



The Voice for Illinois Forests

Acting on issues that impact rural and community forests and promoting forestry in Illinois

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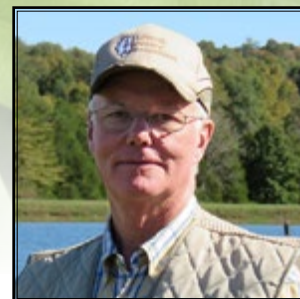
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Message from the President

By Mike McMahan

Spring is almost here, and I know we all are looking forward to the first signs. In fact, my wife spotted the first crocuses sticking their heads up around an old well on our property just a few days ago! When that happens, you know it is almost time.



Your IFA Board of Directors feels the same way – excited about getting things going and planting some “seeds” that we hope will grow as part of a stronger IFA. Our new strategic plan is like a garden that has been seeded with some basic strategies and actions that should bear fruit – if we keep after it.

Any of you who garden know that it requires a substantial investment. Sure, the seeds are fairly cheap, but the level of inputs added directly affects the bounty of your harvest. In our IFA garden, the inputs needed are people and money. People to work in the garden and money to buy other inputs that the crops require to grow. In other words, we need volunteers, dues income, grant-funded projects, and charitable donations in order to “be all we can be.”

In this issue you will find a listing of our committees, each of which has a part to play in achieving the 5 goals that will lead us toward our mission. In this issue you will also find a contact list of our current board members. If you have an interest in helping in any way, please reach out and talk with someone about volunteering.

We have in mind to produce a big garden this year. That is, we have some bold plans to enhance the programs and systems that serve our members, while maintaining our role as the voice for Illinois forests and forest owners.

In order to yield these outcomes we need more income than your dues provide. We either need substantially more members, or we need more people to recognize IFA as a cause worthy of charitable giving.

Did you know it is possible to make a tax-deductible donation in addition to your dues? It is also possible to change your membership level to “Sustaining.” A sustaining member pays \$100 or more a year – that is like adding an extra 3 or 4 members – water and fertilizer for an organization that doesn’t waste a single drop.

Rather than cut needed inputs, we have chosen to present a deficit budget to the board for their consideration. Will we operate within our means? Of course we will. Should we settle for less than what is needed to produce a bountiful harvest? No way. We will press onward for solutions that feed our capacity to promote healthy productive forests in Illinois. That is a garden worth tending.

Enjoy the Spring and all of its beauty!

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IFA Website
www.ilforestry.org

Executive Director Notes

by Stephanie Brown



"The Voice"

It's all over social media – the latest season of The Voice is underway. Don't look now, but the original tagline for the Illinois Forestry Association has been shortened and turned into a wildly popular reality show. If only Illinois forestry could be so lucky!

It has been 10 years since our founders sat around a conference table and decided to move forward with establishing the Illinois Forestry Association as "The Voice for Illinois Forests." Since then we have been involved in supporting (and sometimes opposing) laws and policies that affect forestland and forest owners in the state. Needless to say, these are interesting if not frustrating times to be involved in the Illinois political scene. We have a new Governor, and with that comes the uncertainty of transition. We have leadership changes in forestry and conservation – new senior staff to reach and influence.

Our Legislative/Policy Committee has been working behind the scenes to formulate our strategy for entering the fray. We are working hand in hand with our new State Forester to make sure IFA's message reflects the most critical challenges faced by the IDNR Division of Forest Resources. And, we are developing our Profiles in Forestry project to help those we meet better understand the importance of forestry in Illinois.

On the legislative front, we are watchful of SB 681, a needed amendment to the state's Exotic Weed Act, and also following SB 274, which would authorize

sweeps of a whole bevy of special funds. Fortunately, this amendment does not include the Forestry Development Fund. Of great interest will be the state budget, and how allocations within IDNR could impact our members and Illinois forests at large.

It's like a brand new season in which we start from scratch to make our presence and issues known to the powers that be. And, yes, it is a competition – forestry is just one of many interests that could be severely hampered or helped by changes brought on by a new administration.

The judges in the tall red seats include the governor, state government agency leaders, and our legislators (whose seats may be blue!). The voting public can make a difference in the outcome – but they have to pick up a phone or do something to make their opinions count.

We need YOU, our members, to stand firm and help IFA grow so that our voices will be heard. With your support we will continue to be a strong and effective "Voice for Illinois Forests."



Find IFA on Facebook!

Members and their loved ones who use Facebook are urged to "Like" and "Share" the new Illinois Forestry Association page, as well as our occasional posts. This doesn't replace any of our regular forms of member communication, but is intended as an enhancement. It offers a new way for people within and outside IFA to learn about forestry and our association. Our success depends entirely on the extent to which members are willing to share, so thanks in advance for helping to grow our audience! Check it out!

www.facebook.com/ILForestry

Secretary Comments

by Dave Gillespie

If it has not been mentioned before in the Newsletter, the IFA is part of social media. Executive Director Stephanie Brown established a Facebook page for the IFA. Check it out. There are some informative articles and news on the site. Go to www.facebook.com/ilforestry and "like" the IFA Facebook page.

While I am retired I like to keep up with what is going on in forestry. I belong to the Society of American Foresters (SAF) and enjoy reading the "Journal of Forestry". The SAF is a professional organization, and the "Journal" provides technical forestry information to its readers.

In addition to the IFA Newsletter, I found another publication about a year ago that I find most informative about what I consider articles for the forest landowner and those interested in forestry. It is called "Woodland", and is published by the American Forest Foundation, the sponsor of the American Tree Farm System. I suggest, if you are not already familiar with the magazine to check it out. Go to their website at www.forestfoundation.org. I think my subscription initially cost \$40.00. It's well worth the price.

Needless to say, I think the benefits of belonging to IFA are well worth the dues that our members are paying. Thanks for supporting our efforts to promote healthy and productive forests in Illinois.

Do you have a passion for trees and forestry?

Are you interested in serving on a committee or helping out in some other way?

Contact an IFA officer today, and find out how you can help!

IFA Committees — 2014-15

Meet the groups working behind the scenes to tackle our 5 main goals (in bold italics). You do not need to be on the board to join a committee, and you don't have to participate in committee meetings to support what each is trying to accomplish. Many hands make light work!

Executive – Mike McMahan, John Edgington, Susan Romano, Dave Gillespie, Bill Gradle, Stephanie Brown

Focused on **efficient and effective IFA governance**, strategic priorities, advancing progress between meetings.

Finance – Susan Romano, Dan Schmoker, Dave Gillespie, Mike McMahan
Stewardship of IFA's finances, including investment strategies, budgeting, and financial reviews.

