

Leaves

Newsletter of the Michigan Forest Association

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Volume XXX

August, 2012

Number 7

Association News

Annual Meeting a Success. Seventy-some MFA members gathered in Houghton for the 40th annual meeting of the Association. We will publish some photos in the fall issue of Michigan Forests. John MacInnis hosted us at his "camp" in northeastern Baraga County on Thursday evening to start it off. We had our board meeting and the association's business meeting in the Forestry Building on the campus of Michigan Tech. Great field trips, great company, great entertainment, great meeting.

Teacher Workshop a Success. Twenty people attended our teacher workshop, "An Introduction to Sustainable Forest Management" in early August. Evaluations all came back quite positive; the MFA board of directors approved another workshop for next year. We will work with the folks at Michigan Tech on a 5-year plan for reaching teachers with this information on forest management. There were many nice comments from teachers, indicating they learned a lot and are anxious to share their knowledge with students and other teachers when they get back to school. Tax-deductible donations can be made toward next year's workshop by a check to Michigan Forest Foundation at 6120 S. Clinton Trail, Eaton Rapids, MI 48827.

Wildlife News

Devils Facing Possible Extinction. A cancer epidemic is threatening to drive the Tasmanian Devil to extinction. The cancer is transmitted from one individual to another by biting; it does not respond to chemotherapy or even surgical tumor removal. This may be related to a narrow genetic base on the relatively small island where the devils live. It may give new insights into what causes extinctions -- disease is not normally thought of as a cause.

Smithsonian

Musk-Oxen Moving this Way. Well, don't look for them right away, but they have been showing up in Canada's spruce forests, where they've never been seen before.

Your Week in Trees

Lake Erie Samples Test Positive for Asian Carp eDNA. Six water samples from lake Erie have tested positive for Asian carp eDNA, according to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR). This is not proof of their presence in the lake, but is cause for great concern on the part of both Michigan and Ohio departments of natural resources. Electro-shocking and netting surveys are being conducted to gain more information. So far, no Asian carp have been found. The Asian carp are considered to be a significant threat to the Great Lakes ecosystems. They have been migrating north up the Mississippi River and its tributaries.

DNR listserv

Osprey Flourish in Southern Michigan. The osprey, or fish hawk, was nearly eliminated from southern Michigan, but thanks to a concentrated effort by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Huron Clinton Metroparks, Detroit Zoological Society, DTE energy and more than 100 volunteers, they are now thriving. The restoration effort was begun in 1998 with a goal of 30 active nests in southern Michigan by 2020. This year the number of active nests is at least 49. In 1999 there was just one. The elimination of the use of DDT and the improved management of riparian forests deserve some of the credit.

DNR listserv

Noise is Bad for Birds. A Virginia study found that 35 percent more bluebird chicks died in nests near traffic and other human-made noises than bluebirds in quieter locations.

Science News

Timber News

Manistique Paper Mill Sold. Manistique Papers has been purchased by The Watermill Group, of Boston. Operations are expected to continue with no loss of employees. Manistique Papers is the only North American company making uncoated publishing paper exclusively from recycled fiber.

Great Lakes Timber Professional

High-Grading is Degrading. An article in the May 30, 2012 Gallatin North Missourian by forestry extension specialist Hank Stelzer cautions landowners against the practice of harvesting only the few best trees in the woods – often referred to as “High-Grading”. This practice reduces the average value of remaining trees and often reduces biodiversity. Stelzer compares it to a farmer selling his best bull and keeping the runts for breeding stock. Selecting the few best trees in the woods is not the same as the “Selection System” practiced by foresters to remove the poor-quality trees to allow growing space for the better ones.

The e-forester

Cordwood Masonry Coming Back? A New York Times article from July 18 suggests the art and science of building with cordwood is enjoying a resurgence in popularity.

Your Week in Trees

Alternative Energy

Wood Chips to Heat National Laboratory at Oak Ridge. Smoldering wood chips will be used to heat about 100 buildings at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee. The process is expected to be cheaper and cleaner than heating with natural gas, plus, it will provide a market for 1,000 tons a week of low-quality wood. Thus, it will help the environment in two ways: less air pollution and healthier forests.

The e-forester

One cord of firewood heats as much as:

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1.1 tons of premium wood pellets | 215.5 gallons of propane | 133 gallons of #2 fuel oil |
| 1.1 tons of ovedried switchgrass | 0.6 tons of bituminous coal | 48.7 bushels of shelled corn |

One ton of premium pellets heats as much as:

| | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| 0.9 cords of seasoned firewood | 191.5 gallons of propane | 118.3 gallons of #2 fuel oil |
| 0.9 tons of ovedried switchgrass | 0.5 tons of bituminous coal | 43.3 bushels of shelled corn |

Alternative fuel prices compared to paying \$4.50 per gallon for heating oil:

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|--|--|
| Green wood (50% moisture) \$224.61 /ton | Cordwood (air-dried to 20% Moisture content) \$413.22 /ton |
| Wood (ovedried) \$540 /ton | Softwood (kiln dried to 13% MC) \$481.30 /ton |
| Hardwood (kiln dried to 8% MC) \$493.04 /ton | Premium Wood Pellets \$532.17 /ton |
| Seasoned firewood (20% MC) \$598.70 /cord | Switchgrass (ovedried) \$485.22 /ton |
| Natural Gas \$3.21 /therm | Electricity \$0.13/kWh |
| Bituminous Coal \$1,017.39 /ton | Shelled Corn (15% MC) \$12.29 /bu |
| Propane \$2.81 /gal. | |

The Northern Logger

Safety

Take a Break. Most hand injuries occur in the morning hours, with 10:00 being the worst time. This suggests it is a good idea to take a break in the morning and focus on working safely; not taking shortcuts.

Supervisors Safety Bulletin via **Northern Logger**

Climate Change

Forests Popping Up in the Tundra. A New York Times article in June reported that new forests are developing in the warming tundra, but not in the way most scientists had predicted. Instead of the expected gradual movement of the boreal forest northward, shrubs and bushes of willow and alder that are already growing there are becoming trees. Thus, forest cover is developing in decades, rather than centuries.

The e-forester

Miscellaneous

Michigan Entomologist Named to Science Advisory Board. Dr. Deborah McCullough, professor of forest entomology at Michigan State University, has been named to the American Forests’ new Science Advisory Board. She will bring knowledge of survey methods for emerald ash borer, beech bark disease and other forest pests to this distinguished panel.

American Forests

Watch for SMART. The Forest Service is expected to announce in October the release of its new Stewardship Mapping and Reporting Tool, called SMART. (Who do you suppose comes up with these acronyms?) SMART will be a national repository for Stewardship plan information.

Forest Matters

“Forest Bathing: Japanese researchers concluded that walking in dense woods at a leisurely pace at least once a month induces numerous physiological benefits in humans.”

Your Week in Trees