



The Voice for Illinois Forests

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

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Message from the President

By John Edgington



The seasons change, time marches on, and suddenly we are at the beginning of another term of leadership in the Illinois Forestry Association. I'm honored to step up as President for the coming year, but don't mind

saying that it's a little intimidating. Mike McMahan has left some big shoes to fill, having done an outstanding job in the lead role for the past two years.

For the second year in a row, October has been proclaimed Oak Awareness Month in Illinois. This is also the second year we have offered a special "OAKtober" edition of our quarterly newsletter, normally reserved for members of the IFA. What we've done is repurpose the Fall Issue. Featured articles that were shared with our members last month are included, along with some new content to keep it fresh and relevant to everyone who might identify with our charitable mission - *to act on issues that impact rural and urban forests, and to promote forestry in Illinois.*

One of the most pressing issues threatening healthy and productive forests in Illinois is the absence or suppression of oak trees in the understory. On-the-ground solutions to this complex dilemma often include some combination of invasive species control, prescribed burning, and the harvest and/or thinning of trees - in other words, professionally-guided management. Related to that are issues of policy - adequate staffing and funding to support the management efforts of private landowners, who control most of the forests in Illinois.

If concerns about healthy working forests resonate with you, consider throwing some support our way. We promote forest management, help our members learn about the trees and forests they own, advocate for the resources and policies needed to help our forests thrive, and work to help the public and our policy-makers understand the many virtues that well-managed forests and professional technical assistance bring to Illinois. The more members we have, the stronger our voice - and impact.

If you're already a member - thanks for supporting our worthy cause. If you are not already a member, perhaps you will consider joining us. There is a membership form on the last page, or you can join online at <http://ilforestry.org/join>.

I'm proud of how far we've come, and encouraged by the signs of progress in terms of new partnerships, a growing membership, and a governing board that is getting stronger with each passing year. It's not all wine and roses. We are facing significant challenges, but working together there is no limit to what our association can accomplish.

John Edgington

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Our Mission

The mission of the Illinois Forestry Association is to act on issues that impact rural and community forests and to promote forestry in Illinois.

Our Vision

The vision of the Illinois Forestry Association is to be a highly effective, "go to" community of well-informed property owners who are managing their trees and forests and are influential with their peers and government.

Five Goals

Promote forest management and help landowners manage forests

Educate members and the general public

Policy advocacy for IL forests

Understand/engage members and increase membership

Efficient and Effective IFA Governance

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11th Annual Meeting

"Restoring Illinois Oak Forests" Conference Highlight Reel, Part 1

2016 Fall Meeting
ILLINOIS



Sponsored by...



More to follow in the Winter Issue!



Online and In-Person Classes in Natural Areas Restoration from The Morton Arboretum

by Megan Dunning

The Morton Arboretum is rolling out a newly updated curriculum for volunteers and landowners who manage natural areas. Since 2008, the Arboretum has offered classes in ecological restoration through the Woodland Stewardship Program. Volunteers and landowners interested in woodland, wetland, and prairie conservation have been coming to the Arboretum to learn about restoration ecology, plant identification, invasive species management, land use history and site planning, managing workdays, and more. Thanks to funding from the Tellabs foundation, the Arboretum is currently taking that curriculum and updating it as a blended program, where classes can take place both in-person and online.

The Morton Arboretum's Woodland Stewardship Program trains professionals, volunteers, and interested citizens to manage and restore natural areas including woodlands, prairies, wetlands, and other habitats of the Chicago region. Through classroom study, online interaction, and field experience at the Arboretum, the program provides the essential knowledge and practical experience necessary to be a thoughtful forest

caretaker, as a landowner, professional, or as a volunteer. The program is open to anyone involved or interested in the stewardship of our natural heritage, regardless of prior experience.

The soft launch of online classes began in spring 2016, with classes in basic plant ID, ecological restoration, woodland wildflower identification and invasive species management including online components. This fall, the Arboretum

is rolling out a wider variety of offerings, including classes on woodland tree identification, restoration and wildlife, fire ecology, and tool management, in addition to the classes repeated from spring and summer. The Arboretum has also partnered with Chicago Wilderness to be the host for Chicago Wilderness Prescription Burn Crew Training.

A new class on Nov. 8, Tools for Management, will introduce the tricks of the trade - explaining how hand tools and other equipment can be used to heal the natural landscape by integrating native plants for pollinator and wildlife habitat in adaptive management of natural areas.

<http://www.mortonarb.org/courses/tools-management-online-and-person>

And, don't miss the chance to join Brad Semel, Heritage biologist for the IDNR, for Wildlife and Restoration Sat. November 12 at The Morton Arboretum! As a teacher and researcher, he has contributed to the knowledge of Sand Hill Crane ecology and many other projects in partnership with the Illinois Nature Preserve Commission, where wildlife habitat structure has been restored on hundreds of acres in Northern Illinois.

<http://www.mortonarb.org/courses/restoration-and-wildlife>

For more information, contact Will Overbeck, Woodland Stewardship Coordinator at The Morton Arboretum. Phone 630-725-2116 or 859-396-2319 (cell) or email woverbeck@mortonarb.org.



State Forester Update

by Tom Wilson



The Mason State Nursery is still open, and we are hopeful it will remain so, though budgets for IDNR and the Forestry Division remain an issue through this December. At some point soon DNR leadership expects more fiscal information for the remainder of FY2017. Our nursery is poised and proactive to conservation needs and market demands as well as emerging markets for urban trees and pollinator habitat.

The Illinois Wildland Fire Crew (pictured below) was dispatched August 1st for seventeen days and just returned safely from USDA Forest Service coordinated fire-fighting efforts in the Northern Rocky Mountains. The highly trained individuals on this dispatch included five Division foresters, other DNR staff and others. The Illinois crew remains properly staffed and ready for service when requested for dispatch all year each year.

Conservation World (CW) was open at this year's recent Illinois State Fair. Forestry manned a tent full of forestry exhibits and information for adults while making games and fun for kids! (Picture below) Thousands of people come through CW on the fairgrounds where each division of the IDNR is represented. Foresters were on hand daily to answer

always interesting questions from the public and landowners. Please drop in our tent and see us next August.

Stewardship of the State's forest resources from our most rural areas to our biggest cities, and the interfaces where they meet, remain our highest priority. Though programs like wood utilization, forest health, fire and others help facilitate healthy and manageable forests; it is our Forest Stewardship program, where forestry management plans for Illinois forestland owners are developed and implemented, and our Urban Forestry Program, where Illinois cities participate to monitor and manage their street trees, park trees and forests, which insure and expand the presence and benefits of forests.

Illinois forests continue to produce much more wood than is ever harvested. Wood utilization, markets, mills and timber buyers do remain an important driver of forest stewardship. Without markets for the wood, logs and products Illinois forests produce; foresters and others have very limited options for managing forests. Though huge issues such as high business taxes and workers compensation insurance rates hamper mill and factory investments here; the Forestry Division remains committed to increasing and expanding the markets for, and utilization of, Illinois forest products. Wood utilization expands our economy and favors forestland retention.