Membership – Tom Desulis, Carol Bryant, Stephanie Brown, Paul Deizman, Dave Gillespie, Jim Kirkland

Understand/engage members and increase membership. Assess member needs through interviews and surveys. Address lapsed memberships. Seek opportunities to share IFA recruitment materials through partner agencies and organizations. Reach prospective members with information that encourages and facilitates membership. Provide opportunities for members to engage more fully in IFA activities as volunteers.

Marketing – Stephanie Brown, Paige Buck, Jake Hendee, Susan Romano, Roger Smith, Alan Wolfgang

Educate members and the general public. Develop effective messaging that brands IFA as a recognizable source of valuable and credible information. Develop/deliver content that results in a more complete and accurate popular understanding of forestry and forest management. Communicate in a variety of ways to share useful information with members and the public. Prioritize efforts to maximize growth in IFA membership while making the best use of scarce resources. Increase landowner awareness of IFA through promotion of the Purple Paint Law.

Legislative/Policy – Dave Gillespie, Kurt Bobsin, Bill Gradle, Jim Hynes, Mike McMahan, Lee Rife

Policy advocacy for IL Forests. Monitor state and federal legislative activity relevant to Illinois forests. Recommend appropriate response strategies to the Board. Lead organization of a member alert/response system for use in responding to legislation relevant to member interests. Proactively influence state and federal programs relevant to Illinois forests by representing IFA interests during events/activities of partner agencies. Develop, review, and update IFA position statements on issues of concern.

Technical Advisory – Kurt Bobsin, Wade Conn, Paul Deizman, John Dickson, John Edgington, John Groninger, Jay Hayek, Susan Romano, Dan Schmoker, Stan Sipp

Promote forest management and help landowners manage forests. Share existing technical resources (expertise, print media, videos, etc.) through IFA channels. Identify gaps in existing resources and develop new tools to fill them. Deliver helpful information in a variety of formats appropriate for the material. Assist the Legislative/Policy Committee with position statements.

Landowner Advisory – Jim Hynes, Carol Bryant, Tom Desulis, Mike McMahan, Alan Wolfgang

Periodically advise on topics of interest for newsletter, email blasts, publications, webinars, programs, etc. Engaged on an ad hoc basis as specific needs arise for consultation.

Annual Meeting – Stephanie Brown, Tony Kreke, Stan Sipp, Kurt Bobsin, Wade Bloemer, *other Tree Farm representatives*

Local arrangements, speaker recruitment, program planning, silent auction, and hosting of the IFA annual meeting.

Nominating – Kurt Bobsin, Stephanie Brown, Tom Desulis, Dave Gillespie, Roger Smith

Seek out and secure a steady succession of qualified candidates for the Board and elected leadership positions.



Join Us!

Call Stephanie at 618/949-3699 to learn more about tasks that might fit your interests.

The IFA Board held a special Committee Reorganization Meeting in Springfield on December 16th.



State Forester's DNR Update

by Tom Wilson,
State Forester

IDNR has a new Director, Wayne Rosenthal. The transition to date has been smooth, yet many state processes for travel, spending and procedures are temporarily slowed by the Governor's office.

Illinois Forestry Development Act cost share funds totaling 600,000 were allocated and made available by the Division of Forest Resources. Our Division has allocated the majority of those funds which are to be spent by June 30, 2015. Though DNR fiscal chiefs predict some funding shortages within our and other divisions into 2016, we expect cost-share availability and allocations to continue.

The Division added a new Forest Management Forester, Chris Whittom - an Illinois native and seasoned forester - who previously operated and owned a successful forestry and natural resources consulting firm. We are excited to have Chris on and already being effective in managing and improving many of our forest stewardship and management programs.

Our Wood Utilization and Marketing Program forester will re-introduce the historic Division publication and tool titled *Wooden Dollars!* That publication provides updates and information on wood, timber buyers and the industry plus advertises timber and wood products for sale. *Wooden Dollars* will be similar to its predecessor, yet it will be an electronic publication and linked to our and other forestry websites.

The important Urban & Community Forestry programs across Illinois communities have received yet another boost of support from the US Forest Service, state and private branch, via a recently announced urban forestry

grant. This one promoting urban forest management is to be administered to communities through our partner, the Morton Arboretum.

This February or March, the forestry community and public will see the long-awaited update of the Illinois Forestry Development Act administrative rules go to JCAR. This statewide joint committee will review the updated cost share and forest management plan rules for approval which takes approximately 60 days. Anyone may comment on the rules during this process. The changes are highlighted by increased cost share rates and updated forest management plan requirements.

Please feel free to contact your State Forester or his staff at tom.wilson@illinois.gov.



Tree Farm Program

by Greg Zak, Chairman,
Illinois Tree Farm Committee

GREETINGS FROM THE ILLINOIS TREE FARM COMMITTEE...

As the new Chairman of our Committee, I would like to introduce you to our community of "family forest owners." When the subject of trees is discussed by the general Illinois public, the assumption is that we are talking about "Christmas trees." These types of trees are but a very small portion of trees grown in our State.

There is an ever growing population of hardwoods that are not often recognized as an important resource to our state.

In addition to providing recreation, education and family participation, there is the income gained from the harvest of the wood for marketable wood products.

The Illinois Tree Farm System is an organization that is comprised of woodland owners that believe in a commitment to ensure the continuity and proper management of private forestry in Illinois, as well as the United States. We are organized under The American Tree Farm System (ATFS) which is a program of the American Forest Foundation.

To provide you with additional information on the requirements for becoming a part of our group, the criteria follows.

- You own at least 10 acres of woodlands;
- You have or will agree to develop a Management Plan that meets specific standards of sustainability as described by the American Tree Farm System (ATFS);
- You request a property inspection with one of our trained forestry inspectors;
- Our inspector arranges to visit your property and reviews your management plan to verify that it is in compliance with the standards;
- If the above mentioned requirements are in place, your tree farm will be recognized as part of the American Tree Farm System.

We welcome and encourage your interest in the preservation, continued growth and health of family forests. If you would like to become a Tree Farmer, contact your local IDNR District Forester.

Like you, my wife and I are IFA members, and so is the Illinois Tree Farm Committee. Both of our organizations share mutual objectives in the care and cultivation of forestry in our state and country. We are looking forward to planning a joint IFA/Tree Farm annual meeting this year, and exploring other ways that we might work together to advance our common interests.

Starting Invasive Plant Management on Your Land the Right Way

by Chris Evans, Invasive Species Campaign Coordinator - Illinois Wildlife Action Plan

The old saying goes that the best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago and the second best time is today. That saying is equally true for starting an invasive plant management program on your land. With populations that can double or triple in size every year, it pays a landowner to not wait around to control that infestation of a new invasive plant.

