

# BEECH

What is the value of a beech tree in a sustainable forest? The Mercer County Coon Hunters Association pondered that question recently, and turned for advice to DCNR's new District Forester, Jake Scheib.

At a picnic, members observed how the Coon Hunters answered that question.

The Coon Hunters had recently completed some woodlot and habitat improvement work, following advice and with the help of Forester Scheib. Their Forest Stewardship Plan for the 140 acre woodlot was written in 2000, and is due for an update. Jake and the Club will be doing the follow-up work throughout the upcoming year, but an initial survey of the forest in February revealed many beech trees. His recommendation was to kill the beech, or cut down on the amount of them in the woodlot. But, members wondered, aren't they valuable for timber?... for wildlife habitat? ... for firewood?

Unfortunately, beech is a low-value hardwood timber species. "not worth listing" according to Forester

Scheib. The Coon Hunters' Stewardship Plan promotes higher value species such as oak. If beech is competing with oak, cherry and hickory, we will control the beech.

That brings up a related issue: root sprouts. A mature beech tree is often surrounded by a thick growth of young beech trees, all sprouting from the roots of the mature tree. This condition, somewhat normal for beech, is being worsened at this time by a disease, beech scale nectria complex, a combination of insect and fungus. Thee disease causes beech to sprout prolifically. "Beech Brush" inhibits regeneration of more desirable species.

This disease also has kept beech from producing mast. Deer and squirrels like beech nuts, as do people, but production of these small, triangular nuts has been low in recent years.

The other valuable aspect of habitat is nesting and den sites. Many species of bird and mammals need hollow tree sites for reproduction. Of particular importance to the Coon Hunters, of course, are raccoon, but

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Soon SNOW !!!

# Beech cont.

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squirrel, owls, songbirds, and even wood ducks benefit from a dead tree allowed to stand.

Beech trees do make very good firewood, but their remote location, and our gas heated club house, make it less attractive.

So, how do we kill the trees, yet maintain habitat? Forester Scheib prescribed a system he referred to as “hack and squirt”, and this was carried out July 16, 2011. Club members, instructed and assisted by Jake, chopped through the cambium layer of each tree, and squirted herbicide into each chop mark. The number of chops given each tree equaled the number of inches of diameter. Gloves and eye protection should be worn.

Two weeks later, guest visitors observed the beginning of the mortality of the beech trees and the root sprouts. Leaves were turning brown. The trees however, will remain standing for many years, providing den and nesting sites for a variety of animal species. Regeneration of oak, cherry and other hardwoods will follow, as shade is reduced in these areas.

Diversity of species is important to the forest’s health, and Coon Hunters are certain they have not eradicated beech. Many remain, but the overall health and value of our forest should be improved.

Much work remains to be done in the Coon Hunter’ Otter Creek Township property, but the club is dedicated to sustainable forestry, and working to improve the value of our woodlot.

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*This work was submitted by MCWOA member Dane Mitchell. Shortly thereafter he passed away, and will be missed by all.*

*Dane, a former teacher, loved passing knowledge on. He often spoke to groups and was active with the American Chestnut Association, MCWOA, and the Coon Hunters Association. Dane loved the outdoors and sharing it with others.*

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## TRIBUTE by Gary Micsky

We all lost a very dear friend with the unexpected passing of MCWOA past president Dane Mitchell. Dane brought enthusiasm and dedication to everything he touched and I am still amazed at his ability to contribute to so many worthwhile activities and organizations. They all shared one thing in common – they were all more successful as a result of Dane’s presence. Dane was very instrumental in the early development of MCWOA and continually championed the need for all of us to “never stop learning”.

The skills he developed as a highly respected high school teacher continued to be in demand long after his so called retirement. Whenever people ask me about Dane I usually give them the same an-

swer, I feel as though I have lost an arm. In addition to working with Dane in MCWOA activities, he was our most recent past president of the Mercer County Extension Board of Directors, and undoubtedly our most accomplished volunteer with our chestnut restoration program efforts. More than anything, Dane was a good friend to all of us. Perhaps the greatest lesson this teacher ever taught us is that one person can indeed make a difference when they are willing to get involved. We have big shoes to fill and I can think of no greater tribute to Dane than for each of us to become more active in promoting Dane’s vision of a vibrant MCWOA and an educated public. We all offer our sympathy to Dane’s wife Candace, and the Mitchell family

## LEARNING EVENTS

### MCWOA

**Saturday, October 20,**

**Annual Dinner 5:30 PM**

**Grantham's Landing Restaurant  
Route 173 and Georgetown Road,  
Sandy Lake**

Buffet Dinner, Annual Election of Officers and Wildflower presentation.

