



A newsletter for
those interested in
Forestry, Woodland
Management and
Christmas Trees in
Northwest Oregon

Summer 2012

Know Your Trees

Bigleaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*)

Bigleaf maple is a widely distributed western tree found from southern British Columbia to southern California. It is adapted to a wide range of growing conditions and is quite shade tolerant. It is found all across western Oregon. It has a thin bark and the tree is not resistant to fire. Like many hardwood species, it is prone to stem rots. It is an aggressive sprouter.

Bigleaf maple is a fairly long lived tree with both economic and ecological values. It plays an important ecological role in the forest. Its branches and particularly cavities provide roosting and nesting habitat for birds and mammals. Bigleaf maple flowers early and produces seed every year (mast) in early summer, although the quantity varies, making it an important food for migrating birds.

Bigleaf maple has a fine grained, light colored wood of moderate weight and hardness with good strength and workability. It has many uses including furniture and instrument making, paneling, pulp and firewood.

Want to know more about what is growing in your woods? *Trees to Know in Oregon* is a simple and handy guide to trees common in Oregon and the Pacific Northwest. Find it at:

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/abstract.php?seriesno=EC+1450>

Inside this newsletter, you will find seasonal tips for understanding, caring for and enjoying your woodland property. Also, details about the Summer Woodland Tour in Columbia County and our Fall Mentored Management Planning Shortcourse to be held in Washington County. Happy reading!

Amy Grotta

OSU Extension Forestry & Natural Resources Faculty - Columbia, Washington & Yamhill Counties

Office Location: Columbia County Extension Service, 505 N. Columbia River Hwy, St. Helens, OR 97051

Phone: (503) 397-3462

E-mail: amy.grotta@oregonstate.edu

Web: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia/forestry>

Blog: <http://blogs.oregonstate.edu/treetopics>



Columbia County Summer Woodland Tour
Saturday, July 28th; 8:30 am - 2:00 pm
Nastrom's Needles Tree Farm - Warren



Columbia County Small Woodlands Association and **Oregon State University Extension Service** are co-sponsoring the Summer Tree Farm Tour & Lunch on **Saturday, July 28th, 2012**. Our hosts are woodland owners Rod and Sandy Nastrom, Christmas tree farmers-turned-truffle hunter hosts and longtime CCSWA members. Arrive at 8:30 am for coffee and donuts. The program will begin at 9:00 am. Families are encouraged to attend.

The theme of this year's tour is **Woodland Roads: Best Management Practices**, and we will be joined by instructors Steve Bowers and Paul Adams. Paul is the OSU Extension Watershed Management Specialist and he has had a long history of working on issues related to forest roads and streams. Steve Bowers, better known to many of you as the "Treeman", is OSU Extension Agent in Douglas County and he brings to this topic his own practical experience as a logger and woodland owner. On the tour, we will look at and discuss a variety of road designs, surface types, stream crossings, and slopes, and talk about pros and cons of each. Please wear comfortable shoes and bring a hat for this walking tour.

Lunch is provided for all attendees courtesy of CCSWA. Non-CCSWA members are most welcome, but please consider a cash donation to cover your lunch cost. Please plan to attend and **RSVP to Bill & Lydia Stennick at 503-556-2014 or bill45.lydia54@q.com by July 23rd**. RSVP is needed for an accurate food order, please!

In the afternoon Mark Havel, aka Forest Dan, of Future Forestry Products, Inc. will demonstrate a **firewood processor** designed with your back in mind. Mark is an engineer who has developed a host of equipment for small woodland owners. He also advocates a community woodcutting network.

Directions: From Hwy 30 in Warren, turn onto Church Road (by the Warren Baptist Church). Go 2.4 miles and turn left on Turley. Turn Left on Woods. Follow the yellow "**Tree Tour**" signs beginning at Church Road.

New Publications

EC 1137, Designing Woodland Roads

By Steve Bowers

Revised June 2012, 21 pages. Download free of charge at:

<http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1957/30039/ec1137.pdf>

EC 1502, Understanding Names of Oregon Trees

By Scott Leavengood

Revised April 2012, 5 pages. Download free of charge at:

<http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1957/28721/ec1502.pdf>

PNW 630, Basic Forest Inventory Techniques for Family Forest Owners

By Kevin Zobrist, Don Hanley, Amy Grotta and Christopher Schnepf

New, March 2012. 70 pages. Printed copy costs \$12, order from <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog>.

