

# Leaves

## Newsletter of the Michigan Forest Association

6120 South Clinton Trail, Eaton Rapids, MI 48827

Phone & FAX 517-663-3423

E-mail [miforest@acd.net](mailto:miforest@acd.net)

Web site: [www.michiganforests.com](http://www.michiganforests.com)

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### Association News

**Reserve These Dates! August 16 – 17, 2013 MFA Annual Meeting Camp Tamarack, Jones, MI.**

Tour managed hardwood forest at Camp Tamarack. See: ash salvage, invasive species treatments, giant tulip poplars. More!  
Sawmill at Camp Tamarack. Archery Shoot. Bonfire.

Tour Neal Ferguson's walnut plantation. Discuss: Deer management. Thousand Cankers disease. Planting techniques.

Limited bunking available at Camp Tamarack; Holiday Inn Express and Super 8 available in nearby Three Rivers.

Shipshewana is less than an hour's drive. Winery tours in Paw Paw, less than an hour's drive.

**Registration form** is now available on the MFA web site at [www.michiganforests.com](http://www.michiganforests.com).

Hard copy is enclosed with this newsletter.

Also, lists of nearby lodging and camping facilities are available on the web site and enclosed with this letter.

**On Beech and Lightning.** You may remember that last month we published a question about whether beech trees ever get hit by lightning. **Jerry Tomandl** reported having heard that old-timers built barns with beech timbers because beech trees are never hit. We asked you for your thoughts. Two of you responded:

From **Warren Suchovsky** of Stephenson: "With regard to Beech being immune to lightning strikes: Can't say that I've seen any beech or for that matter many other hardwoods with lightning strikes. In my experience Pines, spruce and balsam are fairly common. Could it be the spreading nature of the beech crown doesn't act as a lightning rod as compared to the pointed crowns of the conifers? Has anyone checked to see if the polarity of beech is different than other species?"

From **Keith Martell** of Gaylord: "I have not heard that topic brought up in many years but recall seeing it written in William M. Harlowe's book: Trees of the Eastern United States. In his description of the American beech, this eminent dendrologist mentioned in his book that he had never known a beech tree to have been struck by lightning. I cannot ever recall seeing one myself and have asked that question of others and to date have found no one that recalls seeing scars or evidence of lightning strike on a beech tree either. Interesting trivia. Another interesting bit of trivia I recall in his book is that he says that the tips of the Canadian hemlock invariably point to the east..."

The jury is still out on this one. There will be a prize for the first picture we receive of a beech tree with an identifiable lightning strike.

### Wildlife News

**Isle Royale Wolves Found in Mine Shaft.** Three missing wolves were found last May floating in water in an abandoned mine shaft on Isle Royale in Lake Superior. Scientists are concerned for the future of the wolf pack on the island due to a shortage of females, one of which was among the dead wolves. The wolf-moose study on Isle Royale is sponsored by the National Park Service, the National Science Foundation, Michigan Tech, and numerous private donors and field volunteers. It is the longest continuing predator-prey study in the world.

Research 2013, Michigan Tech

**Kirtland's Warbler Moving Toward De-Listing.** The Kirtland's warbler population, once down to 167 pairs, is now up over 2,000 and may soon be considered for de-listing from the Endangered Species Act. How to continue the management programs that have helped its numbers is a concern. Two of the programs important to the warbler are trapping of cowbirds that parasitize warbler nests, and management of the jack pine that forms its habitat. Huron Pines RC&D Project in NE Lower Michigan is forming a sport group for the time when the birds are de-listed. Contact Abigail Ertel [abby@huronpines.org](mailto:abby@huronpines.org) for more information. Huron Pines eNews

**Indiana Bat Moving to Michigan?** A study by the US Forest Service predicts that changing climate may render Indiana too hot for its endangered Indiana Bat, forcing the bat to move to cooler areas. Indiana bats are attracted to large, dead trees. The e-forester

## Forest Health

**DNR Forest Health Report Available Online.** The DNR's Forest Health Highlights report for 2012 is available online at [www.michigan.gov/foresthealth](http://www.michigan.gov/foresthealth). Or contact Roger Mech (517-335-4408) or Ed Golder (517-335-3014) in Lansing. There is a lot of good information in this report.

