Species of Eastern United States", by J. Stein, D. Binion, R Acciavatti*



*This newsletter is produced about 8 times per year. It is published about two weeks prior to the meetings. Articles and/or ideas are welcome. Contact the editors John Burnham at 724-223-8781 or e-mail at [burnhamjc@msn.com](mailto:burnhamjc@msn.com) or Gay Thistle at 724-499-5190 [thistle@windstream.net](mailto:thistle@windstream.net)*