The Illinois Division of Forest Resources appreciates the cooperation and support of all individuals and organizations who value our mission and efforts statewide.



Legislative/Policy Report

by Stephanie Brown

Passage of the "stop gap" budget on the last day of FY16 provided relief to some, but fell far short of restoring confidence among the agencies and organizations dependent on state funding.

In forestry, we had some good news. The Forestry Development Act (FDA) Fund remained intact - the IFA was among several groups writing letters to ask that the fund not be swept. The Forestry Development Council was retroactively restored, but little money had been committed or spent, leaving \$108,000 in FY16 funds on the table that would have benefitted Illinois Forestry if a state budget had been in place.

For Soil & Water Conservation Districts that were able to keep staff on board, the stop gap reimbursement was a welcome relief. However, the proportion of Operating Expenses to the Cost-Share Funds they also administer was changed to reduce the support to districts for overhead - an already lean item for these local government operations. Work is still needed to help the Governor's staff and state legislators appreciate the value of what SWCD programs and staff bring to the State of Illinois at the local level.

The IFA recently joined the Illinois Environmental Council as a non-voting affiliate member. That means we are plugged into a coalition of organizations that regularly follows, shares, and advocates for legislation - some of which impacts Illinois forests. Working together, we are a stronger voice in favor of SWCDs and the state nurseries, and this will also help us more closely monitor bills like the Wrongful Tree Cutting Act (WTCA) amendment. It will most likely be next spring before the WTCA amendment is reintroduced.



Oak Forest Management: Is it for the birds?

by Jeff Hoover, Illinois Natural History Survey

The Forests and Woodlands Campaign (Forest Campaign hereafter) is one of the important campaigns outlined in the Illinois Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Plan and Strategy (wildlife action plan). There are many current conservation issues involving Illinois' wooded habitats including the alteration or loss of natural disturbance processes, changing composition of forested habitats away from oak-hickory dominance to maple dominance, and general decline in forest quality caused by increasing numbers of invasive exotic plant species. Since 2011, the Forest Campaign has been monitoring the effects of forest management activities on Illinois' wildlife, to document whether or not forest management activities are successfully promoting populations of focal wildlife species and meeting the goals of the wildlife action plan. A main focus of the Forest Campaign has been to measure the response of forest-dependent songbirds to various forest management tools that include, but are not limited to, thinning, fire, re-forestation, and the removal of invasive exotic plant species.

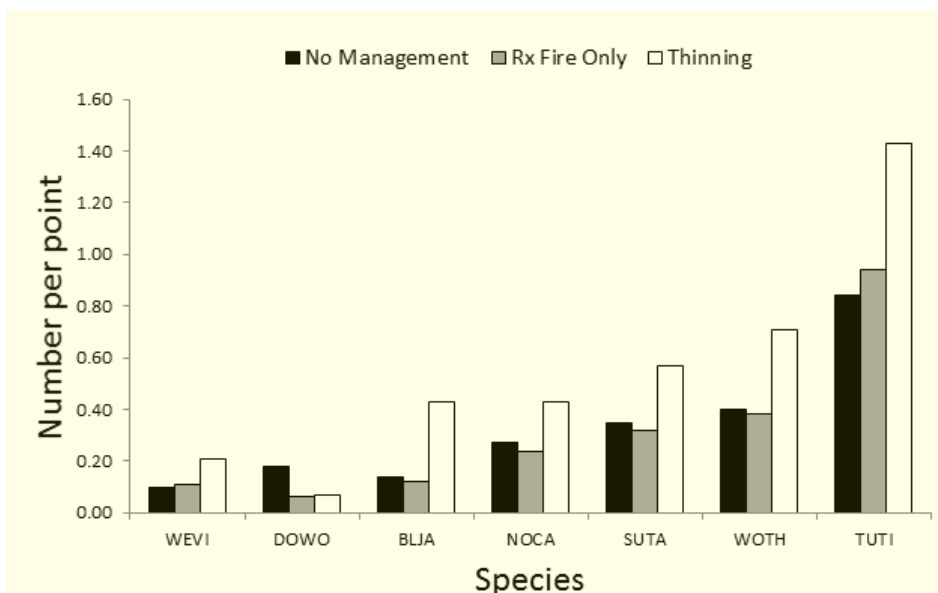


Wood thrush. Photo credit: Michael Jeffords and Susan Post

Breeding forest songbirds in Illinois include more than 100 different species that fall into various guilds (e.g. nesting on the ground, in shrubs, sub-canopy, or canopy; foraging in leaf litter, on bark, on shrub or tree foliage; nesting on or near the ground, in shrubs, or in

the canopy; etc.), making them highly responsive to changes in forest structure and composition and, therefore, a great group to monitor in association with various forest management practices. Over 20 of these species are on the list of Species in Greatest Need of Conservation (SGNC) for Illinois.

Several attributes of forest songbirds make them particularly well suited for studying responses to forest management. One is that most if not all of these species are territorial during the breeding season and their territory sizes are typically between 1-3 acres in size. Therefore, local forest management activities done at scales of 1, 5, 10, 50, or 100 acres are all highly relevant to these birds that occupy a relatively small area throughout the breeding season. Another attribute of songbirds is that several species are known to return the next breeding season to places where they reproduced successfully, and to move away from those areas where they failed to reproduce. This behavior leads to an increase in densities in the "better" habitats and a decrease in densities in the "poorer" habitats. In this regard, relative densities are a good predictor of habitat quality with densities being

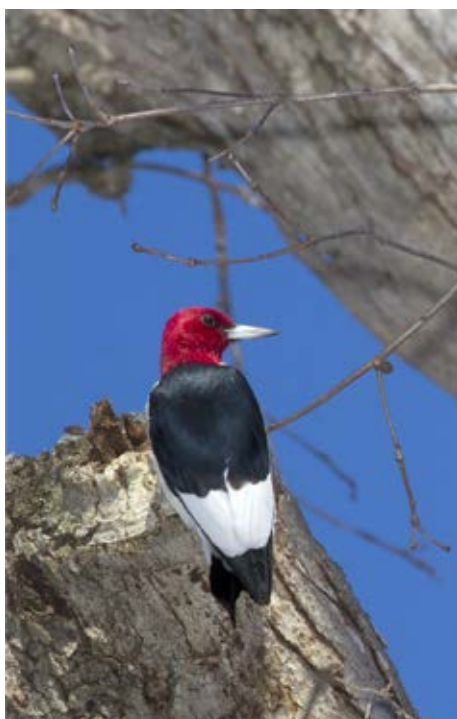


Relative abundance of various bird species at Trail of Tears State Forest. Positive response to forest management is indicated for a species when abundance is higher in one or both treatment categories compared to no management category. Species codes are: WEVI white-eyed vireo; DOWO downy woodpecker; BLJA blue jay; NOCA northern cardinal; SUTA summer tanager; WOTH wood thrush; TUTI tufted titmouse.