The impacts and damage that invasive plants can have on our native plants, wildlife and natural resources is well known. Infestations can outcompete and replace native species, reduce forage for wildlife, reduce the productivity and survivorship of trees, reduce accessibility to our land (who wants to walk through a multiflora rose stand!) and even, in some cases, reduce property values. Managing invasive plants is vital to maintaining the health of our forests.

However, invasive plant management can be a daunting task for a landowner. Even knowing where to start can be a challenge. This article lays out what every landowner should know and do when starting to manage invasive plants.



Invasive plants, such as autumn olive, can have dramatic impacts on your land.

Before starting a management program, it is important to have realistic expectations. To eradicate an infestation, it typically takes 3-5 years of work, sometimes longer. The majority of effort and expense will be in the first year and subsequent years will be focused on treating any plants that were missed, new seedlings, or plants that somehow survived the first treatment. For infestations that are so large that they

cannot be treated entirely in one year or for very common species that are likely to reinvade from neighboring lands, total eradication may not be feasible. Instead, the goal in these situations should be to reduce and maintain the infestations at low enough levels to eliminate the negative impacts. In these cases, yearly 'clean up' treatments may be necessary.

Know your invaders!

Being able to recognize and identify invasive plants is the crucial first step to starting an invasive plant management program. At a minimum, every forested landowner in Illinois should be able to recognize bush honeysuckle, multiflora rose, autumn olive, and garlic mustard.



Every forested landowner in Illinois should be able to identify bush honeysuckle, multiflora rose, autumn olive, and garlic mustard

These species are found statewide and it is highly likely that at least one of these four species is found in every forested parcel in Illinois. In addition to these statewide species, different regions of the state will have other common invaders. For example, landowners in southern Illinois should know Japanese stiltgrass and Japanese honeysuckle while common buckthorn is a big problem in northern Illinois.

The local Extension office or Soil and Water Conservation District are great places to start looking for information about local invasive plants. If the landowner lives in or near to an area of the state covered by a Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA), then contacting the CWMA is a great way to both learn about the local invasive

species and make contact with other landowners, agencies, and organizations in the area working on invasive species. A landowner should learn how to identify any invasive species mentioned in the Forest Stewardship Plan, if the forested parcel has one.

The Illinois Invasive Species Awareness Month website (www.illinoisinvasives.org) is also a great place to go for information and pictures of Illinois invasive plants and is the place to start when looking for information on how to identify invasive plants.

Being able to recognize and identify invasive plants gives a landowner the skills necessary to then monitoring and mark infestations on their land. Areas with recent disturbance or edge habitats are places where invasive plants often show up first. As such, these types of areas should be watched for new invaders showing up. Monitor areas that have recently had the soil or canopy disturbed or that occur near a trail, road, powerline, fencerow, etc.



Marking infestations with flagging helps with relocating the site in the future

When small infestations are found, they should be marked. A simple strip of flagging can be tied on or near the plants. This aids tremendously if returning to the site to treat the invasive. Additionally, marking infestations on a map or aerial photo or using a GPS in conjunction with a program like Google Earth will help in planning and prioritizing control efforts.

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Choosing where to start

Once a landowner has a better handle on the scale and scope of invasion, a decision on where to start needs to be made. If infestations levels are high enough that all of it cannot be addressed initially, then priorities need to be set. New or spreading invasions should receive highest priority. These infestations have the most potential to continue to spread and invade new areas. The goal there would be to control them before they start causing problems.

Another priority should be any area that has a significant resource or investment at risk. A significant resource could be a population of a Threatened or Endangered species or a high quality natural community. An example of an investment at risk is a new tree planting that is starting to be invaded. The landowner has already invested time and money to plant the trees, so controlling the invasive helps protect that investment.

When controlling a large or well-established population, the most effective approach is starting at the outside of the population and work inward. Satellite populations and the edges of the infestation should be tackled first and then, as time allows, continuing control the edge of the population, working towards the heaviest infestation areas. This 'line in the sand' approach prevents future spread and protects from additional damage from invasion.

Finding the right control method

Many options exist for actually controlling invasive plants. Usually the best method is a combination of mechanical (cutting, pulling, torching, etc.) and chemical (herbicide applications) techniques. It is important to choose a method that is safe, efficient, and effective on the target plants and specific situation. Mechanical control is often feasible on smaller infestations but may be too labor intensive for large or well established infestations. Chemical control on invasive plants typically involves the application of a systemic

herbicide to kill the invasive plant and prevent future sprouting. For herbaceous plants, a foliar application is most often used. For woody plants, foliar, along with cut stump and basal bark applications are used. To learn more about these methods and the herbicides to use, Illinois Forestry Association members can visit the IFA website. The member-section has a great archive of publications and recorded webinars on invasive species control techniques.

A great resource for landowners in Illinois is the Invasive Plant Control Database, produced by the Midwest Invasive Plant Network (<https://mipncontroldatabase.wisc.edu/>). This site provides the user with very detailed information on control options for many invasive plants.

Agencies, such as the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and the USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, and groups, such as Cooperative Weed Management Areas, may be able to provide technical and/or financial assistance to landowners to control invasive plants. A visit to the local NRCS office would be the best place to start pursuing this assistance.



Many invasive species have small seeds, such as this garlic mustard, that can be picked up and transported in mud on equipment and shoes

Don't be part of the problem – prevent the spread of invasive plants

Lastly, it is crucial that steps be taken not to spread invasive plants. The seeds of many of Illinois' invaders can be easily spread by mud or dirt stuck on equipment and even boots. Brushing or spraying equipment to remove dirt and debris is a simple step any landowner can take to help prevent the spread of invasive plants. Any contract work that

has the potential to disturb the soil or plant life, such as thinning, forest stand improvement, road building, or harvest, should have an equipment cleaning requirement built into the contract. If hunters or other recreational users access the land, then it should be requested that they also clean their ATVs or other equipment before arriving on site.

Putting it all together

While the thought of starting a comprehensive invasive plant management program may be overwhelming, hopefully, each incremental step listed above is easily accomplished. The step-by-step process outlined in this article makes this a doable process and will start any landowner along the right path to being able to safely, efficiently, and effectively managing invasive plants.



