

SWPWO



May 2010

Southwestern Pennsylvania Woodland Owners

Next Meeting: Wednesday, May 12 Sustainable Forestry: How do you know when you see it?

Dr. Jim Finley, Professor of Forest Resources, Penn State University will be our visiting speaker. Dr. Finley will instruct us sustainable forestry techniques. Many of us have wondered if the timber harvesting decisions we make (or others make for us) are likely to lead to a sustainable outcome? Learn about the critical variables to consider as you plan a timber harvest to create a productive forest with future management options.
Time: 7:00 PM
Place: Building #10, Greene Country Fairgrounds, Waynesburg, PA

May 15 Field Trip Sustainability Assessment: Practical Application

We will be visiting Arlyn Perkey's 60 acre WV tree farm. Arlyn describes it as follows. "The property was "timbered," just before I bought it. It had been in the hands of short-term speculators, so it was done without mercy. I have done rehabilitation work on much of it, but there is more work needed. They pretty well exhausted my red oak seed source on the best sites. At that time (2000) the market for red oak was still good. The area also has a very high deer population and several invasive

plant species. Emerald ash borer is also on the way."

We will apply Dr. Finley's criteria to assess this property for sustainability and discuss outcomes of different forestry decisions that are or could be made on this property. Please wear proper clothing for the weather and shoes for hiking in these woods. This tour is free and open to the public. Directions will be given at the Wednesday meeting or meet at the Greene County fairgrounds parking lot to arrange carpools or to follow. These tours generally last until 4:00 PM.

Time: 1:00 PM

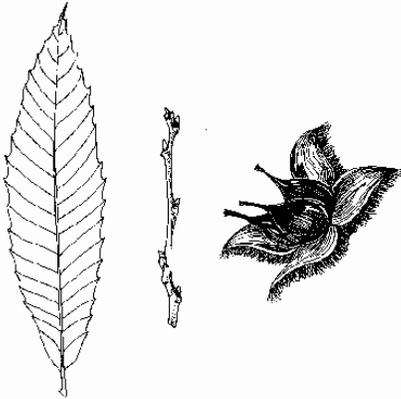
Place: Arlyn Perkey's Tree Farm in Monongalia County, WV

Meet at 12:30 PM at Building #10, Greene Country Fairgrounds, Waynesburg, PA

American Chestnut Revival in SW PA

Gary Micsky of Penn State University and the Pennsylvania chapter of the American chestnut foundation showed his enthusiasm for the revival of chestnuts in our forests. He had an interesting slide show which displayed successful chestnut plantings around the state. An American chestnut stock that is resistant to the blight is still not available, however Gary encouraged forest owners to plant American chestnuts so we can continue to have native germplasm (collection of genetic resources), can accustom ourselves to the care and maintenance of growing chestnuts, produce

chestnuts, collect wood stock, and for the general education of what a chestnut tree looks like.



American chestnut

Gary encouraged us to join The American Chestnut Foundation. The American Chestnut Foundation depends primarily upon its members to support research to develop a blight-resistant American chestnut tree. Over 6,000 members are helping to bring this important tree back from the brink of extinction. With your \$40 membership, the PA-The American Chestnut Foundation receives \$15 towards the local breeding programs. Join by visiting the website at <http://www.patacf.org>. A membership form is included in this newsletter.

Gary drove down again from Mercer county, on Saturday to demonstrate how to plant chestnuts. About fifteen participants showed up for this demonstration and most everyone took home chestnut seeds to plant. Gary also supplied soil mixture and small tree tubes to help protect the seedlings. SWPWO is doing their part in reviving this important historical member of our forests. *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.

Mushroom Season Again

For those of you who received shitake mushroom inoculums in September 2008 and actually inoculated an oak log- check it out. Our logs produced last Fall and again this Spring. I think the recent frost may slow it down a bit. Fresh shitake mushrooms are great. It's also morel season, although it has been a dry and cold spring. As with other morel seasons, I hear of some who have many and some who have few. Take a hike in your woods and don't forget a basket!



Auto Tour Promotes Pennsylvania Old Growth Forests for Eco-Tourism

A new tourist guide to Pennsylvania's old-growth forests is now available from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and on the DCNR Web site. Dr. Donald L. Gibbon, consulting naturalist, and Dr. Walter Carson, forest ecologist at the University of Pittsburgh,

first conceived the Auto Tour of Old-Growth Forests four years ago. Gibbon describes the idea as 'a tour for people who are interested in the forest, to see how it looked originally, and to see the best of what's left.' Some remaining parcels of old growth include the Alan Seeger Natural Area, the Anders Run Natural Area, Cranberry Swamp, Cooks Forest State Park, and more. According to the DCNR, less than one percent of Pennsylvania forestland (30,000 acres) can be defined as "old growth." Old growth forests occur when man or nature leaves the forest undisturbed and the forest succession cycle is not reset. It takes many years for the different forest types to attain such advanced maturity - at least 100 years for scrub-oak barrens to 350 years for hemlock forests.