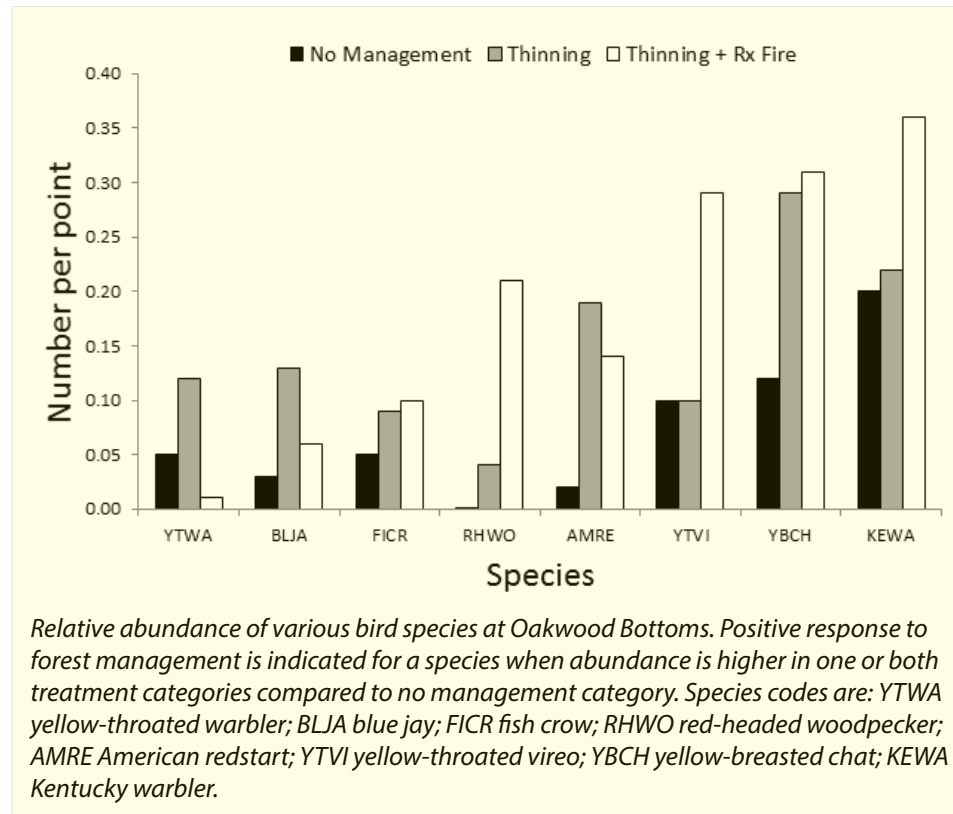
highest in the best habitats. These two attributes in combination should make the songbirds highly responsive to the various types of forest management being done, and changes in their densities tell us whether the forest management is having a positive, negative, or neutral effect on their local populations.

Much of what we know about habitat requirements and habitat use in songbirds comes from observational studies documenting attributes of the forest where songbirds set up their territories. This has led to recommendations to manage forests for songbirds by achieving a particular tree species composition or vegetation structure and complexity, but the actual responses of the songbirds to the management have usually not been measured.

Presently we are collecting data on songbirds breeding in the forests at various sites around Illinois including Oakwood Bottoms Greentree Reservoir, Trail of Tears and Hidden Springs State Forests, Siloam Springs and Stephen A. Forbes State Parks, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' land at Lake Shelbyville. All of these areas have various forest units that are being



Red-headed woodpecker. Photo credit: Michael Jeffords and Susan Post



actively managed as well as forests that are not being managed. This allows us to make comparisons and determine what effects the management is having on different species of songbirds. Forest management in these units is typically some type of mechanical thinning of trees, prescribed fire, or both. At each study site we visit bird survey points located in each category of forest management and also at locations in non-managed forests. Over the course of a breeding season our bird surveys typically record from 45-75 breeding songbird species per study site. We compare their relative abundances between the managed and non-managed forest categories to determine if the management is having a positive, neutral, or negative effect on each species and then draw general conclusions about the effects of the forest management on breeding forest songbirds.

Results from multiple study sites support the conclusion that, in general, the types of forest management being used to improve forest "health" in Illinois are also having mostly positive or neutral effects on breeding forest songbirds. For example, at Oakwood Bottoms the

relative abundance of 42% of songbird species responded positively, 44% neutrally, and 14% negatively to forest management. At Trail of Tears 24% of songbird species responded positively, 59% neutrally, and 17% negatively to forest management. At Lake Shelbyville 46% of songbird species responded positively, 44% neutrally, and 10% negatively to forest management. At Forbes 29% of songbird species responded positively, 58% neutrally, and 13% negatively to forest management. Some examples of species on Illinois' SGNC list that respond favorably to thinning include the red-headed woodpecker, yellow-breasted chat, Kentucky warbler and wood thrush. It should be pointed out that so far these are short-term (e.g. 1-5 years after management has occurred) responses of songbirds to forest management. As we continue to collect more years of data it is likely that some of the species initially responding negatively to forest management could ultimately respond neutrally or positively as more time passes after management. This is particularly true regarding prescribed fire for species like ovenbirds and worm-eating warblers that nest near

Continued on Page 8 -

the ground and avoid forests the first summer after a prescribed fire but move back into those same forests in subsequent summers.

A concern for breeding forest songbirds when thinning is used to open up the forest canopy is the potential for increased brood parasitism of songbird nests by Brown-headed Cowbirds. Female cowbirds may cue in on or use more heavily areas of the forest where the canopy has been opened up. The more-open overstory may make it easier for female cowbirds to view the nest building and mating activities of potential hosts while the cowbirds are searching for nests to parasitize. This could lead to higher rates of cowbird parasitism in forests that are thinned than those not thinned. Our results suggest that this is not the case and cowbird detections were not higher in any particular management category compared to non-managed forests. Therefore, it is likely that the current forest management practices will not increase cowbird parasitism.

This data on songbird responses to different types of forest management (e.g. prescribed fire, thinning, re-forestation, etc.) being collected as part of the Forest Campaign will add valuable and much needed information to the conservation of forest songbirds. In addition, in the next few years we hope to determine which species of songbirds respond positively to forest management in parallel with positive responses of wild turkeys to the same management. In this way, there may be several species of breeding forest songbirds that could serve as indicators of higher and lower quality forest habitat for wild turkeys. Our goal is to use these results to contribute substantially to the growing body of research associated with the effects of forest management on populations of wildlife, and to use the data collected in Illinois to reinforce existing or establish new approaches to forest management that are applicable to forests throughout Illinois and other states in the Midwest.

Dr. Jeffrey P. Hoover is an Avian Ecologist with the Illinois Natural History Survey at the Prairie Research Institute, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

LESSONS LEARNED: Revisiting oak plantations 15 years after planting

by Eric Holzmeuller and Josh Nickelson, SIU Department of Forestry



Heavy autumn olive cover in failed oak planting at Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge

Conversion of agricultural land to oak forest, oftentimes through the Conservation Reserve Program, has resulted in the addition of thousands of acres of hardwood plantations in Illinois over the past few decades. However, these plantings can vary widely as there are multiple factors that can influence the success, e.g. initial planting stock, herbivory, planting technique, etc. More recently there is concern that invasive, exotic plant species, such as autumn olive, stifle long term growth and development of forest plantations.