Mark Your Calendar!
September 25-26, 2015

**IFA/Tree Farm
Joint Annual Meeting
and Field Day**

Near Effingham

Illinois Forestry Association

A non-profit charitable
organization under
IRS 501(c)(3)

Illinois Prescribed Burning Act

Planning to burn your woods this spring or next fall? You may want to brush up on the legal implications. In order to be protected under this Illinois law, a certified prescribed burn manager must be involved in planning and executing your burn. For a listing of trained burn managers, along with the more detailed administrative rules that further define how this law is to be carried out, visit: http://dnr.state.il.us/conservation/forestry/Wildland_Fire/

The Illinois Prescribed Burning Act.

(Source: P.A. 95-108, eff. 8-13-07.)

Sec. 5. Legislative findings; purpose.

- (a) Prescribed burning is a land management tool that benefits the safety of the public, the environment, and the economy of the State. Therefore, the General Assembly finds that:
- (1) Most of the State's natural communities require periodic fire for maintenance of their ecological health. Prescribed burning is essential to the perpetuation, restoration, and management of many plant and animal communities. Significant loss of the State's biological diversity will occur if fire is excluded from these fire-dependent communities.
 - (2) Public agencies and non-governmental organizations in the State have spent millions of dollars to purchase hundreds of thousands of acres of land for parks, wildlife areas, State forests, nature preserves and other outdoor recreational purposes. The use of prescribed burning for management of these public and private lands is essential to maintain the specific resource values for which these areas were acquired.
 - (3) Forests, grasslands, and wetlands in the State constitute significant economic, biological, and aesthetic resources of statewide importance. Prescribed burning prepares sites for planting, removes undesirable competing vegetation, accelerates nutrient cycling, controls certain pathogens and noxious weeds, and promotes oak regeneration. In these communities, prescribed burning improves and maintains the quality and quantity of wildlife habitats.
 - (4) Prescribed burning reduces naturally occurring vegetative fuels. Reducing the fuel load reduces the risk and severity of wildfires, thereby reducing the threat of loss of life and property.
 - (5) Federal and State agencies promote and subsidize fire dependent vegetative communities and recommend prescribed burning as an essential management practice for many funded programs.
 - (6) Proper training in the purposes, use, and application of prescribed burning is necessary to ensure maximum benefits and protection for the public.
 - (7) Prescribed burning in the hands of trained, skilled, and experienced people is safe and often the most cost

effective management technique to accomplish many ecosystem restoration objectives and ecological goals.

- (8) A public education program is necessary to make citizens and visitors aware of the public safety, natural resource, and economic benefits of prescribed burning and its use as a land management tool.
- (9) As development and urbanization increase in the State, pressures from liability issues, and nuisance complaints will inhibit the use of prescribed burning.
- (b) It is the purpose of this Act to authorize and to promote the continued use of prescribed burning for ecological, forest, wetland, wildlife management, and grassland management purposes.

Sec. 10. Definitions. As used in this Act:

- (a) "Prescribed burning" means the planned application of fire to naturally occurring vegetative fuels under specified environmental conditions and following appropriate precautionary measures, which causes the fire to be confined to a predetermined area and accomplish the planned land management objectives.
- (b) "Certified prescribed burn manager" means an individual who successfully completes an approved training program and receives proper certification.
- (c) "Prescription" means a written plan for conducting a prescribed burn.
- (d) "Department" means the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Sec. 15. Requirements; liability.

- (a) Before conducting a prescribed burn under this Act, a person shall:
- (1) obtain the written consent of the landowner;
 - (2) have a written prescription approved by a certified prescribed burn manager;

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Fire Dawgs Prescribed Burn Source: Dr. Charles Ruffner

- (3) have at least one certified prescribed burn manager present on site with a copy of the prescription while the burn is being conducted;
 - (4) notify the local fire department, county dispatcher, 911 dispatcher, or other designated emergency dispatcher on the day of the prescribed burn; and
 - (5) make a reasonable attempt to notify all adjoining property owners and occupants of the date and time of the prescribed burn.
- (b) The property owner and any person conducting a prescribed burn under this Act shall be liable for any actual damage or injury caused by the fire or resulting smoke upon proof of negligence.
- (c) Any prescribed burning conducted under this Act:
- (1) is declared to be in the public interest;
 - (2) does not constitute a public or private nuisance when conducted in compliance with Section 9 of the Environmental Protection Act and all other State statutes and rules applicable to prescribed burning; and
 - (3) is a property right of the property owner if naturally occurring vegetative fuels are used.

Sec. 20. Rules. The Department, in consultation with the Office of the State Fire Marshal, shall promulgate rules to implement this Act, including but not limited to, rules governing prescribed burn manager certification and revocation and rules governing prescribed burn prescriptions.

(Source: P.A. 95-108, eff. 8-13-07; 95-876, eff. 8-21-08.)

Sec. 25. Exemption. Nothing in this Act shall be construed as:

- (1) requiring certification as a prescribed burn manager to conduct prescribed burning on one's own property or on the lands of another with the landowner's permission; Section 15(b) shall not apply to prescribed burns conducted under the exemption in this item (1);

- (2) affecting any obligations or liability under the Environmental Protection Act or any rules adopted thereunder, or under any federal laws or rules that apply to prescribed burning; or
- (3) superseding any local burning law.

Sec. 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law. (Source: P.A. 95-108, eff. 8-13-07.)

Help Make October Oak Awareness Month

by Lydia Scott, Director, Chicago Regional Trees Initiative, The Morton Arboretum

White Oak, *Quercus alba*
Source: State Symbols USA



We encourage you to join other

organizations and individuals all across the state of Illinois as we recognize the importance of oaks and oak ecosystems. Every individual, organization, community, park district, forest preserve, and public or private landowner or manager can play an important role in celebrating oaks and oak ecosystems across Illinois throughout the month of October— OAKtober!

Oaks represent strength and stature. In fact, the white oak is the Illinois State Tree. Majestic oaks create a sense of awe and wonder. Our native oaks have evolved with our native plants and wildlife to make unique ecosystems. Trees work for us by cleaning our air and water, reducing ambient air temperature and usage of energy. They reduce flooding and support our native wildlife. Our oaks, and trees in general, provide important benefits that provide the foundation for our quality of life.

How can you be part of OAKtober?

