

MCWOA NEWS

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THANK YOU
VOLUNTEERS AND
PARTICIPANTS!!!

**I would like to thank everyone who helped this organization continue. The board and members who have presented and arranged our programs. The members who participate and made our events successful. And those who continue to "talk" about MCWOA and keep our membership growing.
YOU ARE MCWOA**

MY TWO CENTS- YOUR TWO BITS

By: Pat Campbell

Reflections: I often wonder when Don would talk about "trees" if he realized I was listening! Sorry, but being able to identify a tree while doing 65 mph down the interstate is just not that important to me.

I do know that I think more about the revenue/expense side. Always asking if he kept a record, receipt or noted it in his log/diary. Because of my years working in the financial industry I know the importance of cost-basis tracking and keeping records for tax season.

I also find different esthetic value in the farm. I can look beyond the blue and yellow markings on the trees and seek out the delicate wild flower merging from the debris or spot the salamander pushing his way under a leaf. I love to look across a field and be amazed by the hues in nature.

Don has a fondness for the American Chestnut (we've planted about 20) and I for the Tulip Poplar (I planted 1). But we are in this together, believe it or not.

The same is true for our relationship with MCWOA, and what we would like to see come about in programming. I have included the questionnaire from the annual dinner. About 1/3 of our membership attended, but I would like to hear from the rest of the membership. This is your time to put in your "two cents". If you have already submitted your suggestions, thank you. If not please try to get them back to me by January 7.

Wishing you a great New Year!!

TAKE CARE

FROM
AG SAFETY NEWSLETTER

Gathering wood might seem like an ideal time for using that old tractor without a ROPS (rollover protection structure) and poorly adjusted brakes. But it's not! Every year we have one or more fatalities in Pennsylvania involving a tractor in the woods. Trees or large limbs have crushed operators sitting in the tractor seat because the operator was trying to pull or push a tree, tractors have gone out of control while descending hills and slopes because of poor brakes, and tractors have flipped over backwards while pulling a tree down or dragging logs that catch and stop moving. If you have to use a farm tractor in the woods, it should have an enclosed ROPS cab, and safety practices such as using a seat belt, hitching only to the drawbar, and no extra riders should be strictly followed.



For more info see full article on the web www.mcwoa.org

ANNUAL DUES FOR 2008

YES ITS THAT TIME
AGAIN!

APPLICATIONS ARE
INCLUDED



When you see a population of Princess Pine you are looking at a very old plant



Who is the Service Forester for your area?
Mercer/Lawrence Counties –

Mark Bodamer- DCNR Bureau of Forestry, 684
Lake Wilhelm Road, Sandy Lake, PA 16145

(724) 253-2624

mbodamer@state.pa.us

FORESTER'S FORUM

By: Mark Bodamer, Forester

Our Smallest Pine

Around this time of the year some folks head for the woods in search of our smallest pine - Princess Pine. Actually, Princess Pine isn't even a pine but belongs to a group of plants (*Lycopodium*) that are related to ferns. The word *Lycopodium* comes from the Greek words "luko" (wolf) and "podos" (foot); and is sometimes called "wolfs paw". These are ancient plants, a remnant of long ago.

The *Lycopodium*s have both above ground and below ground parts. The above ground part (aerial stems) which is commonly collected to make Christmas wreaths has two functions; photosynthesis and spore production. The aerial stems reach maturity around four to six years at which time they will produce strobili that in turn produce spores. Spores are the first step in the sexual reproductive cycle.

There are two types of below ground parts; rhizomes and roots. Rhizomes, which are lateral branches and not roots, can occur on the ground or in the case of Princess Pine, below the ground. The functions of rhizomes are to get the plant where in "wants" or "needs" to go to expand its clonal population, and to store photosynthates, produced by the aerial stems, for future use. *Lycopodium* roots are adventitious and originate from the rhizome. There primary functions are to anchor the plant in the soil and the uptake of water and nutrients.