In order to investigate some of the factors of long-term plantation success, we utilized a series of oak plantations that were established on the Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge in the late 1990s. Plantations were planted with oak seedlings on an 8' x 12' spacing and ranged in age from 15-18 years at the time of our study. Pre-planting land use included ground that was previously in clover, soybeans, woody brush, or herbaceous weeds. Woody brush sites were dominated with early successional, native volunteer hardwood tree species

and autumn olive. Herbaceous weed sites were dominated by fescue and goldenrod. Prior to planting, the woody brush and herbaceous weed sites were mowed and/or treated with herbicides. No follow up treatments were implemented following planting.

Across all sites, there were many native hardwood tree species (sycamore, ash, poplar, elm, etc.) that naturally established via windblown seed following the planting of the oak seedlings. These native volunteers are common in tree plantings in Illinois and historically were thought to be the primary competition/threat for more desirable planted oak seedlings. However, we observed a negative relationship between tree density and invasive cover (as tree density increased, invasive cover decreased). When we looked closer at the influence of pre-planting land cover we saw a higher incidence of successful stocking on soybean and clover sites (80% stocking success) compared to sites that had woody brush or herbaceous weeds prior to planting (20% stocking success).

Overall, our results suggest that there is a potentially beneficial role of volunteer native trees as suppressors of invasive

species that can compete with planted oak seedlings as stand development progresses. In addition, sites should be planted as soon as possible following agricultural abandonment in order to prevent invasive plant species, such as autumn olive, from becoming established. If autumn olive becomes established on a site it may overtop and outcompete all other vegetation, including trees. We surveyed several plantations where autumn olive cover was nearly 100% and tree density (both oak and other hardwood species) was close to zero. In today's environment, successful forest plantation establishment requires continued effort, nullifying the convention of planting followed by passive management. Sites should be monitored to identify any potential threats to the long-term success of established goals and objective and post planting treatments, such as herbicides or crop tree release, may be needed to achieve desired levels of favored species.

Dr. Eric Holzmeuller is a Professor in the Forestry Department at Southern Illinois University - Carbondale. Josh Nickelson is a former SIU Graduate Research Assistant, now Forester Specialist with Indiana Department of Natural Resources.



Successful 15 year-old planting at Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge

New Publications...

The "[Recommended Silviculture and Management Practices for Illinois Hardwood Forest Types](#)" manual was recently updated by Eric Holzmueller, John Groninger, and Jesse Riechman at Southern Illinois University. The manual is intended to serve as a guide for consulting foresters and agency professionals assisting Illinois private forest landowners committed to sustainable timber production on their property. Funding for the manual was awarded by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources - Division of Forest Resources, with additional assistance and comments from the Illinois Forestry Development Council.

Meanwhile, University of Illinois Extension Forestry just released the [2016 Illinois Directory of Professional Consulting Foresters](#), along with a brand new publication: [2016 Forestry Contractors List](#), which provides landowners with contact information for contractors that have the capability to do the practices recommended within forest management plans. Excellent resources!



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Prescribed Burn Association and Cooperative Weed Management Area Join Forces

by Kevin Rohling and Jesse Riechman



In the fall of 2013, the River to River Cooperative Weed Management Area (RTR-CWMA) and the organization then known as the Southeastern Illinois Prescribed Burn Association (SIPBA) (soon to be known as the Southern Illinois Prescribed Burn Association) met with conservation partners from southernmost Illinois to brainstorm project ideas for an upcoming grant proposal to the US Forest Service. The group had been discussing their options, and an epiphany of sorts had been arrived at. Two pillars of the regional conservation community, the RTR-CWMA and SIPBA had been working in much the same area on restoring the natural communities of the southernmost Illinois region, but had not coordinated their efforts. What could be accomplished if these two organizations were to join forces, so to speak, and put their combined resources to task on two of our most pressing conservation needs, invasive species management, and prescribed burning? The answer, we would come to find out, would be significant impacts on both the human and natural communities of the region.

One part of the proposal would expand SIPBA, from focusing on the southeastern portion of the region, expanding to cover the same area already served by the RTR-CWMA, the southernmost 11 counties of Illinois (cleverly avoiding a change in the SIPBA acronym, by changing Southeastern to Southern, to accurately describe the



new coverage area). By expanding the area served by SIPBA to mirror the area covered by the RTR-CWMA, the stage was set for collaboration.

Before getting into the collaboration, it will be best to describe the two organizations, and their roles in the regional community. First, the RTR-CWMA was founded in 2006, and is a partnership of 13 federal and state agencies, organizations, and universities. The area covered by the RTR-CWMA includes the southernmost 11 counties in Illinois and is a region rich in natural resources and public and private natural areas. The RTR-CWMA is an arm of the non-profit Shawnee Resource Conservation and Development Area (SRCD) and has a Memorandum of Understanding with the 13 main partners to work cooperatively to address invasive species issues across the region. This partnership has served the area well over the last 10 years, with numerous projects ranging from support of the Southern Illinois Invasive Species Strike Team, contracting with agencies and contractors on invasive species control on both public and private lands, advising landowners and land managers on invasive species control, prevention efforts, early detection and rapid response to new invaders, and countless educational events, workshops, and volunteer days. The work of the RTR-CWMA is grant-funded, and has included funding from a variety of sources over the years, especially the US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and IDNR. This track-record has been matched in successes only by the SIPBA.

The Southern Illinois Prescribed Burn Association was incorporated as a



nonprofit in 2006 as a partnership between private landowners, government agencies, and conservation groups who share the goal of using prescribed fire to restore native plant and wildlife habitat within the southernmost 11 counties of Illinois. Grant funding support has come from Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Forest Service, and National Wild Turkey Federation, with support from the Fish and Wildlife Service, Shawnee Resource and Conservation and Development Area, and University of Illinois Extension. SIPBA was designed to overcome liability concerns and provides training and equipment to crews of volunteers who assist their neighbors with prescribed burns on private land. SIPBA now averages over 1500 acres of prescribed burning each year and has successfully partnered with state and federal agencies to burn across private land boundaries, bringing a landscape perspective to local burn activities.

In addition to a shift in regional participation for SIPBA, the RTR-CWMA also shifted, from more public projects, working with state and federal conservation organizations to combat invasive species across political and property boundaries, to serving more private landowners. Although the RTR-CWMA had worked with private landowners in the past, it had been a relatively minor part of the organization's role in conservation across the region. Now, with this new partnership, the CWMA would complement the work of SIPBA on private lands throughout the region.

As most of us know, invasive species are a major problem for both natural areas managers, and private landowners alike. Invasive plants can reduce productivity of timber stands, prevent regeneration of trees and other native plants, lead

Continued on the next page...

to soil erosion, lead to changed soil chemistry, pollute water, and much more. In addition, the lack of fire in large part over the last century or so, has altered forest conditions, leading to shifts in forest communities. Both prescribed fire and invasive species control are now necessary to manage forests for the greatest native species diversity and forest health, but landowners may not know where to start.