Printed copies are also available for purchase at the Columbia County Extension office.

This manual will teach you how to identify individual forest stands on your property, take a plot sample, establish an inventory plot, and measure individual trees. You will then learn how to compute basic statistics that will help you assess the condition of your forest and plan appropriate management activities.



Tips for Seeding Dirt Roads

Reprinted/adapted from the Summer 2012 Douglas County Woodlander

Exposed soils resulting from skid trails, landings and new road construction have the potential to degrade water quality. Establishing vegetation on these exposed soils helps to stabilize erodible areas and prevents sediment from reaching streams. Roads and skid trails located on steep slopes and stream crossings have the greatest potential for degrading water quality. The goal of seeding these exposed areas is to encourage the development of dense roots that bind and hold soils, even under adverse weather conditions, thereby minimizing negative environmental effects and decreasing the cost of maintaining these developed areas.

Apply seed when fall rains begin following summer logging activities. Before seeding, evaluate the site in terms of soil depth and type, slope, steepness and aspect to determine the effective precipitation, water availability and shading. A mixture of two or more perennial species is desirable because no individual species can survive and thrive in all conditions or provide all the desired benefits. Species that can establish and grow rapidly stabilize sites quickly. Aggressive, long-lived and well-rooted perennials prevent erosion, provide forage and impede other undesirable plants. Shade tolerance is often desirable since many woodland roads have varying degrees of shade.

Early maturing varieties tend to grow taller while later maturing varieties tend to have a lower profile. The former helps shade out invading weeds while the latter produces higher quality forage and deeper root structures.

Annual ryegrass, a popular early maturing grass, is often combined with the later maturing, lower profile varieties of fescues or bentgrass. Many seed warehouses perform specialty orders and utilizing these businesses ensures a high quality and carefully measured percentage of selected varieties. And remember, cheapest is not necessarily the best: comparing purity and germination percentages between seed mixtures will ensure the greatest survival and growth potential after planting.

Hand broadcasting or the use of a spreader requires 1.5 to twice the rate of seeding versus machine planting. This is due primarily to the exposure of seeds that are broadcast versus machine drilling, where the seed is more protected from climate and birds and animals. Generally, about 100 seeds per square foot is adequate for broadcast seeding. This equates to 10 to 20 pounds of seed per acre. Remove any surface debris to ensure seed has direct contact with the soil. A rough surface is better than a smooth one. Particularly on steeper slopes, straw mulching or a slurried wood fiber provide a better environment for germination and growth and also assists in water erosion. Once the site has been planted, avoid livestock or other activities to allow the seed to germinate, grow and capture the site.

Table of common grass and legume species

Common name	Longevity	Growth rate	Growth habit	Seeds/pound	Comments
Annual ryegrass	Short	Very fast	Erect	200,000	Inexpensive, grows fast
Perennial ryegrass	Short	Fast	Bunch	250,000	Forage & turf varieties
Orchardgrass	Long	Medium	Bunch	500,000	Not for wet sites
Timothy	Long	Medium	Bunch	1,000,000+	Excellent horse hay
"Forage" tall fescues	Long	Slow	Bunch	200,000	Deep rooted grasses
"Fine turf fescues	Long	Slow	Sod	500,000+	Shade tolerant
Alfalfa	Medium	Medium	Erect	200,000	A legume
White clover	Medium-long	Medium	Erect	800,000	Good on wet soils
Red clover	Short	Slow-medium	Erect	700,000	Good on wet soils
Sub clover	Medium	Medium	Erect	700,000	Expansive root system
Highland bentgrass	Long	Slow-medium	Sod	5,000,000	Low profile grass

Birds of a Feather - The Swainson's Thrush

By Sarah Karr, Polk County Master Woodland Manager



Rarely seen but often heard, this elusive bird's song and call fill our forests every May to July. The male's territorial song is very musical and melodic, rising in tone, almost a spiral of sound, a kind of "doodly, doodly, doodly, dooo?". It is distinctive and can sound tantalizingly close, but just where is the bird? The bird's call is more subtle, described in various field guides as a single "whit," "foot," "pilp," or "whoit." To me, the call sounds like a drop falling loudly into a barrel of water.