When you see a population of Princess Pine you are looking at a very old plant; and it is just one plant with multiple aerial stems. New populations

must get started through sexual reproduction. A spore from the strobili will become airborne and may land and germinate (usually in mineral soil). Then a gametophyte may the form below the soil surface. If conditions are right and genetic recombination occurs, a new individual sporophyte may result. This process may take up to twenty years! Once this occurs vegetation reproduction begins, rhizomes form, the plant expands its range and aerial stems start to appear. This is an important time line to consider from a forest management perspective.

Lycopodium species are considered as Non-Timber Forest Products. Examples of uses for *Lycopodium* include winter seasonal decorations, floral industry, medicinal and homeopathic remedies, and spores for pyrotechnics and special effects. In fact, the first photographic cameras used *Lycopodium* spores as flash powders. Also, spores are used for toilet powders, pill coatings, and pancake makeup.

If you are considering collecting some Princess Pine, here are some harvesting suggestions:

1. Permission is required to collect on private land.
2. A permit is required to collect on public lands if allowed.
3. Collect only mature plants with strobili only after the spores have been released. Collecting can usually begin around the end of September.
4. It's best to clip rather than pick the aerial stem near the base at ground level so as not to injure or disturb the rhizome and roots.
5. Don't collect an entire colony. Thin it lightly so that the health and vigor of the plant remains.
6. Don't harvest the same colony (area) every year. Skipping two to three years between harvests allows the immature aerial stems

FORUM CONTINUED

(without strobili) to mature and also allows the possibility for spore germination to occur producing a new plant with new genetic material.

Remember Lycopodiums are part of the diverse and complex forest ecosystem where every part has a purpose. Lycopodiums are also a renewable non-timber resource that can be and should be managed sustainably.

I want to take this opportunity to wish everyone a very merry and enjoyable, safe Christmas and New Year. Remember the reason for the season.

Reference Literature:

Non-Timber Forest Products and Implications for Forest Managers

Forest Stewardship News Release December 07

***Remember
Lycopodiums are part
of the diverse and
complex forest
ecosystem***

MERCER COUNTY

FROM PAGE 4

(Continued from page 4)

MCWOA volunteers are also to be commended for the enjoyable although often painful job of harvesting and preparing well over 3000 open-pollinated American chestnut seed for use by TACF and the Mercer County program. Thank you to Fred Haun for his continued support of our efforts and access to his orchard.

Our volunteers logged approximately 300 hours of service in the past year and contributed nearly \$200 in donations towards the program. The orchard plantings at the Hissom and Stallsmith farms continue to move forward and we had an outstanding high school junior from Lakeview – Leora Cantolina who took on a very ambitious self determined 4-H Project detailing our county program efforts. Leora plans on pursuing a Forestry degree at Penn State following graduation next year.

What do people in Mercer County do when there is nothing to do? Plenty.

***What do people in
Mercer County do when
there is nothing to do?"***




*Air Chestnut
is a hit!*

**PENNSYLVANIA
CHAPTER**
PA-TACF Website

www.patacf.org

Sue Oram,
Chapter Administrator
Sko2@psu.edu

Sara Fern Fitzsimmons,
Tree Breeding Coordinator
Sara@acf.org or
sff3@psu.edu

206 Forest Resources Lab
University Park, PA 16802
814-863-3600 or 863-7192

MCWOA AND THE PA-TACF

BY: GARY MICKSY,
COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE

2007 witnessed impressive growth in both public interest and in our volunteer initiatives.

On March 3rd, MCWOA co-sponsored a program featuring Sara Fern Fitzsimmons, Northern Appalachian Regional Science Coordinator for The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF), and Tree Breeding Coordinator at Penn State. Sara gave an interesting presentation on the history and future of this important species and updated us on the status of TACF breeding programs. Over 500 open pollinated American chestnut seed were distributed among the 57 individuals attended this program in order to further encourage participants to develop skills required for chestnut culture, identify future sites and growers for blight-resistant trees, and to retain genetic materials for future use. Special thanks to everyone who assisted in making this meeting possible.