That's where the partnership steps in. Under this project, the RTR-CWMA and SIPBA joined forces to create, train, and guide the Forest Restoration Support Team (FRST). The FRST is a joint program of the CWMA and SIPBA. The RTR-CWMA developed and delivered a series of trainings for those participating in FRST. The "Core" training is mandatory for those wanting to participate in the program and can include anyone from the public, as well as other groups such as the Master Naturalists, who want to help out. The "Core" training includes courses in invasive species identification, ecology, and control as well as a field portion to demonstrate tool use. For those wanting to learn more, there are additional FRST coursework, including Integrated Pest Management, where volunteers learn how to minimize negative impacts on the environment while managing for invasive plants. Another FRST course developed with the support of UI Extension Forestry was Forest Stand Improvement, a short-course on how foresters survey and determine the optimal tree densities



for forest production and health. These courses are offered multiple times throughout the year.

The work of FRST is accomplished on SIPBA members' lands, with the idea that those that are members in the SIPBA will have a strong land ethic and management history and will also continue to manage their land appropriately in the future to assure the work of the FRST is not lost in subsequent years. In addition, we have brought homeowner's associations into the program to promote contiguous treatment areas. Many of these lands also abut natural areas, including Crab Orchard National Wildlife Refuge and Shawnee National Forest, leading to even larger blocks of managed forest.

Over the first two years, the joint project has achieved significant outcomes, and greater successes are assured in the future.

Just a few short years ago SIPBA was striving to reach an annual average of 1000 acres of prescribed burning, a number that seemed challenging, but within reach. Since our expansion in 2014 SIPBA has grown from just over 100 to more than 160 members representing nearly all 11 southern Illinois counties, and these volunteers have worked hard each burn season to bring our annual average to over 1500 acres of habitat restored by fire. Perhaps even more valuable are the members themselves, who attend trainings, workshops, and workdays on each other's land. These are the stewards who will carry on the management of southern Illinois and help to communicate its importance to their friends, family, and neighbors. In this way, SIPBA measures success not just by acres treated, but by landowners involved. It is this purposeful involvement that the SIPBA/CWMA had in mind when they recently approached several homeowners' associations in the region. To date, Union Hill Homeowners Association, Midland Hills Country Club, and Tacoma Lake Subdivision have joined the effort to practice prescribed fire and invasive species management. A multitude of training workshops and workdays have already benefitted these communities and momentum is growing.

Since the summer of 2014, RTR-CWMA held over 30 training events with more than 500 participants covering invasive species identification and ecology, herbicide safety, control methods, integrated pest management, and much more for participants in the FRST. We also organized over 40 work

Continued - bottom of the next page...



Starting from Scratch

Have you got a plan?

by David Gillespie, IFA Secretary

Before any undertaking, a plan must be developed to guide in carrying out that endeavor. This is especially true for the management of forest land. So many factors come into play that can affect a person's goals for their forest.

Forest management plans describe the current forest conditions, such as the tree species present, soil types and other information that can affect the management of the forest. The plan is based on the objectives of the forest landowner, and includes strategies to implement management activities over the next 10 years or so. It will guide you from the current forest conditions toward a healthier and better forest in the future.

Other factors that should be noted in a forest management plan are the health of the forest, threatened or endangered species present, fire and grazing, and invasive species present. Specific management activities might be needed to address all factors that help or hinder the forest from achieving its potential.

The key to the development of a sound management plan is to first select a professional forester who can meet with you to evaluate your land and learn more about your objectives. I have heard it said a number of times by some forest landowners that they can develop their own forest management plan. With all due respect, no they can't. And why should they when there are many qualified public and consulting foresters in Illinois. A person would not develop a plan for their personal health without the advice of a doctor – the same applies with the health of Illinois' forests. Plus, to qualify for any cost share assistance and tax incentives, a forest management plan must be developed and approved by the local district forester with the IDNR.

So, if you don't yet have a plan to meet your objectives for your forest land, get started. Contact your local IDNR district forester, your local NRCS office, or the IFA. All of these agencies can help you find a forester in your area who can work with you to develop your forest management plan.

Tune in next time for more advice about "Starting from Scratch."

Help is Available

IDNR District Foresters

Click [HERE](#) for the latest map that provides contact info for the District Forester serving your county. If you don't have access to a computer, call 217/785-8264 to get it by mail.

Illinois Consulting Foresters

Click [HERE](#) for the latest directory prepared by U of I Extension Forestry, or visit the Illinois Consulting Foresters Association [website](#) for an interactive map to find a forester near you.

Illinois Forestry Association

Need a quick and handy way to find a forester any time of the year? Check the home page of our website: <http://ilforestry.org> under *Find a Forester*.

USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

A great general resource for one-on-one assistance with conservation planning is found at your local USDA Service Center. Click [HERE](#) for an interactive map, or find your local office in the phone book.

Joining Forces - Continued -

days, treating over 300 acres of invasive species on priority private lands with over 300 participants. Participation in the FRST continues to climb and is complemented by additional projects of the RTR-CWMA and SIPBA.

It is fitting, perhaps, that these two organizations were both founded 10 years ago, and will soon be celebrating that milestone together. Over the years, many thousands of acres have been impacted by the work of these two groups, and working together, the impact will be broader and more lasting.

Kevin Rohling is Coordinator, River to River Cooperative Weed Management Area, and Jesse Riechman is Coordinator for the Southern Illinois Prescribed Burn Association.



TSI Primer: How timber stand improvement can be a part of your forest management activities

by Chris Evans, Extension Forester, University of Illinois

More and more landowners realize the benefits to managing their forests beyond simply occasionally cutting the larger timber. Sound forest management can not only help increase the quality, value, and amount of the timber that can be removed but also shorten the time between harvests and improve the health of the forested ecosystem to the benefit of the native plant community and wildlife.

Timber Stand Improvement practices, often shortened to simply TSI, are a critical part of forest management that is often overlooked by landowners. TSI practices are a set of actions taken to improve the growth of desirable trees. These actions are non-commercial thinnings, meaning that the material removed has no timber value, either from lack of quality, wrong species, or, more commonly, lack of adequate size. You may hear foresters refer to TSI practices as 'intermediate stand treatments,' meaning that they happen between planting/establishment and harvest.

TSI practices should follow a set of specific prescriptions that were developed based upon the individual stand characteristics and the landowner's objectives. Often TSI is combined with prescribed fire and invasive species control.

The premise behind TSI is simply to remove undesirable trees to make more room for the desirable species to grow. This release from competition can increase their growth rates, create the right conditions for seedlings to establish, alter the species composition of the stand and improve habitat for wildlife.

An example of a common TSI practice for forests in Illinois is the removal of beech and maples that are occupying the midstory of an oak-hickory forest. These trees can cast heavy shade, limiting oak seedlings from establishing. Removing

the maples, through cutting or girdling, opens the midstory up and provides more light to developing seedlings. Another common practice is to 'release' desirable trees by removing other trees that are in direct competition with them. These release cuts allow the desirable trees to fill out their canopy and grow faster and can help push the stand composition to a higher percentage of desirable species.