"These small fragments represent the best picture we have of what forests might have looked like prior to European settlement," says Carson. "When you walk into a section of old-growth, you get the sense that you're seeing a very different kind of forest. One of the different features is a large amount of big downed, woody debris, and standing dead trees with fallen crowns and very large, slowly decaying trunks." Visitors may also expect to get a glimpse of towering giants like Cooks Forest's record setting 181-foot white pine, or of 300-year-old black cherry trees in the Tionesta Scenic Area. Cooks Forest's white pine and hemlock trees are between 350 and 450 years old.

The nineteen natural areas chosen for the tour lie in the Lumber Heritage Region, a fifteen-county area in the northwest, north-central part of the state that contains many of our state and national forests. The region

owes its name to a history of heavy logging in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The inaccessibility of some parcels spared them from the widespread clearcutting. Even today, the forests along these muddy bogs and rocky inclines have never been harvested; however, individual trees might have been removed from the area.

Although Pennsylvania's old-growth fragments are too small to provide significant wildlife habitat, Carson says there are some animals that require old growth. Auto-Tour sites frequently overlap the Audubon Society's designated Important Birds Areas and the Pennsylvania Game Commission's Pennsylvania Important Mammals Areas. Mammals like black bear, pine marten and flying squirrel, and birds like blue-headed vireo, brown creeper, and barred owl find refuge in old-growth forests.

The Auto Tour of Old-Growth Forest brochure, available from the DCNR and on the DCNR Web site, contains detailed directions, photos, and a brief description of each area. Gibbon says, "It would probably take six or seven days to visit all the sites. It's especially interesting to visit them in all seasons, not only summer.

Many of the sites are located off Route 120 or Route 322, and some can be accessed by car. Cooks Forest and the Alan Seeger Natural Area, for example, have roads running through them. Other sites are located a couple of miles off the road, and travelers will need to walk to see the old growth. "This is not set up for the armchair tourist," Gibbon explains. "It's for people interested in experiencing woods as woods." Many of the areas do not provide amenities. As

Pennsylvania's second largest industry, tourism is vital to our state's economy. The "Pennsylvania Wild" campaign, one of four new state initiatives to promote Pennsylvania tourism, will encompass portions of the old-growth areas outlined in the auto tour. Contact your local Bureau of Forestry district office for a brochure. *Printed from the Forest*

Stewardship website

<http://paforeststewards.cas.psu.edu/NewsArchive/2004/04Sep16.html>

SWPWO 2010 Calendar of Events

June 11 (Friday) Summer Tour: Visit to Keystone Cooperage Barrel Manufacturing Plant

Brian and Mike Wilson

Description: Roll out the barrel. We're going to have some fun! Come see, from beginning to end, how white oak logs are cut into staves (narrow strips of wood) and then made into wine barrels. The Wilson Forest Products Company has been making barrel parts (the staves) in Greene County since 1931. But in 2001 the owners Brian and Mike Wilson, grandsons of the company's founder, decided to get into the actual barrel-making side of the business, which they named Keystone Cooperage. The white oak tree grows well in SW PA and it is the wood of choice for barrels, since its individual cells are impervious to liquids. Once cut, the staves go through a process of assembly, a hot water bath, application of steel bands, toasting of the inside of the barrel, and sanding the outside to an even surface. The company sells over 5,000 52-gallon barrels each year and hopes to increase this number in the near future. Note Unusual Day Friday

Time: 1:00 PM

Place: Keystone Cooperage Barrel Manufacturing Plant

Meet at 12:30 PM at Building #10, Greene Country Fairgrounds, Waynesburg, PA

July 10 Summer Tour: Other Agricultural uses for Property: Tour of Winery, Wine Tasting, and Social

Description: The Thistlethwaite family farm is in a beautiful setting. The land has been farmed

for many years, in a traditional sense. Eight years ago the Thistlethwaite's started a new agricultural adventure- viticulture. From their own grapes, they now produce a nice variety of red, white and sparkling wines. We will be given a tour of the vineyards and the wine making facility. We will be offered a wine tasting in a tastefully remodeled barn that has a bar made from cherry that was harvested from their property. We will also share an assortment of hearty appetizers in the outdoor gazebo. There will be a cost associated with this tour and we will have to have reservation from those who want to attend. Directions can be given at the time of the reservation. More information will be available later in the year. Wear sturdy shoes for walking and appropriate clothing for the weather.