Sara always does a great job of motivating our troops and in building our confidence. Even though this year's weather did its best to baffle our efforts to coordinate bagging and pollination schedules, 2007 was a very successful year for our county breeding program. We were only able to place pollen exclusion bags on one tree (Beagle Club) but we had our most productive year to date with the harvest of 118 viable F1 cross nuts. It is noted that Bob McGhee and Dane Mitchell did all of the pollinating this year – obviously they are quick learners.

MCWOA volunteers pioneered an interesting and entertaining method of pollinating

previously inaccessible mother trees which we have affectionately dubbed “Air Chestnut”. Evidently, we have achieved a bit of notoriety among chestnut breeding enthusiasts. The following is an excerpt from an email recently sent to us by Sara:

Just wanted to let you know that Air Chestnut is a hit!

I presented it to our Science Cabinet during our meeting in Burlington, VT and everyone loved it. I've been getting a lot of folks interested in the technique.

This procedure utilizes the controlled ascent of helium filled balloons to deliver a massive delivery of pollen just above the canopy of the targeted mother tree. Details of this procedure are featured in the September 2007 issue of “The Chestnut Tree” which can be accessed on the PA-TACF website: <http://www.patacf.org>

Additionally, Sara gave a light-hearted but factual description of “Air Chestnut” and our volunteers at the November 10th meeting of the PA-TACF Winter Meeting attended by Don Campbell, Allan James, Dane Mitchell, and myself. We were introduced with a Power Point slide asking the humorous question

“What do people in Mercer County do when there is nothing to do?”

The next slide featured photos narrated with a West Virginia accent describing our unusual procedure. Special thanks to Daryl and Donna Lang, Dave Thompson, Brad and Luke Stallsmith, and Jamie Hoegerl for their hours of hard work in perfecting the system. Bottom line, it worked with over 68 viable nuts harvested – and those were only the ones which were accessible!

(Continued on page 3)

TREE WHIZ FOR KIDZ

The forest provides a home for many animals. The forest supplies a food store with such items as acorns, hickory nuts and apples. It also provides cover from storms and weather for the animals. Birds nesting in trees, squirrels and raccoons use cavities in trees for their homes. You may not know they are there because you do not see them, but they are there. The proof is in what they leave behind.

Winter is the perfect time to explore your backyard and see who has been visiting. After a new snowfall, fresh tracks can be found identifying every visitor if you know how to read the signs. Animal tracks not only identify the critter, but tell you if they were walking or running and in what direction they were going.

You can develop your skills by studying your pet tracks. Dogs, cats, and even farm animals have specific prints.

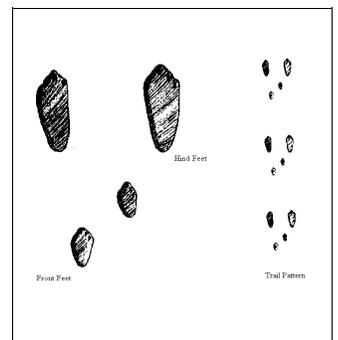
Things to look for:

- Count toes in the footprint. For instance, the raccoon track is distinctive because of the 5 long toes that look like fingers. The raccoon print resembles a child's handprint. Hind feet tracks are larger than those from the front feet. Check for claws in the footprint. Other five-toed animal prints come from the weasel family, which includes skunks.
- If you see 4 toes in the track, you probably found tracks from the cat, dog or rabbit family. Cats include mountain lions, bobcats and common house cats. Cats retract their claws when they walk, so you rarely see claws in a cat print. The biggest difference between cat footprints is the size. A house cat's print may be the size of a quarter. A bobcat's tracks are about 1-3/4 inches long, and the mountain lion's track is even larger. You may see small triangular marks in front of the footprint. These are claw marks shared by dogs, coyotes, foxes and wolves. Coyote and dog tracks resemble each other, but the coyote footprint is more oval.
- Discover a "Y" shaped pattern of movement that belongs to the rabbit. While rabbits also have 4 toes, they land with their hind feet ahead of the front feet and with one front foot in front of the other.
- Detect larger hoofed mammals by the presences of only 2 toes. Deer walk the same way as cats and dogs, but the print looks almost like a teardrop, coming to a point where the toes meet at the top. Adult deer footprints can be as long as 3-1/4 inches. Larger, rounder tracks belong to the elk.
- Huge 5-toed prints belong to a bear. With significantly larger back feet, a bear's tracks will zigzag and look like they came from a drunken animal.