TSI practices are also used in wildlife management. The increase in light condition that reaches the ground layer in a forest after TSI promotes the growth of understory plants, increase forage availability. As the canopy of released oaks and hickories develop, they increase nut production. Girdled trees create snags which are great habitat for a variety of wildlife.

Regardless of a landowner's reasons for managing their forest, TSI may be an important method to meet those objectives. Having a current Forest Management Plan and working with a district or consulting forester is a great way to determine what type of management is needed for your forest and if the time is right to implement TSI practices.



Shade tolerant species, like beech or maple, cast heavy shade that can restrict the growth of oak seedlings. In this picture, beech saplings are the dominate feature in the midstory.



Small diameter wood cut during a TSI can either be left standing to create snags, dropped on the ground and left in place, or utilized for firewood or log-grown mushroom cultivation.



Walnuts & Acorns

by Lee M. Rife

I recently learned an important lesson in tree planting. What I am about to say might sound like “old stuff” to many of you, but still. It never hurts to be reminded.

I was visiting with my next-door neighbor and she asked about the soft maple tree in my front yard. I was aware of smaller than usual leaves, but wondered just why she was concerned. She pointed to the top and asked if it had some sort of disease, or if it had been hit by lightning. I looked and saw that the top of the main stem was completely bare of any leaves for about the upper six feet or so. Let me say that this part of the tree is not visible from my front porch and unless I am looking upward at it when coming home from the east, I don't see the top of the tree. However, I did look and see the die back.

I will be the first to admit that I know next to nothing about tree disease, so I called a fellow IFA member and he came over to take a look. One of the first things that he pointed out was that the roots of the tree were girdling, indicating that the tree when planted some 40+ years ago was not planted deep enough to force the root structure out in a circular pattern. Instead they have wound around the stem (and like many soft maples and sugar maples, taken the path of least resistance and moved to the top of the ground) and are now slowly strangling the tree. In addition, those on top of the ground have suffered much injury from lawnmowers set too low by those of us who prefer a neat looking front yard rather than one which resembles a hayfield. The small leaves were apparently caused by a drought a few years ago. The combination seems to be creating a problem for the tree which will probably need to be removed in a few years.

What are the lessons learned here. First, when planting trees in a yard, make the hole plenty deep. It does not hurt to plant a tree three or four inches deeper than it was planted in the nursery. Also make sure that the new hole is sufficiently wide enough for the roots to spread out properly. The old adage of “for a five dollar tree, dig a ten dollar hole” applies. Second, when the dirt from planting settles, put additional dirt around the tree to assure that water is being directed away from the stem and toward the feeder roots. This applies to all trees, not just maples.

Many of you probably already know that, but sometimes we all need to be reminded. I know that I had forgotten some of that advice.

Follow this link to a great tree planting guide: <https://www.arborday.org/celebrate/tree-planting.cfm>, and don't forget to Just Say No to Mulch Volcanoes!

History of Conservation in Illinois

by Dave Gillespie, IFA Secretary

This account of the history of conservation in Illinois was written by Joseph P. Schavilje in 1941. This 17th installment begins where #16 ended, in Part II - History of Forest Conservation

In the bottomlands of the southern part of the State a belt of cypress and mixed hardwood extended down the lower Wabash and Mississippi valleys and along the Ohio. Extending along the flood plains of the larger streams was rich hardwood forest. Early records show that the Wabash and Ohio regions produced the finest hardwood trees found anywhere in the country. All flood plain forest was luxuriant with the predominant species varying some from north to south. The mixed hardwoods extended out along the lesser streams and here black walnut made its greatest

development. The upland forest varied considerably in different regions of the State. The best upland forests were in the Ozark region and on bluffs bordering the Wabash, Ohio, Illinois and Mississippi rivers. These were characterized by fine stands of oaks and hickories with a wide mixture of other hardwoods. In the poorly drained area of south-central Illinois the forest was generally poor. Post oak occurred in pure stands, while mixtures on better-drained soils were hickory and black oak. The remaining upland forest were largely mixtures of oaks with some hickories. Along the prairie the forests thinned out into grove-like conditions and pioneers recorded that these border forests were badly damaged by fires from the prairies.

(To be continued in the next issue)

Forest Management/ Invasive Species Control Workshop November 5th in Williamson County

Do you own forest land, but are not currently managing it? If you are interested in improving your property value, learn more at the upcoming Forest Management Workshop to be held on Saturday, November 5th at 10:00 a.m. The field tour will be held at the Crab Orchard Wildlife Refuge (Visitors Center) in Marion. Topics to be covered include Controlled Burn, Invasive Species Management, Propagation of Seeds, Thinning and Preparing for your Timber Harvest.

Call the Williamson County Soil and Water Conservation District at 618-993-5396, ext. 3, for more information. Lunch will be provided for those who register by November 3rd.



Healthy Forests along the Rural-Urban Interface

IFA to Offer an Encore Special Session at the Illinois Arborist Association Fall Conference

As part of our ongoing effort to strengthen partnerships, IFA will be participating in the Illinois Arborist Association's Annual Fall Conference, October 18-19, 2016, at the Holiday Inn Convention Center in Tinley Park. This will be our second appearance at the popular annual event. We'll have an exhibit booth and offer a special session from 1 to 3 p.m. on the 19th, focused on healthy forests along the rural-urban interface.

Participants will hear from two leading experts: University of Illinois Extension Forester Chris Evans, and Dr. Frederic Miller, Senior Research Scientist in Entomology at The Morton Arboretum. Chris will focus on the impact of invasive plants on forested ecosystems in urban and rural settings. Arborists, landscape designers, municipal foresters, and others working in the urban forest can influence the introduction and spread of invasive plants through choices in species selection and management efforts. Chris will discuss: 1) How invasive plants move between urban and rural forests; 2) How interactions, impacts, and management differ; and 3) Best management practices for minimizing the impact and spread of invasive plants, with a focus on those used as ornamentals.



Dr. Miller's presentation will look at the history of forest pest impacts in other states as a predictor for what we might expect to see in Illinois, with an emphasis on imminent threats and the implications for oak forests and their restoration. His presentation will cover how gypsy moth defoliation has affected oak forests, the effects Emerald Ash Borer (EAB) may have on ash regeneration, and the potential interaction with oak regeneration. He'll share some research work done in Ohio and Michigan regarding what happens to woodlands once the ash are gone. He'll also weave in a little about what the potential impact Thousand Cankers Disease could play with walnut mortality and how that would also affect oak forests. We'll cap it off with a short pep talk about OAKtober – Illinois' Oak Awareness Month – and how this special designation can be leveraged to benefit communities, organizations, and business interests.