DNR Listserve

**Decoys Employed in Fight Against Ash Borer.** Researchers at Penn State University are experimenting with decoys that resemble female ash borers in hopes they can increase their trapping efficiency and thus get an early jump on new populations. The decoys would be used in traps set out to determine the limits of existing populations.

The e-forester



**What Effect will Climate Change have on the Boreal Forest?** The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources modeled the effects of a warming climate on the growth of jack pine and black spruce in the boreal forest. Results predicted a positive effect on jack pine and a slight decrease in growth for black spruce.

E-insights

## Alternative Energy

**Researchers Discover a Chemical Reaction that Releases Energy.** Professor Yun Hang Hu, at Michigan Tech, has developed a heat-releasing reaction between carbon dioxide and lithium nitride that produces carbon nitride, a solid semiconductor, and lithium cyanamide, a precursor to fertilizer. In the process, large amounts of heat are released. According to Hu, the temperature surrounding the reaction jumped almost immediately from 339 degrees C to about 1,000 degrees. That's about the temperature of molten lava. This could be a way to take carbon dioxide out of the air and produce energy at the same time.

Research 2013, Michigan Tech.

**Colorado Energy Producer Switching from Corn to Woody Biomass.** Front Range Energy in Windsor, CO, is planning to begin commercial production of ethanol from woody biomass, making it the second U.S. producer to switch from corn to wood.

The e-forester

## Legislation

**Revisions to Qualified Forest Property Act.** A package of forestry-related bills passed the state Senate earlier this year and will soon be taken up by the House. One of the things these bills do is modify the Qualified Forest Properties Act. They have made it possible to enroll properties with structures on them and they have softened the penalties for withdrawal from the Act. Under the new legislation, landowners enrolled in the QFP would save 16 of the 18-mil school tax levied on non-homestead property. If the property is sold, and the purchaser agrees to keep it in QFP, there would be no "pop-up" in taxes. Much of the administration of forestry services to private landowners would be transferred from the Department of Natural Resources to the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development and the conservation districts. The MFA executive committee met March 4 to discuss these bills; a decision was made to support them, with some fairly minor recommended revisions. Your executive director testified the following day to the House Committee on Natural Resources that MFA thought the bills would have a favorable effect on our members. Application for enrollment will be made through the conservation districts if the legislation passes.

## Markets

**Chopsticks from Michigan?** Plans are afoot to produce chopsticks at the industrial park in White Pine. Global Wood Sticks, LLC has announced a deal to produce chopsticks and other products at White Pine. Equipment at the facility will include a sawmill; the company will employ 70 to 80 workers. We were not able to determine what species of wood the plant will use, but similar plants in other states use white birch.

Michigan Biomass

## Miscellaneous

**Timber Tax Workshops Coming Soon.** MSU Forestry professor and MFA board member Dr. Karen Potter-Witter is conducting a series of workshops on timber taxes across the state. Still ahead are workshops at:

Cadillac on March 19, 6:30 PM, Baker College Student Center call 231-775-7681, ext. 3

West Branch on March 20, 6:30 PM, Forwards Conference Center, call 989-826-8824

Rogers City on March 21, 6:00 PM, County Commissioners' Room, Presque Isle County Courthouse, call 989-734-4000

**Adirondack Park Forests Described as "Junk".** A million acres of private forest land in New York's Adirondack Park have been described by some foresters as "Junk", after years of high-grading, deer predation, acid rain and other insults. Plans are being considered to improve the quality of forest regeneration, but public support is not unanimous.

The e-forester

**Tree Id: There's an App for that.** Apps are available now to help you with tree identification. If you have an Android phone, try vTree, sponsored by the Department of Forestry and Environmental Conservation at Virginia Tech; for iPhones, look at Leafsnap, designed by Columbia University researchers. Both are free.

Michigan Arbor Day Alliance