

# Leaves

## Newsletter of the Michigan Forest Association

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### Association News

**Nice Comments from Member.** We had a pleasant phone call recently from long-time member Tom Erickson, of Ironwood. Tom, who joined MFA in 1974 at the recommendation of the late former board member Ed Aho, had positive comments on the newsletter and sends his greetings to all the old-timers. Tom is 92 years old; he hopes to see everyone at the 2012 Annual Meeting in Houghton.

**Speaking of the Annual Meeting,** the program is shaping up to be one of those you won't want to miss. Registration information will be out soon. Watch this space!

**Stories Wanted.** MFA wants to hear about your forest management experiences. Do you have documentation of thinning and harvest activity over the years? We'd like to hear about it to help construct a small publication. If you have such information on your own, or someone else's property, would you share it with us? Owners' identities, of course, will be kept confidential.

### WILDLIFE NEWS

**Poaching Cold-Case.** The case is pretty old, but researchers from Texas A&M University have found a mastodon rib in Washington State – with a projectile point still in it. The bone has been dated to about 13,800 years ago. It's considered some of the oldest evidence of hunting by humans in the New World. Smithsonian

**Cormorant Numbers are Down.** It would appear that things are going according to plan with regard to the cormorant population in the great lakes. The Michigan population peaked around 2000 at about 30,000 nests; a goal was set in 2004 to reduce that number to between 5,000 and 12,500. This year's number appears to be between 14,500 and 18,200 nests; it is anticipated that the management goal may soon be reached. DNR listserve

**Kirtland Warbler Numbers are Up.** Again. The 2011 census of Kirtland's warblers recorded 1,805 singing males in Michigan. Thirty-five of those were in the Upper Peninsula. In addition, 21 were counted in Wisconsin and 2 in Ontario. This represents an expansion of their range from that of 1974, when the warblers were found only in the northeastern Lower Peninsula and the entire population consisted of 167 pairs. The management of jack pine forests provides the needed habitat during the early years of a stand's growth. Under sustained management, there should always be stands of the appropriate age and size in Michigan, Wisconsin and Ontario. Thus, the outlook for this once severely endangered little bird is looking pretty good right now. DNR listserve

**U.P. Hunter Injured by Bear.** A hunter was attacked by a bear while in his tree stand west of Trout Lake in Mackinac County last September. The bear was a female and was traveling with 3 cubs when it climbed the tree and clawed at the hunter's legs. The hunter was able to fend off the bear, but she returned and he killed the bear as it attacked him. DNR listserve

**Wasps Recognize Faces.** Other wasp faces, that is. The northern paper wasp, *Polistes fuscatus*, has been shown to differentiate among faces of other wasps of the same species. This is according to research done at the University of Michigan. Other wasp species did not appear to be as good at recognizing individuals. This may be the first invertebrate to be shown to have this ability. Science News

**Bats Threatened.** The disease of bats called White-Nose Syndrome (WNS) is estimated to have killed nearly 7 million bats in 16 U.S. states and 2 Canadian provinces. WNS has not yet been detected in Michigan; the Department of Natural Resources has developed a response plan to be put into action whenever WNS might be detected here. The response plan can be found on the internet at:

[http://www.michigan.gov/documents/emergingdiseases/MichiganWNSPlanFINAL122010\\_342261\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/emergingdiseases/MichiganWNSPlanFINAL122010_342261_7.pdf).

## **Alternative Energy**

**Commercial Torrefied Pellet Plant in France.** Thermya Company has built a torrefaction plant in northern France to produce wood pellets. The process has several advantages over coal. Read about it at

<http://torspyd.com/?lang=en>.

Bill Cook; SAF

**Another Try at RenewaFUEL.** A group of investors has purchased and plans to reopen the renewaFUEL plant at K.I.Sawyer, near Gwinn. The plant was built to provide fuel for Cleveland Cliff's operations and other entities, but was closed last year due to lower-than-anticipated production. The new owner is RNFL Acquisition, LLC, based in Minnesota. Production may resume after 4 to 6 months, during which equipment will be ordered and permits acquired.

Bill Cook; SAF

## **Markets**

**Michigan Dentist Looking for Gums.** Black gum trees, that is. A Michigan dentist is looking for a source of black gum twigs to make "chewsticks". Also called black tupelo, the black gum tree grows about as far north as the Bay City – Muskegon line. If you have some twigs to share, please call or write to the MFA office; we'll put you in contact with the "Gum Doctor".

## **Miscellaneous**

**FREE CAMPING for Volunteers --** The Department of Natural Resources' Parks and Recreation Division is offering free camping this summer for outdoor lovers who volunteer as campground hosts at Michigan state parks, recreation areas and state forest campgrounds. Contact Pam Ames for state parks and recreation areas (517-467-7401) or Ada Takacs for state forest campgrounds (989-275-5151, ext 2049). More information and application forms are available at [www.michigan.gov/dnrvolunteers](http://www.michigan.gov/dnrvolunteers).

DNR listserve

**Taxes, taxes.** Two webinars on timber taxes will be held next month, put on by the U.S. Forest Service. 1. Timber Tax Update for 2011 Filing Season, Feb.1, 12 noon. 2. Timber Basis, Feb 22, 12 noon. Each session is 1 ½ hours in length. Go to <http://www.forestrywebinars.net/upcoming-webinars-1>

Bill Cook, SAF

**Natural Resource Grads Doing Well.** According to a study by Georgetown University's Center on Education and the Workforce, recent college graduates in agriculture and natural resources are among those with the highest employment rates.

The e-forester

**MFA Member Bill Rockwell Takes the Reins of SAF.** MFA member Bill Rockwell, of St. Johns, began his term as term as president of the Society of American Foresters on January 1. Bill is also president of Strategic Resources Systems in St. Johns and is a partner with *The Plum Line*, in St. Johns, MI and Antrim, NH. He is also an associate with Metropolitan Forestry Consultants, Inc. in Lansing.

The Forestry Source

**Wood for Good in Flint.** The Genesee Conservation District has launched their new "Wood for Good" program aimed at finding better uses than mulch for city trees that are removed due to disease or other causes. The program is funded by a grant from the Southeast Michigan Resource Conservation and Development Council. Trees that are cut down will be sold to local consumers for use in craft projects or furniture and possibly home construction through a proposed partnership with Habitat for Humanity.

Mich. Arbor Day Alliance

**Was Columbus Responsible for the Little Ice Age?** Research at Stanford University by geochemist Richard Nevle suggests a chain of events that led to the Little Ice Age beginning in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. The chain goes something like this: Columbus brought with him diseases that decimated Native American populations, leaving large areas of cleared land unattended. The subsequent natural reforestation sequestered enough carbon to trigger the change in climate.

Science News

**3,500 –Year-Old Tree, Hit by Lightning, Burned Up.** A cypress tree in Big Tree Park, Longwood, Florida, estimated to be 3,500 years old has burned up. After being struck by lightning, the tree, which was hollow, burned from the inside out.

The e-forester