There are many ways your organization, community, friends and neighbors can facilitate OAKtober—Oak Awareness Month—and help create awareness of the value of oaks across the state of Illinois and develop a network to support our important oak ecosystems. Here are some suggestions:

- **Host an oak workday.** Individuals can help to remove invasive species to improve growing conditions for an oak ecosystem. Or plant, water, and mulch oak trees.
- **Sponsor a campout.** Individuals and families can camp under the oaks and learn about the history of our region and the importance that oaks play.
- **Lead a walk through an oak woodland.** Help participants notice all of the wildlife and plants that make up the oak ecosystem.
- **Host a talk.** Have a local oak expert give a public talk and invite your organization's members, and their friends and neighbors.
- **Collect acorns and plant them in pots.** Plan to plant them out into the community or parks in a few years.
- **Find your largest oak.** Identify the largest oak tree in your community or park, determine its approximate age and introduce community members to the tree and its history.
- **Host an OAKtober beer or wine fest.**
- **Engage the local schools.** Encourage students to write essay or create posters on the importance of oaks to our communities and our ecosystems.
- **Hug an oak tree!**

Join the effort and memorialize your event. Take pictures and send them to us so we can post them on the OAKtober local, regional and state-wide newspapers and social media. Let us know what you are doing so we can all celebrate our collective action. Be part of our first ever OAKtober celebration! **Register your event** with Melissa Custic, Chicago Region Tree Initiative Coordinator at mcustic@mortonarb.org so we can track the statewide effort to support our oaks. Happy OAKtober!



Walnuts & Acorns

by Lee M. Rife

As I write this, it is a rather mild winter day, but I am awaiting another Arctic blast which the weather people assure us, will arrive in the next 48 to 72 hours. The only good thing that I can say about this type of weather is that it is ideal if you are taping maple trees for, say, to make maple syrup. The freeze – thaw cycle increases the amount of sap being pumped up to the upper reaches of the tree, or so I am told.

However, this quarter, I want to get to a different subject. Most of the time, I will be writing about woodland matters, but another item has been on my mind lately. This involved some advice that every one of us who have small children or grandchildren should pass along. Altogether, too many times I have heard young people smart mouth or as they would say, disrespect not only each other, but people who are in authority, or older or just there. I want to pass along seven words which have done me well over the years. Yes, I know that I'm old school, but if more people used these, the world would be much better, and life a lot more pleasant.

These words are: SIR, M'AM, YES, NO, PLEASE and THANK YOU. They show respect, not to mention common courtesy. They make the other person feel respected and what's more they make the speaker of these words feel better about themselves. I realize that there are situations where you may not think these to be appropriate, and I have had to bite my tongue more than once. I still remember, when in the Air Guard, an officer telling me that I could call him anything as long as I called him sir. Sir Jack of Ass came to mind, but I wisely just turned around and stormed off.

I hope that today's generation does learn that politeness and courtesy pay off in the long run. To get respect, people must show respect. Further, you may not realize it, but the person whom you are respecting may be in a position to help you sometime later.

History of Conservation in Illinois

by Dave Gillespie, IFA Secretary

(Installment # 11)

This account of the history of conservation in Illinois was written by Joseph P. Schavilje in 1941. This installment begins where the tenth installment ended.

Henry R. Schoolcraft journeyed up the Illinois in 1821. He writes, "The otter, muskrat, the raccoon, are still taken by the Indians and contribute in a great measure to their support, - the skins being sold to the traders and the flesh taken as food. The beavers, which have so greatly diminished in all parts of America within a few years, is now rarely found in this stream or its tributaries." While at the junction of the Des Plaines and the Kankakee rivers, he wrote about the "unvaried surface" as he called the open prairie land, and "small, clear streams", the "limited forests of timber", and the "vigorous growth of grasses and flowering plants".

Schoolcraft evidently was concerned about conservation of our forests. He writes, "It has been observed that the first effects of plentitude of inhabitants is the destruction of wood; the culture and creation of forests will here demand the earliest attention. It appears very evident that these grassy plains were formerly covered with forests of timber. There is no country in the world better adapted to their growth. Whether these ancient forests were burned down by fire, as some have supposed, or destroyed by water, as others maintain, may be an interesting topic for discussion to the geologist; but the farmer and planter are chiefly concerned in the restoration of the stock and promotion of its growth." (Quaife, 1918)

(To be continued in the next issue of "The IFA Newsletter".)

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Wood Projects for Illinois Wildlife -- Bluebirds!

Eastern bluebirds are one of the most popular songbirds in Illinois. Their brilliant blue colors, delightful calls, clean habitats and family devotion have long provided happiness and inspiration to people.

Ideal bluebird habitat is comprised of mixed hardwood forests and grasslands. The grassy areas may be either meadows, pastures, yards, cemeteries, highway rights-of-way or prairies. It is best if the grass is short or sparse. Mowed or grazed areas provide good habitat.

There should be either power lines, fence posts or scattered trees in grassy areas to provide feeding perches. Bluebirds will sometimes nest in the back yards of homes in rural areas or on the fringe of urban areas. Normally they nest in rural areas away from farmstead sites, however, because competition with house sparrows is usually too great near farmsteads.

Bluebird nests are neat, cup-shaped structures made of fine grass. Usually there are five pale blue eggs in a clutch.

Either the Peterson or the one-board bluebird houses should be placed four to six feet above the ground and spaced about 100 yards apart.. The entrance hole should face north, east or northeast to prevent sunlight from shining into the hole and overheating the box interior.

