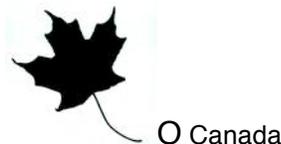


SWPWO



Southwest PENNA Woodland Owners Assoc.

March 2014

busybeaver.cs.pitt.edu/swpwo/

OUR 15TH YEAR!

March 12 Meeting

Non-Native vs. Native Plants

WED, 7 PM

Kathy McGregor from Sylvania Natives in Pittsburgh will focus on the importance of maintaining native species in our woodlands for the health of the forest, as well as for the wildlife. She will also cover identification of some of the invasive plants that are found in our woods.

Old Concord Presbyterian, near Prosperity, Washington County

March 15 Field Trip

[Late] Winter Tree ID Refresher Course

SAT, 1- 4 PM

What better way to herald a new growing season than brushing up on lessons learned. In our version of Spring Training, Arlyn Perkey has agreed to lead a mini Tree-ID course. The veterans can prove they still got it, while the rookies have a chance to step up and shine. After the harsh winter (see following article), the state of the woods promises to be revealing. Will the undergrowth be noticeably knocked back? Will this be a particularly opportune year to attack invasives as they struggle to regroup? We will contemplate our options, in addition to the trees. Bring your notebooks, binoculars, hiking boots, and sense of humor. Everyone gets a trophy--er, cookie.

Perkey Tree Farm, near Rutan, Greene County

Meet at 12:30, Greene County Fairgrounds

THE POLAR VORTEX—BRING IT ON

You were likely none too happy on February 2 when the groundhog predicted six more weeks of the cold, snowy stuff. This winter has been an especially cold one. Our farm has recorded two nights in a row far below zero; -17° F, then -20° (Jan 28-29). But woodland owners may have reason to celebrate. The cold temperatures could prove to be population control for the invasive pests that affect our trees.

Insects are successful because they quickly adapt to new situations in their environment. Insects native to the colder regions have a variety of survival mechanisms. Many beetles burrow in the ground to maintain a constant temperature. Others, like Monarch butterflies, migrate to warmer temperatures in the winter. Amazingly, some insects have a natural anti-freeze (ethylene glycol) preventing formation of the ice crystals that can burst their cells.

However, many of the invasive pests that we are currently dealing with have moved from warmer climates. In recent years, we have not had cold enough winters to test if they have actually adapted to their new surroundings.

There have been many science-based articles hypothesizing that this cold snap will be the wake up call, and keep populations down.

According to Richard C Cowles, a scientist with the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station, hemlock wooly adelgid will die when the temperature hits minus 4 or 5 ° F. While this insect pest is not yet in Greene or Washington counties, it is in the counties north and east of us and does totally wipe out the population of hemlocks (our official PA state tree). Yea for the cold!

Emerald ash borers require minus 30 ° F in order to have high rates of mortality. While we did not see those temperatures in our neck of the woods, Minnesota, Michigan and Illinois did. Any hit to the populations may slow the infestations to us. Yea for the cold!

While ticks are not insects, but arachnids, they remain a pest to woodland owners from spring through fall as we work in our woods. While most of the ticks we find are dog ticks, we are in an area that has Lyme disease, which is spread by a deer tick. A 2012 study, co-authored by Cary Disease ecologist Rick Ostfeld, found that ticks exposed to sub-zero temperatures had a slightly increased mortality rate. Yea for the cold!

We will have to wait until spring and summer to see what effects this cold snap has on our woodland pests. If populations are down I, for one, will be cheering because these pests were taken care of naturally without costing me any time, energy, or money. Yea for the cold!

----- **Gay Thistle**

Sources:

1. Edgar, Tricia. "Cold, Glorious Cold: How Cold Snaps Play a Role in Managing Invasive Species." *Decoded Science*. 14, January 2014. Web. Jan 28, 2014. <http://www.decodedscience.com/cold-weather-invasive-species/41624>
 2. Foderaro, Lisa W. "Celebrating Deep Freeze, Insects Experts See Chance to Kill Off Invasive Species." *New York Times*. 8, January 2014. Web. 26 January 2014: http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/09/nyregion/experts-cheer-the-deep-freeze-as-a-killer-of-invasive-insects.html?_r=0
- Ferro Gannet, John. "Lyme disease: Freezes May Reduce Ticks." *Star Gazette*. 27 January 2014. Web. 3 February 2014: <http://www.stargazette.com/article/20140127/NEWS10/301270008/Lyme-disease-Freezes-may-reduce-ticks--->

So how cold has this winter been? [The following data is taken from the Toad Hollow Backyard Meteorological Project, an amateur undertaking in all respects. Readings are from a gradual-sided Hollow, elevation 1220 feet, at the headwaters of Fish Creek in SoWest Greene.] Jan-Feb 2014 has recorded 14 days with a low temp in the single digits F, and an additional 8 days below Zero. In the 19 winters preceding, the averages are 6 days single digits and 1.5 days below Zero. Not since 1994-95 had there been a winter with more than 3 days of sub-Zero temps, and 9 winters of the 19 had none. This winter also featured a full-ground snow pack—a particularly glistening and icy one--of 35 consecutive days. While not unprecedented in the 20-year period, it is twice the average of 18 consecutive days. What is unprecedented was a 10-day stretch (Jan 21-30) with low readings every night but one below 8 F, with 5 nights below Zero. Hi-temps never broke freezing (with 5 in the teens) except for a 4-hour respite in the wee hours of 1/27 when a warm breeze briefly blew in from the South, which was followed by the 2 coldest nights in the last 20 years. This winter has a strong claim as the Coldest of the last Twenty. --Ed.