For more information, visit the IAA website at:

<http://illinoisarborist.org/agenda>



Advanced Chainsaw Safety & Directional Felling (Levels 3-4)

University of Illinois Extension Forestry to offer training course at the Dixon Springs Ag Center

Participants in this two-day, hands-on chainsaw safety course taught by Extension Forester Jay Hayek will build upon all the topics covered in Levels 1-2, with greater emphasis placed on advanced techniques necessary to overcome difficult trees. Advanced topics include felling plans and safety assessments for difficult trees; wedge segments and wedging techniques; bucking and limbing techniques for logs and limbs under compression and tension; and handling spring poles.

Maximum enrollment is 10 people. The registration fee is \$40 per attendee, which includes lunch on both days. This course runs from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on October 14-15, 2016. Meet at the Dixon Springs Agricultural Center, 354 State Highway 145 N, Simpson, IL. Attendees must have previous chainsaw training experience equivalent to Levels 1-2.

To register: http://web.extension.illinois.edu/state/calendar_event.cfm?ID=72973.

For more information, including additional training courses planned for the future, contact Chris Evans at cwevans@illinois.edu (phone 618/695-3383) or Jay Hayek at jhayek@illinois.edu (phone 217/244-0534).

University of Illinois
College of ACES
- USDA - Local
Extension Councils
Cooperating - provide
equal opportunities
in programming and
employment. If you
need reasonable
accommodations to
participate in this program, contact the
Dixon Springs Ag Center at 618/695-3383.





Illinois Buffer Partnership plans pecan farm field day

Voss Pecans, owned by Ralph and Karen Voss, will host an Illinois Buffer Partnership field day starting at 3 p.m. Oct. 23. Advance registration for the free event is required by Oct. 21.

Voss Pecans in Carlyle illustrates how the buffer program can help landowners interested in improving water quality and sustaining a practical business.

The Vosses participated in the Illinois Buffer Partnership in 2007 after some of their pecan trees were lost during a wind storm. The family farms grain, livestock and pecans. Their 140 acres of pecan trees help clean the water in the nearby Kaskaskia River watershed and provide pecans to local customers and restaurants.

As the state's only established commercial pecan operation, the Vosses will discuss pecan production, demonstrate harvest and cleaning equipment and serve pecan treats. The farm is located at 10101 Slant Road, Carlyle. Learn more at <http://vosspecans.com>.

To register, visit <http://treesforever.org/pecan>. Direct questions to Barb Grabner-Kerns at 217-561-1062.



Ralph Voss checks his pecan crop

International Woodworking Fair's Urban Wood Seminar Report Slated for Oct. 11th Webcast



Highlights from the urban wood seminar at the International Woodworking Fair (IWF) will be presented during an Oct. 11 webcast by the Wood Education and Resource Center.

Rich Christianson, communications director of the Illinois Wood Utilization Team, will lead the discussion about "Urban Wood Utilization: Making Products & Profits from Landscape Trees."

The seminar, organized by the Full Circle Urban Forest Network, was held Aug. 26 at IWF 2016, North America's largest woodworking event.

The IWF presentation is one of nine updates on the docket for WERC's Fall Urban Wood Utilization Webcast, 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (CST) Tuesday, Oct. 11.

Here's the full schedule of the webcast.

1:00 p.m. Introduction and Overview
Ed Cesa, U.S. Forest Service, Wood Education and Resource Center

1:10 p.m. Update on Urban Forest Products Standard
Bob Rouse, Tree Care Industry Association

1:25 p.m. Update on International Woodworking Fair Urban Wood Activities & Illinois Wood Utilization Team Activities
Rich Christianson, Illinois Wood Utilization Team

1:50 p.m. Example of Urban Wood Utilization in Charlotte, NC
Harry Watt, NCSU Wood Products Extension

2:15 p.m. Urban Wood Products Exchange and Urban Wood Usage Video
Eric Muecke, North Carolina State Forestry

2:25 p.m. Northern Virginia Urban Wood Utilization and Marketing Workshop
Joe Lehnen, Virginia Department of Forestry

2:35 p.m. Harrisburg, PA, Urban Wood Utilization Efforts
Ellen Roane, Pennsylvania Bureau of Forestry

2:45 p.m. Update on Wisconsin's Urban Wood Utilization Activities
Sabina Dhungana, Wisconsin Division of Forestry

2:55 p.m. Update on Michigan Urban Wood Utilization
Jessica Simons, Southeast Michigan RC&D Council

3:00 p.m. Final comments and date for next webcast: Tuesday, April 11, 2017

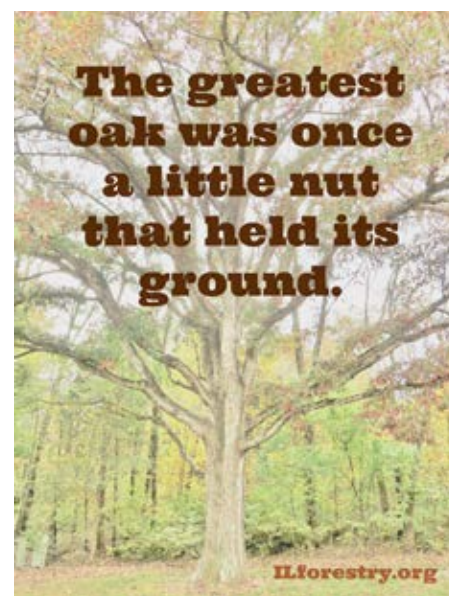
Attend the Oct. 11 webcast by following these instructions:

Connect to the Adobe Connect web meeting: <https://usfs.adobeconnect.com/werc-500/>

Keep "Enter as a Guest" selected
Type your name into the "name" box
Click "Enter Room"

For audio: Dial in by phone: 888-844-9904; access code: 7578516

The webcast will be archived and available on demand at <http://www.na.fs.fed.us/werc/eab.shtm>.



Featured Invasive: Bush Honeysuckle

(*Lonicera maackii*, *L. morrowii*, *L. tatarica*, and *L. xbella*)

Perhaps the greatest invasive plant threat to forests in Illinois is bush honeysuckle. This invader is actually a complex of several species, all of which look similar and have comparable impacts, though Amur honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*) is by far the most common.

Bush honeysuckle is an extremely aggressive invasive shrub in Illinois. Stands can crowd out native plants, restrict tree seedling establishment and survival, and slow the growth rate of mature trees. Infestations have been shown to impact bird nesting success and even change the chemistry of streams that it grows adjacent to.

Fall is the best time to identify bush honeysuckle because it often stays green when our native shrubs and saplings

lose their leaves. In fact, you can often identify bush honeysuckle easily in late fall after most of other species have dropped their leaves by simply driving down the road and looking for color within the woods. In the fall, honeysuckle also has bright red berries (for Amur honeysuckle, other bush honeysuckle species might also have orange berries).

If you think you have a honeysuckle plant, look for the red berries, opposite leaves with pointed tips, and light tan stringy bark. This is a plant that you do not want to leave alone. As soon as you identify this as being on your land, you should start controlling it. Waiting even a year can result in a drastic increase in its population size.