I do know what I am looking for, though. The Swainson's thrush is a brown-backed thrush, robin-like in appearance but smaller, with a buffy eye ring and sporting a spotted breast. In the spring, it is likely to be found feeding on insects and invertebrates living on the ground, particularly in leaf litter. As the season progresses, it moves higher into the canopy, adding growing quantities of fruit to its diet. It also can be seen fly-catching where insects are available. Toward the end of summer and early fall, the Swainson's thrush will be looking for high-lipid fruits to help provide it with fuel for long distance migrations. Some Swainson's thrush populations will migrate to southern Mexico or as far south as northern Argentina.

The Swainson's thrush is common in forests and woodlands of the area (from the Coast Range, across the Valley floor and into the Cascades). If you have a young conifer stand of Douglas-fir, western redcedar, western hemlock, you, too, may be hearing the Swainson's thrush in spring and early summer when the males are establishing territory and singing to attract mates. The odds of having this nearly invisible bird on



Photo credit: Minette Layne, flickr.com
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your property increase if you also have deciduous trees in the mix or in a riparian area, especially ones that attract insects and produce fruit. A maple tree, for example, is one of the first trees in our forests to attract insects in the spring, just when the Swainson's thrush is beginning to move into our area; in addition, maple and other deciduous trees shed their leaves which allows light to fall on the forest floor in the winter and early spring, helping maintain shrubs in the understory. These shrubs provide valuable cover and nesting habitat for this shy bird. Smaller flowering deciduous trees, such as dogwood or cascara, attract insects and provide fruit as well. The leaf litter under deciduous trees shelters the insects the Swainson's thrush seeks early in the season; woody debris also serves this function. Later in the season, fruit producers such as elderberries, wild cherries, and blackberries will be highly prized as well. Knowing this, you can make your woodland more inviting to the Swainson's thrush and other migratory songbirds by managing for structural and compositional diversity in your woodland by retaining and allowing some growing space for shrubs and fruiting trees.

For more information about the Swainson's thrush, as well as other birds you might find in your forest, try www.allaboutbirds.org/guide. For excellent information about habitat issues in the Pacific Northwest, ask your local extension people about the USGS publication: *Rainforest Birds: A Land Manager's Guide to Breeding Bird Habitat in Young Conifer Forests in the Pacific Northwest. Scientific Investigations Report 2006-5304.* By Bob Altman and Joan Hagar.

Western Tent Caterpillar

The western tent caterpillar is a native insect to our forests. The caterpillars congregate in white silky tents on their host plants and feed throughout the spring months. The tent caterpillar's population is cyclical. Over a period of two to three years, the population builds up and then crashes as natural parasites and diseases kill them off. Then we don't see them again for maybe 8 – 10 years.

There have been several reports of western tent caterpillars this spring around Oregon, including in our area. Here on the westside, they prefer hardwoods such as alder, cottonwoods and willows.

While they may look alarming and can substantially defoliate the trees they infest, there's little cause for alarm. The caterpillars will be done feeding for the year by the time you read this, and the affected plants typically regrow a new set of leaves later in the summer. The best strategy to manage western tent caterpillars is to allow their natural enemies to do the control for you. If you can't stand the look of them, you can prune and remove affected branches and their tents. Spraying insecticide is not recommended.

My guess is that we'll see more western tent caterpillars in some localized areas next year. For more information, consult this [Forest Health Note](#) from the Oregon Dept. of Forestry:

<http://www.oregon.gov/ODF/privateforests/docs/fh/WesternTentCaterpillar.pdf>



Western tent caterpillars near Clatskanie, June 2012

Research Briefs: Wood-based biofuels

Biofuels provide a domestic energy source that creates jobs and spurs economic development. However, current technologies are heavily subsidized and in some cases increase greenhouse gas emissions. Oregon State University researchers are analyzing the efficiencies and economics of biofuel production and its role in a broad forest management strategy that includes fire risk and rural communities. Below is a link to a blog post from OSU's *Terra Magazine*, "[From Wood to Watts](#)", that describes OSU's current research into forest-based biofuel. <http://oregonstate.edu/terra/2012/05/from-wood-to-watts-2/>

The [Northwest Advanced Renewables Alliance](#) is a group of researchers that is working to develop a regional wood waste-to-aviation biofuel supply chain. They are investigating many things including the technology, economics, sustainability social and forest operations aspects of wood-to-energy. The NARA team is inviting interested individuals to sign up as stakeholders to provide input to the research and learn more. To sign up, go to <http://www.nararenewables.org/or>.

