

SWPWO



Southwest PA Woodland Owners

Feb. 2020

2020 SWPWO Calendar

<p>Apr 15 (Wed) WA County Conservation District meeting rm beginning at 7 PM 50 Old Hickory Ridge Rd, Washington, PA 15301</p>	<p>Money and Assistance Programs for Managing Your Woodlot- a panel of speakers which includes, Rennie Stoy of NRCS, George Wherry of PA Farm Bureau, and Jared Zinn of Greene County Conservation District, will talk about the different avenues to fund forestry management projects.</p>
<p>Apr 17 (Sat) Fajerski Tree Farm, WA County 1-4 PM Meet at 12:30 PM at the Washington Crown Center mall parking lot in front of Sears garage bays to caravan</p>	<p>Tour a Project Funded by NRCS EQUIP Monies with Mark Fajerski. Mark has been granted a Conservation Stewardship Plan (CSP) by the NRCS office in Washington County. The CSP is for herbaceous weed control on specified acres of Maple Hills Tree Farm near Claysville. Mile-a-Minute, Japanese honeysuckle vine and Japanese stiltgrass are some of the invasive vegetation that are the target in both forested and open areas.</p>
<p>May 16 (Sat) At the Burnham woodlot, Washington, PA 1-4 PM Meet at 12:30 PM at the Old Concord Church in Concord, PA parking lot to caravan</p>	<p>Invasive Plants and Insects Talk and Tour with Brian Wolniak, Urban Forester with Penn State University Extension Services stationed in Pittsburgh, PA. This combination talk and tour will review the invasive plants and insects that are negatively impacting our forests in SW PA. Invasives are so named because they are aggressive, encroaching and exotic. Brian will tell us about a new pest that has not yet arrived in our area, but is on its way from SE PA-the spotted lanternfly. There will be a talk and then a tour to get a hands on identifying invasives and discuss control strategies.</p>
<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 tout of Greene County's original 1797 log courthouse.</p> <p>10:30 brunch or just coffee at Kiln to Table Restaurant, 352 S Richhill St, Waynesburg, PA (optional)</p>
<p>July 17 (Fri) Greene County 181 Hunting Hill Rd, Dilliner, PA</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</p>

1 – 4 PM	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.
Sept 16 (Wed) Greene County Fairgrounds, Building 10, top floor meeting room 7 PM	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.
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	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.
Oct 4 (Sun) Fajerski Tree Farm	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 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.

2020 Membership Dues Reminder

Dues for 2020 can be mailed to SWPWO at 261 2nd St, Oakmont, PA 15139. You can stay up to date on all of our events for 2020 and stay informed with our newsletter. Dues are still at the low prices of \$10 for an individual and \$15 for a household. Contact Maria if you have questions about your membership status (mecp1942@gmail.com).

REPLACING THE WHITE ASH PLANTATION AT MAPLE HILLS TREE FARM

We purchased our Washington County property in 1991. Most of the property was wooded except for an open field near the house. The field was about 6 acres and was overgrown with briars and multiflora rose. The growth was so dense that it was impossible to walk completely across the field. It took a few years to get the 'thorny' situation under control. I began to think it would be great to reforest the field so in 2002 with my wife, Debi, we planted 200 red oak seedlings that I purchased from Penn Nursery. We used tree tubes to protect the seedlings and had a very high survival rate. I could see that they were going to do well.

The red oaks only covered a portion of the field and so it was decided to continue planting seedlings. I thought it was important to diversify so I looked around and saw that the white ash trees in the area were doing very well. In 2003, we planted 100 white ash seedlings that I purchased from The Virginia Department of Forestry and, in 2004, we planted another 100 white ash seedlings from the New Hampshire State Forest Nursery. Everything was great for a few years and then I learned about the newest forest pest, the emerald ash borer. As I observed the purple and green traps hanging from trees, I realized I had diversified with the wrong species. I joked about having a bunch of firewood close to the house but when the EAB infestation started in 2014, it really wasn't funny. The devastation in 2016 was incredible, so I had to think of a replacement.

I met "The Axe Whisperer" and fellow Pennsylvania Forest Steward, Jim Walizer, at the 2017 Forest Landowners Conference in Altoona. Jim gave me a bag of 12 "tall Chinese chestnuts". Interestingly, there's a place in China where the chestnut trees grow taller than normal. The white ash were meant for lumber production but now I thought maybe I would go for a wildlife planting. The chestnuts would be a perfect replacement.

I potted the 12 chestnuts Jim gave me and they all grew nicely. One day, I took four of the potted seedlings out to the field and planted them. Tree tubes were again used to protect the seedlings. On the very first night, an animal dug up one of the seedlings and ate the nut. Another seedling was disturbed but not killed. It was then that I read a publication handed out by the American Chestnut Foundation folks that explained that the nut should be removed from the seedling before planting to avoid this sort of thing. If all else fails, read the instructions! In all, I've planted approximately 120 tall Chinese chestnuts provided by Jim.

I spoke with my Service Forester, Russ Gibbs, and asked if he thought planting white pine in the area would be a good idea. Russ looked at my soil survey and told me that white pine would be OK, but recommended a pitch x loblolly pine cross instead. He had seen them in Fayette County and was impressed with them. Pitch pine is native to the Mid-Atlantic area and loblolly is native to the southeastern states. The cross pollination creates a tree that has the winter hardiness of the pitch pine and the fast growth of the loblolly.

I ordered 25 seedlings from the Missouri Department of Conservation nursery and planted them in March 2017 using a planting bar I borrowed from Russ. Every seedling was protected by a cage

made from 1 inch poultry netting. One of the seedlings was eaten by wildlife in spite of the protective cage and another one dried up and died. At the end of the first growing season, most of the trees exceeded 12 inches in height and some of them reached 18 inches. A huge success! I planted another 25 trees in March 2018 with similar success. The growth rate of the second planting wasn't quite as impressive as the first but I only lost one tree. At the end of the 2019 growing season, many of the 2017 trees are 7 to 8 feet tall and a number of the 2018 trees are 6 feet tall.

It seems that the pitch x loblolly pines tend to continue growing late into the autumn. I was originally concerned that the trees wouldn't harden off and there would be damage from the first frost or freeze, but that hasn't happened.

A few of the pitch x loblolly pine trees had some needle rust (fungus) in the spring of 2019 but the rust disappeared after a few weeks. I've been informed that the rust is not life threatening. In the middle of summer, I cut 2 feet off the top of one of the older trees because I observed what appeared to be damage from white pine weevil.

At this point, I still have one of the New Hampshire white ashes and a couple dozen Virginia white ashes. I didn't notice any additional crown die back, epicormic branching, or sprouts coming from the root collar this past summer. Interesting. We'll see what happens next year.

It's been a lot of trouble removing dead ash trees and replanting with chestnut and pine, but I'm really happy with the new "wildlife planting". Submitted by Mark Fajerski

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><u>Membership Information</u> Membership dues will be collected at meetings or can be sent to: SWPWO 261 2nd St, Oakmont, PA 15139 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><u>2020 SWPWO Officers (year elected)</u> President – Mark Fajerski (2018) Vice President – John Gregor (2018) Secretary – Maureen Burnham (2020) Treasurer – Maria Piantanida (at large position) Director – Melissa Gregor (2018) Director – Harold Thistle (2019) Director – Wayne Kraeer (2018) Advisor-Bill Wentzel Advisor- Arlyn Perkey 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.