Chinese Auction—Prizes, baked goods, Artwork, any gift will do.

**The Pennsylvania Forestry Association  
Saturday, September 29, 2012, Grove City, PA.**

This year's meeting theme is "The Importance of Young Forests/Early Successional Habitat."

There are increasing opportunities through various organizations (NRCS, etc.) for landowners to raise their awareness of the importance of young forests/early successional habitat and to receive technical and funding assistance in the development of habitat for early successional species such as songbirds, game species, reptiles, etc. The goal of this PFA meeting is to provide a forum for the attendees to learn more about those opportunities and to visit some properties that demonstrate some on-the-ground practices.

Featured speakers include:

- Emily Bellush with NRCS/IUP
- Linda Ordiway with the Ruffed Grouse Society
- An informative field tour planned for the afternoon.

**Cecile M. Stelter** | District Forester, DCNR  
Phone: 814.723.0262 |Email: [cstelter@pa.gov](mailto:cstelter@pa.gov)

### On the WEB

#### AMERICAN FOREST FOUNDATION

New e-Newsletter—visit and sign-up at  
[www.forestfoundation.org](http://www.forestfoundation.org)

Welcome to the inaugural issue of AFF's e-newsletter in which we are excited to announce [MyLandPlan.org](http://MyLandPlan.org), a new online tool for woodland owners! Plus, learn about our work in [Wisconsin's Driftless area](#) to help landowners conserve their forests, and why Tree Farmers want Washington to ['Fix the Estate Tax!'](#)--vital to ensuring they can pass on their forest legacy to the next generation.

## Successional Habitat

Out of the 72.5 acres that make up our Treefarm, one third of it is considered successional habitat (old field coming up in brush and trees). This is the beginning of a young forest and is slowly becoming the most critical of all of the types of habitat.

In Pennsylvania most of the land was cleared for farming by the turn of the century or early 1900's. Shortly thereafter, farmland was gradually abandoned as jobs became available in industry. By the end of World War II the move from agriculture to urban America was occurring at a record pace. Most of the farmland that was abandoned during the 40's, 50's and 60's has since reverted back to pole or small merchantable timber.

Our farm is a classic example of what I'm talking about. The 19-acre field that I'm primarily talking about was abandoned around 1977. The rest of our tree farm was abandoned during the 40's or 50's as the rings on the tree stump tell when we cut a tree. We chose to add more acres to our successional habitat that once was tilled ground and then abandoned to sheep pasture only to be abandon to forestland. These areas could be converted to maple forest but Pat and I have chose to help the wildlife by setting

back the progression of habitat on an additional 9 acres.

We intend to keep one third of our land as successional habitat by clear-cutting the aspen clones every 10 to 15 years. As time permits we will cut down any hardwood trees that reach 15' tall. Some groves of nana berry and gray dogwood will be set back periodically.

The following vegetation in old fields produces soft or hard mast for wildlife. Blueberry, huckleberry, nana berry, arrow-wood, hawthorn, osier dogwood, flowering dogwood, alternate life dogwood, red stem dogwood, stag horn sumac, saint john wart, wild strawberry, alder, serviceberry, hazel nut, crabapple, common apple, choke cherry, black berry, raspberry, dew berry. Most of the above list of species can be found in our old fields.

We have worked on removing the following invasive species that can take over and eliminate some of our native species in our old fields: autumn olive, multiflora rose, garlic mustard, phragmites or common reed, Canada thistle and Japanese barberry. Since birds, and other critters visit the farm, and the creek passes through we must be vigilant for any new crops which may arise.

## Find it on the WEB

<http://www.forestfoundation.org/>

MyLandPlan is a resource for woodland owners, by woodland owners to help you protect and enjoy your woods and is provided to you by the [American Forest Foundation](http://www.forestfoundation.org/) (AFF).

AFF works on behalf of family forest owners around the country who want to ensure their woods stay healthy for all the reasons why we love woods – wildlife, recreation, solitude, a place to enjoy with family and friends.