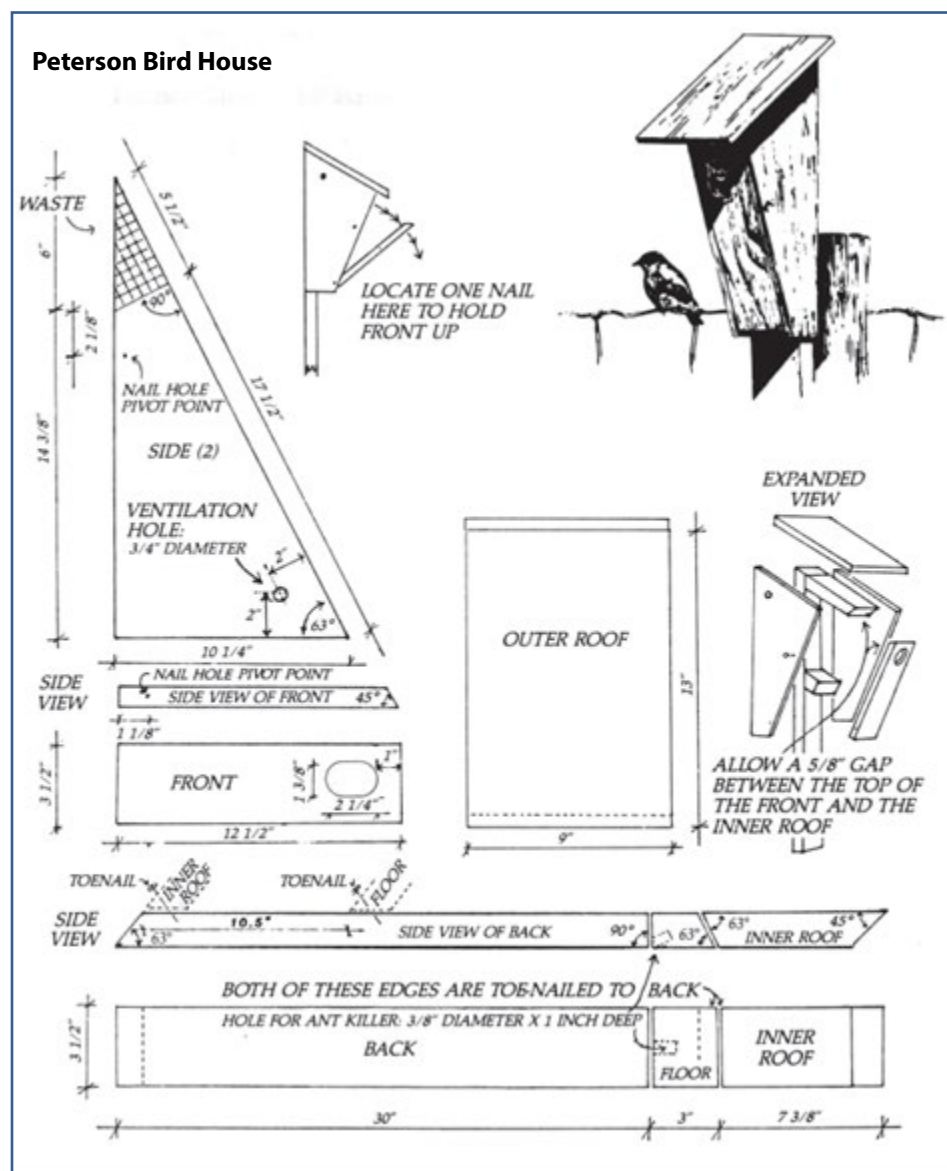
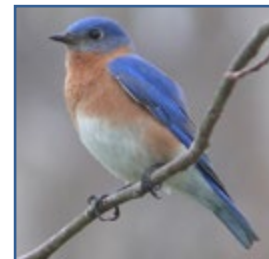
A bluebird trail consists of 5 or more houses placed along a road or fenceline. The houses should be ready by late March and should be checked every week to 10 days from late March until mid-August. A nest should be removed as soon as a brood leaves its nest box. This allows a second brood to be raised.

You can access a scanned copy of "Wood Projects for Illinois Wildlife" at <http://www.dnr.illinois.gov/publications/Documents/00000211.pdf>.

The information and project plans in this article are protected by copyright and shared with permission from the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

The **Peterson bluebird house** is the best type of bluebird house. It is relatively safe for bluebirds and is easily checked and cleaned.

The seven parts of this house are assembled in this order. First, the inner roof is toe-nailed to the top of the back. Second, the floor is toe-nailed to the back, 10 1/2 inches below the top. Thirds, one side is nailed to the resulting frame. Next the swing down front is fastened by nailing one nail to each side of the base. A third nail is pounded part-way into the side near the entrance hole. This is pulled out each time the house is checked. This top serves primarily as a cat guard.



One-board Bird House on page 10

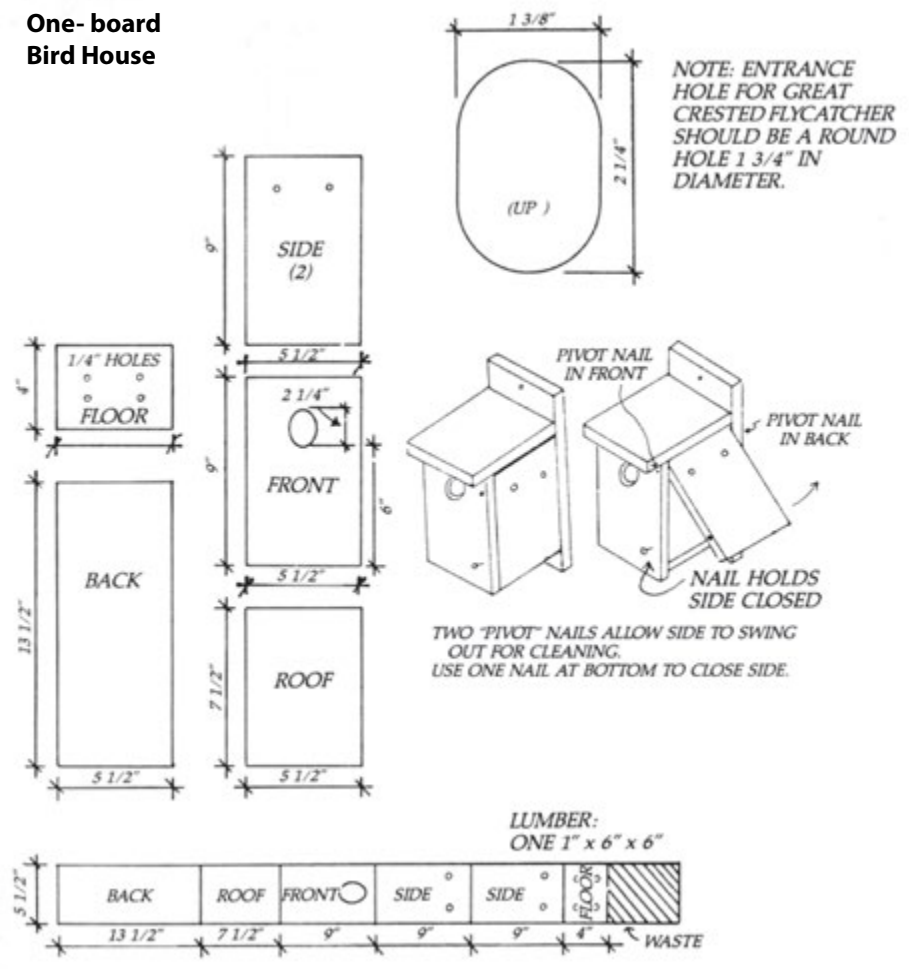
A **one-board bluebird house** is much easier to build than the Peterson house and is included here for the benefit of young people or for adults who do not have access to table saws or radial arm saws.

This type of house is more vulnerable to predation by house cats so it is best used on free-standing posts which have tin or aluminum sheets stapled around the support post. Some people feel that sparrow use in the one-board box can be diminished by cutting a 3-inch diameter hole in the roof and covering the hole with $\frac{1}{4}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ inch hardware cloth mesh. Bluebirds don't seem to mind the "sunroof" but sparrows may be discouraged by it.