Christmas Tree Corner

By Chal Landgren, OSU Christmas Tree Specialist

Controlling those Pesky Christmas Tree Insect Pests

Insect control is right up there with basal pruning among the least liked tasks in producing a Christmas tree. So, let's spend a bit of time discussing some of the ways to make this task as efficient as possible and mention some helpful aids.

Grower concern with insect control are often accompanied with or complicated by any of the following:

- **Difficulty in identification.** Just finding an insect on the tree certainly does not make it a pest. The insect might be beneficial, or just "hanging out" or passing through. Plus, insects seldom stay put for you to look at them, or they are underground, or only around at night. It is also common to only see the damage and never find the culprit causing it.

Some possible aids to help with identification include: *Christmas Tree Diseases, Insects, & Disorders in the Pacific Northwest*. WSU Publication MISC0186. Available to order on-line at <http://pubs.wsu.edu>. Also the PNW Insect Management Handbook is available (look under the table of contents for Christmas Trees) on-line at: <http://uspest.org/pnw/insects>. Or stop by the Extension office to consult the hard copy handbook.

- **Loss of product options.** Some broad-spectrum insecticides, such as Thiodan, are being phased out and are no longer available. Where newer products are coming, the trend is that these "replacements" are more narrowly focused products targeting a particular aspect of insect growth or feeding habits. Often they cost more too, so targeting helps avoid wasted money and time.

Your local Crop Advisor can be a great help in selecting products and the web site mentioned above lists chemical names of appropriate control options.

Given these "concerns" how does one develop a plan for controlling insect pests? One way is to think of these tasks in the context of "Integrated Pest Management", commonly just called IPM. Here, think of the abbreviation PAMS - Prevention, Avoidance, Monitoring and Suppression. A few practical tips that may help you think in that manner are:

- If you have a field site that is difficult to spray, plant a species that might need less insect control work. For example, plant Nordmann or Turkish fir, not grand fir. Grand fir often requires aphid control.
- As best you can, know your market. A field that might be exported out of country often requires added pesticide applications and pest-free trees. Plant these in areas easier to spray. Local markets may tolerate a little midge damage, for example.
- Remember that younger and pre-market trees can sustain a higher damage level than market trees.
- Dedicate focused time to monitor/scout your fields.



Grand fir sooty mold aphid. Photo by Chal Landgren

Carry flagging to mark trees, a hand lens and clippers. Dig into the older needles and check the base of trees. Shake a few branches onto a light colored surface and see what emerges. Walk the edges of fields and spots where there were problems in prior years. If you suspect root feeding/damage, dig around the roots and look for the larvae of scarab beetles, root aphids or weevils.

Last but not least "Read the Product Label". Many insecticides will have specific safety/buffer or use restrictions. The label will guide you on how to use these products.



Need a Forest Management Plan?

Write your own by taking the Mentored Management Planning Shortcourse

A written Forest Management Plan serves many purposes. It is required for Oregon Tree Farm System participation, helps you qualify for cost-share funding, and it forms the foundation for sustainable forest management. A plan is an invaluable communication tool for your family as well. Landowners can write their own forest management plan and save on professional consulting costs.

Writing a plan takes time and an understanding of your property, but the Mentored Management Planning shortcourse will guide you through the process. Each of the four class sessions will guide you through the plan components, and you will be paired with an experienced "mentor" who will provide one-on-one assistance.

**Course location: Washington Street Conference Center
102 SW Washington St., downtown Hillsboro**

**Course dates/times: Tuesday evenings, 6:30 – 8:30 pm
Oct. 2nd, 16th, 30th, Nov. 13th**

- Primary instructor for this course is Amy Grotta, OSU Extension Forester.
- There is a \$40 charge (per family/ownership) to attend the course. Participants should plan to attend all sessions and expect to do "homework" on their plan between sessions.
- To attend you must pre-register no later than **September 24th**. Use the form below or register online at: <https://secure.oregonstate.edu/osuext/register/417>
- Questions? Contact Amy Grotta, (503) 397-3462 or amy.grotta@oregonstate.edu

Mentored Management Planning Registration Form

Or, register online at <https://secure.oregonstate.edu/osuext/register/417>

Name(s): _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Legal description of your forestland: Township: _____ Range: _____ Section: _____ # acres: _____

Taxlot number(s): _____

Mail this form with \$40 course fee to: OSU Extension Service, 505 N. Columbia River Hwy, St. Helens, 97051. Make checks payable to OSU Extension Service.





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 Columbia County
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