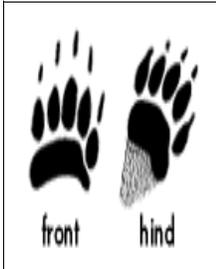
Exploring nature is for everyone

Field guides make great gifts to encourage exploration and reading.

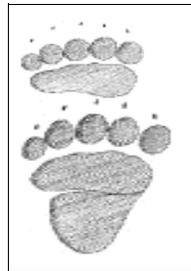
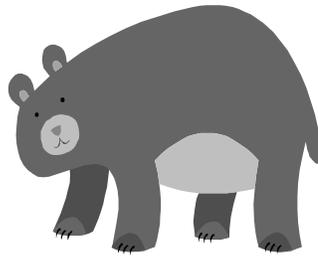


Rabbit tracks

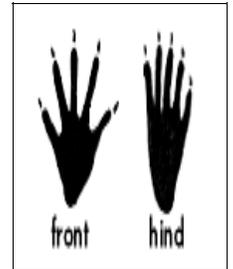
TREE WHIZ FOR KIDZ MATCH A FOOTPRINT



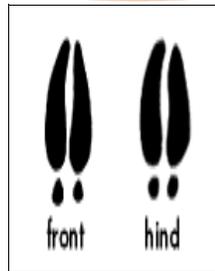
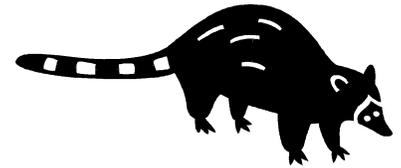
SKUNK



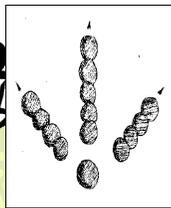
BEAR



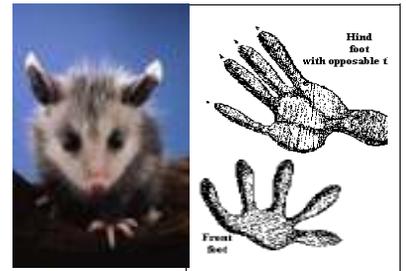
RACCOON



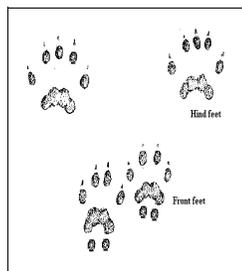
DEER



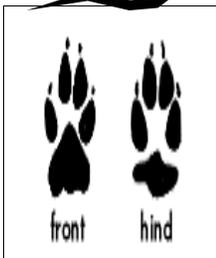
TURKEY



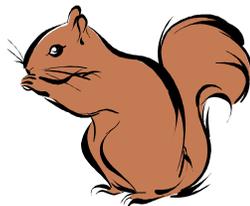
OPOSSUM



SQUIRREL



COYOTE



EXAMINE, TRACKS AND
LOOK FOR DETAILS.

DON'S DIARY

By: Don Campbell

After watching the invasive species program at the annual dinner I felt compelled to add my two cents worth on this subject. My intent is to help other MCWOA members with their control efforts when dealing with some of the invasive species that are found in Mercer County. Mark Bodamer pointed out a few solutions to this growing problem. I've attended conferences and training session on this subject and I've talk to a few experienced individuals who deal with invasive species.

When Pat and I purchased our Tree Farm seven years ago we found Phragmites (common reed grass) growing in a 1/8 acre low spot next to the gas well on our property. The first year I cut the seed heads off of those plants and threw them in a bond fire to destroy the seeds as I didn't have time to deal with them and I didn't want them to spread. I ask one of the Managers at Presque Isle State Park what work on this plant and what didn't work. They told me they tried burning it and it only made it grow more vigorously. They said mowing it several times during the growing season weakened it. That was as much as the Manager knew at that time.