Once a suspected bush honeysuckle plant is found, a great way to verify its identification is to cut open a small stem. Honeysuckle stems have hollow piths. Keep an eye out for this species in woodlands and forests throughout Illinois.

IFA Members: Watch for the Winter Issue of the IFA Newsletter for "High Volume Basal Bark Applications for Autumn Olive: What It Is and Why You Would Use It," by Chris Long - in the Consultant's Corner. Also - DIY Maple Syrup Production, the latest from the Illinois Recreational Access Program (IRAP) and more!



Featured Tree:

Sugar Maple (*Acer Saccharum*)

State Champion - 54.5" DBH, 80' Height, 85' Spread (Johnson County)

Found throughout Illinois, sugar maple is a large, deciduous tree that often gets a bad reputation. Because it is shade tolerant, it's frequently one of the main species to move into oak-hickory forests that lack disturbance. Because of this, many young maple trees are cut to promote oak regeneration. However, maple is a native part of Illinois forests and an important tree in rich woods, coves, and well-drained ravines. It is also the most important tree for syrup production and prized for its fall color.

Sugar maple is a valuable timber species, with prices for quality sugar maple timber ranking up there with white oak and walnut as some of the most valuable timber in Illinois. Its wood is used for many purposes including veneer and furniture.

Sugar maple has opposite leaves and branches. The leaves are simple, with 3-5 pointed lobes (usually five). The leaves are sparsely toothed. Fall color is yellow to orange. In winter, brown, curled leaves often remain on the branches. Flowers are small, greenish-yellow and occur in clusters in leaf axils. The fruit are paired, winged samara. Sugar maple bark is variable in color, from light gray to brown to sometimes nearly black. On larger trees, the bark is usually broken into broad plates.

Featured Trees and Invasives are authored by Chris Evans, Extension Forester at the University of Illinois.



Acer saccharum



Look for Chris' article about producing maple syrup in the Winter Issue!

Helpful Resources...

Invasive Plant Species Regulated by the Illinois Exotic Weed Act

University of Illinois Extension Forestry Technical Bulletin NRES-1601

Oak Problems

University of Illinois Plant Clinic Report, S-417 Turner Hall, 1102 S. Goodwin, Urbana, IL 61801, (217) 333-0519, web.extension.illinois.edu/plantclinic

Invasive Species Phenology Report

Available monthly from Chris Evans, Extension Forester, University of Illinois, cwevans@illinois.edu

The Gradual Oak Decline Brochure

Department of Forestry, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale.

How to Identify, Control, and Prevent Oak Wilt

US Forest Service, Northeastern Area State & Private Forestry

How to Recognize Common Diseases of Oaks in the Midwest

US Forest Service, Northeastern Area State & Private Forestry

Thousand Cankers Disease Website

<http://www.thousandcankers.com/>
Links to many resources are found here.

Thousand Cankers Disease and the Walnut Twig Beetle

Illinois Department of Agriculture, Environmental Programs, PO Box 19281, Springfield, IL 62794-9281, 217-785-2427

Word Search Challenge

Oaks of Illinois!

OAK	QUERCUS
BLACK	VELUTINA
BLACKJACK	MARILANDICA
BUR	MACROCARPA
CHERRYBARK	PAGODA
CHESTNUT	PRINUS
CHINKAPIN	MUEHLENBERGII
NORTHERN RED	RUBRA
OVERCUP	LYRATA
PIN	PALUSTRIS
POST	STELLATA
SCARLET	COCCINEA
SHINGLE	IMBRICARIA
SHUMARD	SHUMARDII
SOUTHERN RED	FALCATA
SWAMP WHITE	BICOLOR
WHITE	ALBA
WILLOW	PHELLOS

S B W Q K P K R H A T F N L J S P A U P
E U H I R C O R R O A B O Y O R H N K S
J N C I L L A B A P A Z R U K S L I P S
F T N R O L U L R B Y J T U Y C C T E B
M U U C E R O A B G Y H H J S A H U T S
S U I N V U C W P L E R E I O R I L I V
W B E H T O Q N R R L D R C S L N E H H
B H F H R S B J N V N P N E U E K V W U
A L Z C L X E R M Y M U R B H T A U P K
W O A P K E E H X W R M E G H C P E M P
A M S C G D N C C A C I D N A L I R A M
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W H B E M J U A E P I I D R A M U H S A
C J R A O R A X D R A M U H S S Q H T A
M J E H L V Y C H P G S X K T N I A P T
C O C C I N E A K I N I P R W N L E A A
P H E L L O S R P O S T I F G L O T G C
A T A R Y L F C C H V S T L E U A I O L
R P H W M J Q E Z U Y Q E T A Y K H D A
U H R L Z S T L J P P E S C B Y D W A F



Purple Paint Sign Order Form

Name _____

Street Address _____

City/State/Zip Code _____

E-Mail Address _____

of Signs _____ x \$12 (Member Price) _____

of Signs _____ x \$18 (Non-Members) _____

Shipping & Handling _____

TOTAL _____

Shipping: 1 sign - \$8.00 | 2 signs - \$9.00 | 3 signs - \$9.00 | 4 signs - \$10.00 | 5 signs - \$11.00

Orders in excess of 5 signs must be shipped in two mailers

Mail Order Form to: (Check or Money Order made payable to *Illinois Forestry Association*)

Stan Sipp
Director, Region 3
P.O. Box 111
Mansfield, IL 61854

Signs are shipped via U.S. Postal Service
Invoice will be included with signs

Questions? Contact
Stan by email at
skipp@illinois.edu



Membership Registration Form

Privacy matters to us. We will not sell or share this information.



Name(s): _____ Date: _____

Representative, if business or group: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell Phone: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home County: _____ Land County: _____

Membership Category: _____ Term: _____ Amount Due: _____

See below for categories and term options

Would you be interested in a volunteer role of any kind? ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe

(We are always on the lookout for potential committee or board members, and occasionally need help with events, mailings and other tasks. If you have special skills or interests that might fit – forestry, clerical, legal, real estate, marketing, IT, etc., please let us know!)

Please return this form and your payment to: (or join and pay online at <http://ilforestry.org/join>)

Illinois Forestry Association
P. O. Box 224
Chatham, IL 62629

For IFA Administrative Use (01/2016)

ID # _____ Region _____

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Questions? Call Dave Gillespie at 217/494-6982

Membership Category

IFE - Basic Membership – with email address	\$25
IFE3 - Advantage Basic – 3-year member w/ email	\$70
IFM - Basic Membership – newsletter via US Mail	\$35
IFS - Supporting Membership	\$50
IFX - Sustaining Membership	\$100
IFL - Life Membership *	\$500
BUS - Business Membership	\$50
STU - Student (non-voting, email only)	\$10

IFA is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit charitable organization. Dues may be tax deductible as a business expense, and donations counted toward charitable contributions. We encourage you to explore the tax benefits of IFA membership with your accountant. Welcome, and thanks for your support!

* Lifetime membership dues can be paid in two installments, up to 6 months apart

Date: _____ Membership Category Selected: _____

Amount Due: _____ Total Paid: _____ Check # _____