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One-board Bird House



Bluebird Legacy

by Mike McMahan, IFA President

Birds in your woods on a warm, spring morning.....what a great treat to experience with your kids or grandkids. As you stop and watch, the birds seem so happy and are always on the move, singing excitedly to each other in the process.

Your granddaughter asks, "Grandpa, why are there so many different birds?" Tough question if you really get into it scientifically, but you say "Maggie, they all have different jobs to do. Some eat insects and some eat berries....that way all of them help each other and help us too." For now, Maggie is satisfied with your answer, but you know it won't last too long.

A few minutes later, sure enough, here comes the next question. "Grandpa, why is that bird SO blue?! It is my favorite

color!" You think to yourself, "why IS the Eastern Bluebird blue? Beats me. So, you say "God made them that color just for you!" Now you have done it.....started a continuing love affair with one of the prettiest birds in our area and also one that needs our help.

Since you were a child growing up nearby, you have seen the development of housing, shopping, roads and commercial properties on what you remember as open land with lots of woods nearby. That creek was your favorite place to go swimming with your friends. Some of the favorite places that birds liked to hang out have been lost to changes in the landscape, too.

Speaking as one guy who is fortunate enough to own some woods AND have a reason to be concerned, I want to do what I can to help these little creatures.

To me, the answer is simple.....you built your home several years ago, so why not build the birds a home now?

The great news is that bird houses are a lot cheaper to build than people houses! For less than \$10, you can build one fine bluebird home. If you want more information on how to build a bluebird house, where to put it up and what to do to make sure it is a successful home for Maggie's new friends, check out a new feature of our newsletter.

Each quarter we will include an excerpt from the IDNR Natural Heritage Division publication, Wood Projects for Illinois Wildlife – now out of print, but still very useful to landowners and backyard nature enthusiasts alike. We heartily thank the folks at IDNR for allowing us to include this information in our newsletter!

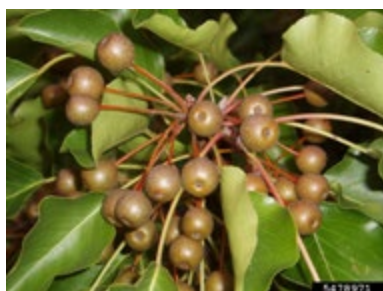
Invasive Species Profile:

Callery Pear - *Pyrus Calleryana*

by Chris Evans, Illinois Wildlife Action Plan,
Invasive Species Campaign Coordinator

The Callery pear is a widely used ornamental tree that has started to invade natural areas throughout Illinois. This species is perhaps best recognized by the name of its popular ornamental varieties – Bradford Pear and Cleveland Pear.

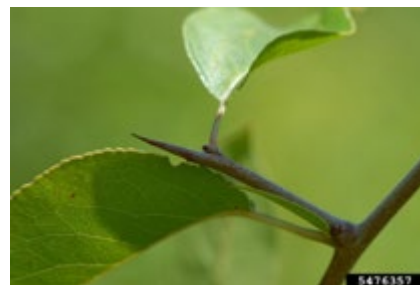
The early ornamental varieties were thought to be sterile but the addition of newer varieties meant that planted trees were able to cross-pollinate and produce fertile seed. Now Callery pear escapes can be found across



Illinois. It is most commonly found invading old fields, roadsides, young tree plantings, pastures, and other open areas.

Callery pear is native to Asia and was introduced multiple times into the United States. Mature trees can get up to 40 feet tall, but are often much shorter. This deciduous tree often turns a deep red color in the fall. Leaves are alternate and broadly ovate with rounded teeth along the margins. Flowers are white with five petals and bloom before the leaves erupt on the plant. This is often one of the first trees to bloom in the spring. Fruit are small, rough, and tan in color and occur in loose clusters.

Escaped individuals revert back to the 'wild type' and often look very different than the planted cultivars. Escaped plants can be multi-stemmed and often have sharp thorns.



Smaller Callery pear stems can be controlled through a foliar spray or a cut stump treatment with glyphosate or triclopyr or a basal bark application of triclopyr (ester) in oil. Larger stems should be controlled using cut stump treatment with glyphosate or triclopyr. With any herbicide application, always read and follow the label information and check the label for recommended application rates.

This just in...

White-Nose Syndrome Found in Four Additional Illinois Counties

***Disease That Has Killed Millions of Bats
in North America Confirmed For First
Time in Union, Saline, Johnson and
Jackson Counties***

SPRINGFIELD, IL – White-nose syndrome, a fungal disease that has killed millions of bats in North America, has been found in four new Illinois counties.

Tests conducted by the U.S. Geological Survey's National Wildlife Health Center in Madison, Wisconsin found five bats submitted from Union, Saline, Johnson, and Jackson Counties were positive for the disease. These are the first confirmed records in these counties. The disease was first discovered in Illinois in 2013 in Hardin, LaSalle, Monroe and Pope Counties.

White-nose syndrome (WNS) is not known to affect people, pets, or livestock, but is harmful or lethal to hibernating bats, killing 90 percent or more of some species of bats in caves where the fungus has persisted for a year or longer, according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

WNS is known to be transmitted primarily from bat to bat, but spores of *Pseudogymnoascus destructans*, the non-native fungus that causes white-nose syndrome, may be unintentionally carried between caves and abandoned mines by people on their clothing, footwear, and caving gear.

The name of the disease refers to the white fungal growth often found on the noses of infected bats. To protect hibernating bats, including threatened and endangered species, all Illinois Department of Natural Resources-owned or managed caves have been closed to the public since 2010.

In addition, all caves within the Shawnee National Forest, managed by the U.S. Forest Service, have been formally closed since 2009.

White-nose syndrome was first detected in New York State in 2006 and has killed more than 5.7 million cave-dwelling bats in the eastern half of North America. Bats with WNS have been confirmed in 25 states and five Canadian provinces. White-nose syndrome monitoring in Illinois is done in collaboration by the University of Illinois–Prairie Research Institute, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U. S. Forest Service, and the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Bats play an important role in the environment, with individual bats preying on thousands of night-flying insects daily. Bats provide valuable insect pest control.

For more information, visit: www.whitenosesyndrome.org.

Southern Illinois Forestry Field Day

Friday, April 17th, 9am-3pm
Trail of Tears State Forest, Jonesboro, IL

Join the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and a team of experts for a hands on seminar focused on providing resources to local landowners. This field day will alert landowners to the possibilities available to assist them in making wise decisions about their forested land.

Topics will include:

- Forest inventory and products
- Management goals and techniques
- Invasive species I.D. and management
- Portable sawmill demonstration



Lunch is provided by:
The Great Boars of Fire

This seminar is free and open to the public however, space is limited to the first 50 registrants. Please register by calling the Giant City State Park Visitor's Center at 618-457-4836.