We know there is a lot of information available about woodland management from a variety of sources, but our hunch is that you have not found all that you are looking for in one single location. Until now!

Many of us at AFF own woodlands ourselves, and we built this website for woodland owners that are a lot like us – newbies to land ownership, legacy owners who inherited land, wildlife lovers, birders, and other recreational owners who value woods for all the fun activities woodland ownership provides.

### [MyLandPlan.org](http://mylandplan.org)

Sign up for and explore AFF's website for woodland owners, by woodland owners. If you're a birder, we can give you tips on how to attract more songbirds to your property. If you want to attract more wildlife like deer and other critters, we can help with that too. And if you want to learn how to keep your woods healthy, and growing strong, there's lots of information on [mylandplan.org](http://mylandplan.org) to help you do that.



## By Columbia University, University of Maryland, and Smithsonian Institution

Open iTunes to buy and download apps.

Leafsnap is the first in a series of electronic field guides being developed by researchers from Columbia University, the University of Maryland, and the Smithsonian Institution. This free mobile app uses visual recognition software to help identify tree species from photographs of their leaves.

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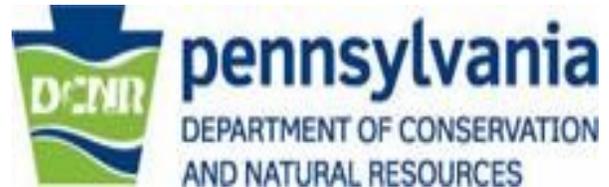
## The Beauty of Snags

By: Jake Scheib

Dead or dying snags left in the woods, after a timber harvest or during a woodlot cleanup, can be very beneficial to many mammals and bird species.

First we need to define the word snag. A snag is a dead or dying standing tree that can provide wildlife habitat. One of the benefits to leaving snags is the cavity users. Cavity users could be birds or mammals such as: squirrels that use the cavities for dens, wood ducks that use the cavities for nesting sites, and a variety of birds that use the cavities for nesting sites and mammals that use the cavities for dens. Snags are also a great place to view perching or feeding birds. Another benefit to wildlife are the insects that breakdown the woody material which provide food for a variety of woodpeckers such as the pileated woodpecker.

There are a couple different ways to create or sustain snags. You can create snags by girdling the trees or chemically killing the trees. You would want to do this on trees that are undesirable or are inhibiting regeneration of desired species. If you are going to create snags, it is a good management practice to distribute the snags evenly throughout the woods. You can sustain or maintain snags by simply leaving dead or dying trees in your woodlot.

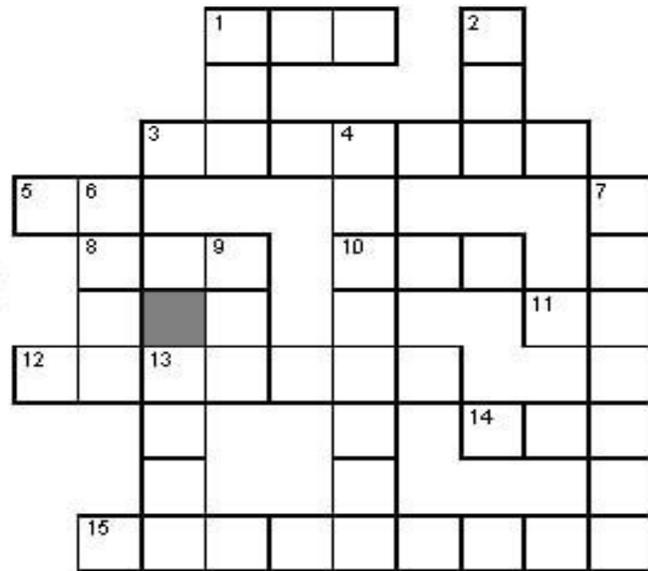


# Insects



## Across

1. A flying animal that eats insects.
3. A white insect that is the ants' enemy.
5. A cup \_\_\_ tea.
8. The top of a jar.
10. How many legs do insects have?
11. Yes \_\_\_ no.
12. A red insect with black spots.
14. Turn the light \_\_\_\_.
15. A long flying insect.



## Down

1. An insect that makes honey.
2. An insect that lives in a colony.
4. An insect that drinks blood.
6. An insect that makes dogs itchy.
7. An insect that is bright at night.
9. Not night.
13. Open the \_\_\_\_\_.