The second, third, and fourth years I mowed it off several time not allowing them to go to seed. I noticed the plants lost vigor and didn't grow as high and as thick as they original were when I found them. The fifth year I suggested we needed to spray them with roundup. A Department of Agriculture Herbicide expert told me that Roundup would kill it but you need to add an agent that causes it to adhere to the plant for it to be effective. Pat asked me what that was and I didn't remember. That didn't stop Pat; she sprayed it with roundup anyway.

Twice that year both time before the seed heads formed. It turned brown to my surprise. The sixth year only a few plants came up half way through the growing season and I mowed them off. This year only two plants came up and I mowed them off. I suspect they came up from seed or from a root that didn't get killed with the roundup. I achieved my first goal of keeping the plant from spreading. My second goal was to reduce it or eliminate it. I have definitely reduced it and I am confident that I will eliminate it from our farm.

I am sure the source of our Phragmites came from the well drillers who reseeded the field after they completed there drilling operations. The reason I am sure I'm right is the only place I see it growing in our area is on gas well recovery sites of older wells. The current operation is using a better mulch and seed source for their recovery operations.

Both Multiflora Rose and Autumn Olive I have removed successfully by mechanical digging them out with the front end loader on my tractor. I learned this technique from my Forman at M. K. Goddard State Park. It work well if you only have a few plants that need removed. Mark Bodamer and I sprayed around 100 Multiflora Rose bushes this past spring using roundup and a spray unit on an ATV. Birds have introduced these species to our Tree Farm and will continue to do so. The bright side to what birds introduce is that they gave me a couple of patches of elderberry that I tried to get established from plants but failed miserable at. Always make sure you follow the direction on the label when using any herbicide product. You may kill native species as well as the invasive species when using herbicides.

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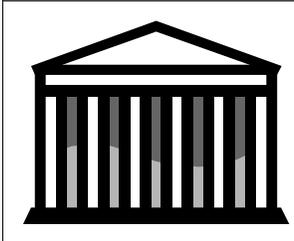
**Mercer County Woodland
Owners Association**

Attn: Pat Campbell, Sec
778 Sunol Road
Cochranon, PA 16314

Email: MCWOA@yahoo.com



MCWOA



Upcoming Events

January 9—Wednesday Meeting of Board of Directors Extension Office 7:00 p.m.

February 23—Chestnut Assoc Meeting—Forest Service Offices Marionville

March 8—Income Opportunities in Agriculture—PSU Beaver Campus. Includes a session on growing Ginseng

March 29 - Saturday Northwest PA Woodland Owners Convention—Allegheny College—programming still in planning

March ?? - Saturday -Clarion Woodland Conference—date unavailable at time of printing

June 21— Saturday- Tour and Picnic at George Freeman's Tree Farm in Knox, PA, Joint program with WOCAV

Based upon points of interested shared at the Annual dinner - we are looking into the following programs:

Tour Ernst Farms—Bio-fuel / Switch grass; wildflowers; growing herbs; management plans and more.

MERCER COUNTY WOODLAND OWNERS ASSOCIATION

Officers:	President	Robert McGhee	
	Vice Pres	Alan James	
	Sec/Tres	Pat Campbell	(814)-425-2700
	Email: MCWOA@yahoo.com		

Board Members:	Albert Law	John Scheafnocker	Donald Campbell
	Patrick Kelly	Dane Mitchell	

Advisors:	DCNR, Bureau Forestry	Mark Bodamer	(724)-253-3634
	Mercer County Extension Office	Gary Micsky	(724) 662-3141

MEMBERSHIP

TYPE	Dues	Description
Lifetime	\$200	Individual Lifetime, Woodland owner, voting member
Family	\$15	Immediate household, Woodland owner, 1 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	\$10	Group or Business interested in Woodland Mgmt, non-voting

ALL MEMBERS receive newsletter, mailings, and MCWOA event admissions.

MCWOA NEWS Letters will be discontinued if memberships are not current.