SWPWO 2014 Calendar

Date	Location	Topic/Speaker
March 12 (Wed) 7 PM	Washington County Old Concord Presbyterian Church	Non-Native vs. Native Plants , with Kathy McGregor from Sylvania Natives in Pittsburgh, PA.
Mar 15 (Sat) 1-4 PM	Perkey Tree Farm Near Rutan, Greene County	Tree ID Refresher Course - Whether new to the art of tree identification, or a veteran, a chance to test your knowledge just as Spring unleashes its' transformative magic.
May 14 (Wed) 7 PM	Greene County Fairgrounds, Bldg 10, downstairs	Water Quality in the Age of Fracking , with Ken Dufalla of the Greene County chapter of the Izaak Walton League (IWLA). A critical look at a critical issue: what are the threats to our drinking and groundwater, and what, as landowners, can we do to be prepared? The results of the IWLA's 5-year water monitoring program will be presented.
May 17 (Sat) Field Trip 1-4 PM	Meet at Ten Mile Creek County Park; Main St, between Clarksville and Rte. #88	Intro to Water Testing Procedures : A first hand look at the Clyde Mine discharge, which is threatening the water quality of the Ten Mile upstream from the public drinking water intake. Mr. Dufalla will provide an aquatic biologist's perspective, entertain an examination of the Big Picture, and demonstrate the basics of water testing.
June 14 (Sat) Tour 1-4 PM	Warrior Trail HQ, Fordyce Intersection of Garard's Fort Rd & Fordyce School Rd	A Short Hike on the Historic Warrior Trail : Llew Williams, long time Director of the WTA, will give a brief history of the ridge Indian trail that connects the Mon & Ohio Rivers, and lead us on a casual, informational hike that promises multiple points of view.
July 19 (Sat) Field Day 9 AM-3 PM	Burnham Tree Farm, Near Prosperity	National Tree Farm Annual Meeting : July 17-19, Pittsburgh Registration at https://www.treefarmssystem.org/tree-farmer-convention or join us to help host the field day for tree farmers from around the nation. The Burnhams will need many volunteers to make this event a success. There will be about 30 stations of learning set up for the 300 expected to visit. Contact John Burnham if you are interested in assisting.
Aug 9 (Sat) Tour 1-4 PM	229 Hunting Hill Rd, Greensboro, PA 15338 http://www.huntinghillspa.com	Visit to Hunting Hills Sporting Clays An up close look at wildlife habitat development. Hunting Hills was founded in 1967 by Roy and Sally Sisler, who operate 750 acres targeted for wildlife conservation. We will tour the habitat development sites on the property and consider what it takes to manage land for wildlife.
Sept 10 (Wed) 7 PM	Washington County Old Concord Presbyterian Church	Strategies for Managing Forests from Three SWPWO Members Woodland owners have long lists of management tasks to complete on their grounds. We all manage our time and efforts differently depending on many factors, including ages of children, whether we're working or retired, resources available, experience, etc... In this program we will hear strategies of how three SWPWO members go about managing their tree farms. This is a good forum to pick up tips and tricks for your own management plans and to learn about available resources.
Sept 13 (Sat) Field Trip 1-4 PM	Perkey & Thistle Tree Farms, Greene County	Boots on the Ground Look at Woodland Practices This is a hands-on tour of two of the three tree farms that presented at the Wednesday program. At the Perkey farm, we will view the results of successive crop tree thinning as well as sites where Forestry assistance programs were utilized. At the Thistle farm, the topics will be tree planation establishment and deer protection measures.
Oct. 18 (Sat) 1 PM Picnic <i>'anat</i>	The SWPWO Picnic Grounds	SWPWO Annual Picnic for members and their guests, with a tour of Burnham farm looking at management strategies. This is a continuation of the September meeting. We will critique Walnut clonal forestry and an American chestnut restoration project. Afterwards, join in for a potluck picnic. Meat and utensils provided.

Nov. 12 (Wed) 7 PM	Greene County Fairgrounds, Bldg 10, downstairs	Carbon Credits for Forestlands , with Al Steele from the USDA Forest Service. We will take a look at what forest carbon markets are, why they were created, and the current status of such markets in the US. We will debate the concept of carbon markets, how advocates have attempted to address controversies, and how these responses affect the development of forest carbon projects.
Nov 15 (Sat) 1-4 PM Field Trip	TBD	Inventory Techniques for Your Woodlot: An in-the-woods look at some of the field measurements/ inventory-related information which may be necessary to participate in carbon markets. The workshop will be structured in a way that will allow landowners, or groups of landowners, to determine if forest carbon markets are something that would be useful for their particular situation.

**Meet at 12:30, Bldg 10, Greene County Fairgrounds to caravan for Sat Field Trips
Call 724-499-5190 or 724-447-2323 for driving directions or questions**

**NEW THIS YEAR
COMING TO A GROVE NEAR YOU**

SWPWO kicks it up a notch with a nod to the expressiveness inherent in the wooded vale. Maureen Burnham will lead us in **Writing Right in the Woods**, a group now forming that will meet, write, share, and enjoy bits and bites as small moments spark writing. We plan to convene--in the spirit of Thoreau and Annie Dillard, Robert Frost and Sarah Orne Jewett, (Edward Abbey even?!)--in the April-out-of-doors to bid adieu to Old Man Winter, in writing.

Contact Maureen at burnhammaureen@yahoo.com--or Dave (724-447-2323), or Gay (724-499-5190)--with your ideas and inspirations.

The pen is mightier than the chain saw.

<p align="center"><i>Our Purpose</i></p> <p><i>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.</i></p>	<p align="center">Membership Information</p> <p>Membership dues will be collected at meetings or can be sent to:</p> <p align="center">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>
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