## Farm Bill

### Highlights of FY 2011 Farm Bill forest conservation investments include:

- Nearly 5% of EQIP and 32% of WHIP funds were used to address significant threats to communities and forests. Even these relatively small investments are going a long way to reduce forest fire risk, mitigate the effects of invasive species, and enhance native species habitat.
- Dollar-for-dollar, federal EQIP dollars matched private landowner investments, providing more than \$80 million for on-the-ground forest conservation improvements.
- Federal investments in WHIP leveraged private funds to provide more than \$25 million for forest wildlife improvements, protecting and sustaining valuable woodland species.
- More than 629,000 new forested acres were enrolled in CSP, engaging better stewardship on more forested acres.

### 2012 Education Award Recipient.

Jeffrey Osborne, from West Middlesex, Pennsylvania was selected as this years award winner. He is attending Penn State University. We wish him well in his studies.

Who influences Jeffrey and why a Forestry Career? Read on.

*From Jeffrey's Essay:*

Pennsylvania, and many of the states in our nation, have valuable forest resources. Professional management of these resources is necessary to ensure the forests can sustain multiple uses like timber harvesting, wildlife habitat and recreation. The management of the forest does not just mean growing trees, but the challenges of reforestation, the study of diseases affecting forest vegetation and wildlife, invasive species and the cohabitation with humans and their impact.

I feel that the field of forest management

will be a challenging yet rewarding career field. I am most interested in the timber management for use by the wood products industry. I will be concentrating on studies involving tree growth, genetics, diseases and pests. The ultimate goal to manage a sustainable, healthy forest for years of wood production.

Since I was five years old my father has taken me fishing, trapping, and hunting. He has taught me about the animals and their habits. My grandfather has taught me how to recognize many species of trees in our area. He has also shared stories about the loss of trees due to chestnut blight and Dutch elm disease. He has a passion about the chestnut tree growing near his home, and worries about anything that might damage it and cause its death. I have read about President Theodore Roosevelt and his love of nature. Gifford Pinchot and his efforts to establish forest management practices to assure ongoing and productive timber resources. I have had so many positive influences in my life encouraging my interest in nature.

I am putting some of my knowledge to work as a research assistant at Penn State, Shenango, but am so interested in the new things I am learning about in the field of forestry and find it a rewarding challenge.



# MCWOA

## MCWOA REPRESENTATIVES AND MEMBERSHIP

### MERCER COUNTY WOODLAND OWNERS ASSOCIATION

MCWOA  
Penn State Extension Office  
PO Box 530  
Mercer, PA 16137

or

C/O Pat Campbell, Sec  
778 Sunol Rd  
Cochrannton, PA 16314

Email: MCWOA@yahoo.com

**Officers:** President Travis Sereday  
Vice Pres Donald Campbell  
Sec/Tres Pat Campbell (814)-425-2700  
Email: MCWOA@yahoo.com

**Board Members:**  
Thad Lang Patrick Kelly Chuck Kite Bob McGhee Harry Elder

**Advisors:** DCNR, Bureau Forestry Jake Scheib (724)-253-3634  
Penn State Extension Office Gary Micsky (724) 662-3141

### MEMBERSHIP

TYPE	Dues	Description
Lifetime	\$200	Family Lifetime, Woodland Owner, voting member
Family	\$15	Immediate household, Woodland owner, voting member
Individual	\$10	Individual, Woodland owner, voting member
Associate	\$5	Individual, Non-Woodland owner, non-voting member
Junior	\$2	Individual age 16 yrs. and younger, non-voting member
Sponsor	\$15	Group or Business interested in Woodland Mgmt., non-voting

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

## SPONSORSHIP - Groups and Businesses who support MCWOA

*The mission of our organization is to provide information and education to our membership concerning all aspects of private woodland ownership and management.*

**MCWOA would like to recognize the Businesses and Groups who support goals.**

*Like to see your Group or Business recognized here contact Pat Campbell at MCWOA@yahoo.com or call 814-425-2700*

**Sponsor memberships available.**

**EDWARD L. McDOUGALL**  
Certified Public Accountant  
Accounting & Tax Services  
Business & Individual

309 Hillcrest Ave (724) 458-5878 Grove  
City, PA 16127 Call for Appointment

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«First\_name» «Last\_name»  
«Company»  
«Address\_1»  
«City», «St» «Zip»l

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