We'll see you at the White Barn located at the Trail of Tears State Forest!



Schedule

- 8:45-9:15-Registration
- 9:15-9:30-Stephanie Brown,
Executive Director, Illinois
Forestry Association
- 9:30-10:00- Ben Snyder, District
Forester, IDNR Forest Resources
- 10:00-10:45- Ryan Pankau,
Conservation Forester with
USDA-NRCS
- 11:00-11:45- Karla Gage, PhD,
River To River Cooperative Weed
Management Area Coordinator
- 11:45-12:15-Calvin Beckmann,
Site Superintendent, IDNR
- 12:15-12:45- Lunch
- 12:45-2:45- Michael Nosovitsky,
owner of Natures Creations
- 1:00-3:00- Tour of the
demonstration sites within the
state forest.



White Barn at Trail of Tears State Forest

The Good, the Bad, & the Lovely: Horticulture Webinars



April 7 from 6:30 to 8:00 PM

Invasive Species of Concern

Horticulture Educators Kari Houle and Andrew Holsinger will focus on basic identification of common invasive species as well as species of concern in Illinois and the impacts of these species on the environment and natural habitats.

Control Strategies

After you learn to identify invasive plant species the next step is control. The strategies for eliminating invasive plants depend upon the plant itself. Horticulture Educators Rhonda Ferree and Chris Enroth will address control recommendations of common invasive plants.

April 21 from 6:30 to 8:00 PM

Landscape Alternatives

Your backyard has been overtaken by burning bush, but you don't remember planting burning bush? Invasive plants are those that "escape" from other landscapes. Horticulture educators Jennifer Fishburn and Martha Smith will consider alternatives to landscape plants that are being "watched" as becoming problematic and invasive.

Pollinator Plants

Many Illinois gardeners wish to contribute to the biodiversity of their own gardens by planting flowers that lure and contribute to the survival of pollinators. Horticulture Educators Kelly Allsup and Ken Johnson will discuss how gardeners can attract different types of pollinators by using native plants.

Register today at <http://web.extension.illinois.edu/abhps/>

If you need reasonable accommodations to attend this program, please contact your local Extension office.
University of Illinois | U.S. Department of Agriculture | Local Extension Councils Cooperating
University of Illinois Extension provides equal opportunities in programs and employment.

Resources

New Invasive Plant Guide Available

The River to River Cooperative Weed Management Area has recently published the 'Management of Invasive Plants of Southern Illinois' guide. This 20 page booklet gives details different control techniques and gives specific management recommendations for 27 invasive plants species present in southern Illinois. A pdf of the guide can be found at http://www.rtrcwma.org/Management_SILinvasiveplants.pdf

Invasive Plant Conference Presentations Available

The Midwest Invasive Plant Network has announce that many of the presentations given at last year's Upper Midwest Invasive Species Conference are available to view on their website. This year's conference included over 200 presentations that highlighted invasive plant, animal, insect, and pathogen species research and work across our region. See MIPN's Proceedings and Presentations webpage for links to presentation slides that may interest you. For more information, visit www.mipn.org.

Upcoming Events

Tri-State Forest Stewardship Conference

The 21st annual Tri-State Forest Stewardship Conference will be held Saturday, March 14, 2015, at Sinsinawa Mound Center, Sinsinawa, WI. Contact Jay Hayek at (217) 244-0534 or via email at jhayek@illinois.edu.



Participants will receive a copy at the symposium

2015 Illinois Indigenous Plants Symposium

Discover southern Illinois Natural Areas and their Rare Species. The 2015 Illinois Indigenous Plants Symposium will kick-off with a guided hike at La Rue Pine Hill on Friday March 20, and end on Sunday with an additional guided hike along Trillium trail at Giant City Park. Mr. John Schwegman former state biologist, who retired from a career in Nature Conservation at the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, will deliver the keynote address Notable Plants of Some Southern Illinois Natural Areas. Mr. Schwegman's work included the establishment of the Natural Areas Program for the Illinois Department of Conservation. This year, attendees will have the opportunity to discover those special regions located in southern Illinois and the work being done to preserve them.



The Illinois Indigenous Plants Symposium will take place March 20 - 22, 2015 at John A. Logan College in Carterville, IL. Registration is \$25.00 per person to the public, \$15.00 per person for those in the Master Naturalist or Master Gardener programs.

Forestry Field Day - 9am-3pm - April 17 at Trail of Tears State Forest near Jonesboro. Lunch provided.Space is limited. To register, call the Giant City State Park Visitor Center at 618/457-4836.

IFA/Tree Farm Annual Meeting and Field Day - September 25-26, 2015, near Effingham.



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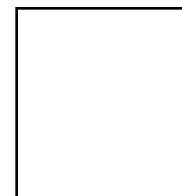
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ALPHABET SOUP - A SAMPLING OF COMMON ACRONYMS USED IN FORESTRY AND CONSERVATION ...

AFF	American Forest Foundation	IFDC	Illinois Forestry Development Council
AISWCD	Ass'n of IL Soil & Water Conservation Districts	IGA	Illinois General Assembly
APHIS	Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service	INHS	Illinois Natural History Survey
ATFS	American Tree Farm System	INPS	Illinois Native Plant Society
CREP	Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program	ISAM	Invasive Species Awareness Month (May in IL)
CRP	Conservation Reserve Program	IWAP	Illinois Wildlife Action Plan
CWMA	Cooperative Weed Management Area	IWC	Illinois Walnut Council
DBH	Diameter at Breast Height	NIFA	Northwest Illinois Forestry Association
EAB	Emerald Ash Borer	NRCS	USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
EQIP	Environmental Quality Incentives Program	PLT	Project Learning Tree
EWRP	Emergency Wetland Reserve Program	RC&D	Resource Conservation & Development (Area)
FDA	(Illinois) Forestry Development Act	RCPP	Regional Conservation Partnership Program
FSA	USDA Farm Services Agency	RD	USDA Rural Development
FSI	Forest Stand Improvement	SIPBA	Southern Illinois Prescribed Burn Association
IAA	Illinois Arborists Association	SWCD	Soil & Water Conservation District
IDNR	Illinois Department of Natural Resources	TSI	Timber Stand Improvement
IDOA	Illinois Department of Agriculture	USDA	US Department of Agriculture
IFA	Illinois Forestry Association	USFS	US Forest Service
IFAP	Illinois Forest Action Plan	USFWS	US Fish and Wildlife Service
IFDA	Illinois Forestry Development Act	WRP	Wetland Reserve Program