

SWPWO



Southwest PA Woodland Owners

Sept 2020

The September 16th and September 19th SWPWO events have been cancelled due to COVID 19 concerns.

Please see the updated calendar below. Unfortunately, most live events have been cancelled. Mark Fajerski is still hosting an outdoor tour of his tree farm in Claysville, PA on Sunday, October 4. Also, you can now register for the online [PA Forestry Association Annual Symposium](#) which is being offered at no charge this year and, as an added bonus, you will not have to travel either. Check out the [schedule of speakers](#). On Wednesday, 10/28/20 at 12:45 PM one of our own SWPWO members will be honored (see below). So, if you cannot make all of the days, at least tune in on Wednesday!

Another Greene County PA Tree Farm of the Year Award!

Rebecca Trigger and her son Mark are being awarded the 2021 PA Tree Farm of the Year. As we have seen at the summer tour of this tree farm, they have accomplished a lot on her woodlot. Parts of it have gone from invasive infested woods to beautiful and sustainable forests. She and her son have worked on combatting tree of heaven and grapevine. They have cooperated with many outside sources, like WVU, to combat mile-a-minute weed with a biological control that is dropped by drone and with the local, infamous Carmichaels Envirothon team to plant tree seedlings. She has branched out and has planted native pollinator fields and is in the beginning stages of growing and selling native plants from her farm. Their commitment to sustainable forestry that focuses on growing high quality hardwoods, while providing educational outreach to local community groups has set this tree farm apart. Congratulations Rebecca and Mark! Stay tuned for information about a field day at her property in 2021. This will be the fourth PA Tree Farm of the Year from our SWPWO membership! Rebecca and Mark will be awarded virtually on Wednesday, Oct 28, 2020 at 12:45 PM at the PA Forestry Symposium. This event is free and open to the public. Please see registration information in the article above.

The “JOY” of Using a Battery-powered Pole Saw for Woodland Trimming

by Rebecca Trigger

I didn't always feel joy with the chore of trimming branches hanging low over my woodland trails. I'd put it off until I could no longer duck the branches from smacking me in the face while on my tractor. I dreaded the prep time of getting out saws, mixing fuels, running them to warm up, then loading up all the saws, fuel, and safety equipment in my UTV and driving down the trails. And I've always had physical difficulty with the pull starts on any gas powered machinery (lawn mowers, weed-whackers or chain saws).

During a visit to drop off chains to be sharpened at my local John Deere dealer, I noticed the section of battery powered equipment made by Stihl. I thought how nice it would be to walk out to my garage, strap on a light weight battery powered pole-saw and hike along my woodland trails to cut low branches. No need to load up my ranger to carry smelly fuel, no need to wear heavy/hot chaps, no constant loud noise...only the sound of a gentle hum when the button is pressed.

Perhaps, dare I ponder, pruning can even be a pleasant endeavor.

I learned from the dealer that in my area these battery powered tools are used primarily in coal mines where using any type of fuel or plug in electric can cause a hazardous explosion. He said, "the workers really like these battery saws and say they work great. The lithium-ion batteries and high-torque motors have come along way." I thought why not give them a try. I bought a battery powered pole-pruner, hedge-trimmer and small chainsaw that are all powered by the same size battery requiring only one charger. Having equipment with an interchangeable battery is an important financial savings and convenience.

This purchase did not disappoint. In fact there were many more advantages and uses of the pole-saw than I had ever imagined. The no prep time and light-weight of this saw allows me to carry it around for hours on a shoulder strap. This has increased the amount of time I do actual pruning. The telescopic pole (up to 16 feet above ground) allows me to maintain a safe distance while cutting overhead AND vegetation near the ground. No more stepping into thorny multi-flora rose, gnarly clumping vines, eye-poking small trees, or thickets with hidden poison ivy or snakes to remove them. I don't have to wear heavy and hot safety chaps. The chain stops running as soon as your finger is lifted off the throttle. And since it runs while only cutting, the battery charge lasts a long time. (A full battery charge lasts me a 6-8 hour day of pruning.)

This little gem has replaced all my other miscellaneous equipment, from hand held loppers to gas powered trimmers. It has allowed me to work smarter, not harder. I get more accomplished, with less wear and tear on my body, with fewer things to hassle over and in a more pleasant environment. All this motivates me to get out on the trail and do more pruning resulting in beautifully maintained trails, which brings me joy.

Suggestions when purchasing a battery powered pole-saw:

- Buy from a reputable dealer located near you for easy maintenance, such as chain sharpening.
- Buy a commercial grade quality saw with a high-torque electric motor.
- Check that the battery is interchangeable with other equipment you may purchase.
- Be sure the saw has a telescopic pole rather than a fixed pole (telescopic can reach up to 16 feet above ground).
- Decide on a fixed or multi-angled head adjustment (mine is fixed to keep it simple).
- A shoulder strap is a must.
- Read online reviews of the commercial brands available in your area.

More Online Resources as We Continue to Hunker Down

New invasive plant id and eradication Fact sheets:

https://ecosystems.psu.edu/research/centers/private-forests/news/announcing-new-invasive-plant-fact-sheets-series?utm_campaign=Forest+Leaves+Newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_content=newsletter_title

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Woodland Stewardship Online Workshop:

<file:///C:/Users/GT/Downloads/Flyer%20WEST%20VIRGINIA%20WOODLAND%20STEWARDS%20SEMINAR%20FLYER%20-%20FINAL%20-%20%20DIGITAL%20083120.pdf>

2020 SWPWO Calendar

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| 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. The tours is free open to the public. Bring your friends, neighbors, grandchildren to learn about our special forests. |
| Oct 17 (Sat) | SWPWO Pig Roast- . Cancelled |
| Oct 26-30 Online 12:00 to 1:00 PM daily | Impacts on Penn’s Woods. PA Forestry Association Annual Symposium is online and free this year. Join PFA for lunch (noon-1 PM)and a guest speaker. Each day will have a new topic. Registration here: http://paforestry.org/event/2020symposium |
| Nov 18 (Wed) | Old Growth Forests Cancelled |
| Nov 21 (Sat) | Tour an old growth forest Cancelled |

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| <p><u>Membership Information</u> Membership dues will be collected at meetings or can be sent to: SWPWO 261 2nd St, Pittsburgh 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>Our website: http://www.swpwopa.com/</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.