Time: 1:00 PM

Place: Thistlethwaite Winery, Jefferson, PA in Greene County

Meet at 12:30 PM at Building #10, Greene Country Fairgrounds, Waynesburg, PA

August 7 Field Trip Tour of Maple Hills Tree Farm

Time: 1:00 PM

Place: Home and woodlot of Mark and Debi Fajerski, outside of Claysville, Washington County

September 8 Meeting Game Commission Update Rodney Burns, PA Wildlife Conservation Officer Emerald Ash Borer Update Rick Turcotte, Ph.D., US Forest Service Entomologist

Time: 7:00 PM

Place: Building #10, Greene Country Fairgrounds, Waynesburg, PA

September 11 Field Trip Collecting Ash Seeds To be determined

Description: They say the emerald ash borer will eliminate ash trees from our forest populations. The thought is that the emerald ash borer will go through the ash trees and then be out of this source and die off. After this threat is gone, scientists would like to have a native seed source ready to be planted once again in our forests. There is a national effort to collect these seeds now. In this tour you will

learn how to collect ash seeds, how to preserve them, and where we can donate our seeds.

Time: 1:00 PM

Place: To be determined

Meet at 12:30 PM at Building #10, Greene Country Fairgrounds, Waynesburg, PA

October 23 Picnic with Plant Identification Competition and Potato Gun Competition (Members, Friends and Family)

Time: To be determined

Place: To be determined

**November 10 Meeting
Non-Timber Forest Products**

More information will be forthcoming

Time: 7:00 PM

Place: First Floor Meeting Room, Courthouse Square Building, 100 W. Beau Street, Washington, PA. Free Parking: enter through the Beau Street B-Level entrance at the base of the Courthouse Square Building

November 13 Field Trip Winter Tree Identification: the Basics

Arlyn Perkey, US Forest Service (Ret.)

This field trip will cover the basics of tree identification in the winter. The discussion will focus on trees common in our woods of SW PA and that have a particular value for hardwood. Be prepared to take notes and wear appropriate clothing for the weather and proper shoes for the walking.

Time: 1:00 PM

Place: To be determined

Meet at 12:30 PM at Building #10, Greene Country Fairgrounds, Waynesburg, PA

**Membership Information
For 2010**

Membership dues for 2010 will be collected at meetings or can be sent to:

SWPWO
2506 Hollywood Dr
Pittsburgh, PA 15235

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.

**Executive Committee for the year
2009**

Officers

Bob Daley- President

Mike Irvin -Vice Pres.

Gay Thistle- Secretary

Maria Piantanida - Treasurer

Board of Directors

Dave Cressey

Mark Fajerski

Jessica Wise

Advisors

Bill Wentzel Arlyn Perkey

Ralph Campbell

Past Presidents

John Burnham

Harold Thistle

Our SWPWO Website

www.cs.pitt.edu/~daley/swpwo for the most up to date information about our organization and connections to other resources to help you manage your woodlot

Newsletter Info.

This newsletter is published about eight times each year. The editors are Gay Thistle and John Burnham. Articles written by our members are welcome. Please submit them to Gay at thistle@windstream.net. Next mini newsletter June 1,2010.

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Join Our Science Team

NEW! Help test our latest line of potentially blight-resistant seeds in your own backyard! Members who join as a Chestnut Annual Sponsor or above are eligible to receive our latest line of potentially blight-resistant seeds.

Become part of our science team by helping us evaluate the blight resistance of these latest trees. Your feedback on seedling performance will be critical in helping TACF researchers improve resistance. All of this for the cost of shipping and handling.

Annual Sponsor Levels (Seeds Will Be Shipped in Spring 2011)

- ___ Silver Leaf Sponsor (\$1,000-\$9,999) -- 4 Restoration Chestnut seeds
___ Bronze Sponsor (\$500 and up) -- 3 Restoration Chestnut seeds
___ Chestnut Sponsor (\$300 and up) -- 2 Restoration Chestnut seeds

Regular Membership Levels

- ___ Three-year (\$120)
___ Regular (\$40)
___ Student (\$15)

(All TACF memberships include all TACF publications, membership in one of our state chapters, and a car decal.

Sponsor members will receive a separate seed order form.)

Additional gift to my state chapter \$ _____
(please circle one: AL, CT, GA, IN, KY, MA, MD, ME, NC/SC, NY, OH, PA, TN, VA, VT/NH, WV)

Enclosed Amount: \$ _____

Membership Application

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: () _____ E-Mail: _____

This is a gift membership from: _____

Check Enclosed (Make payable to The American Chestnut Foundation)

Credit Card please check: VISA MC #: _____

Exp. Date: _____

Billing Address for Credit Card if different from above: _____

Name on Card (print): _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Please make check payable to: *The American Chestnut Foundation, and mail to:*
TACF 160 Zillitoca Street, Suite D, Asheville, NC 28801

TACF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The member services portion of your contribution is valued at \$15. The American Chestnut Foundation is an equal opportunity provider.