

Community Forestry News

City of Bath, Maine

The Newsletter of the Bath Community Forestry Committee ♦ 1 Oak Grove Ave. ♦ Bath, Maine 04530 ♦ 1-(207)-443-8345 ♦

Summer- 2012



Forestry Committee Book Review

The Sibley Guide to Trees, by David Allen Sibley, is so highly thought of and so easy to use that the BCFC thinks it is a must read for all tree lovers. Published in 2009, Sibley wrote and illustrated the tree guide and modeled it after his successful and acclaimed books on birds.

The guide condenses a vast array of information on tree identification, more than has ever been collected before, in a single volume and in an easy format. With over 4,100 meticulous illustrations presented with precise colored drawings, the book is a hefty 400+ pages, but is still manageable for using in the field. The information includes a cross-referenced index of botanical names and a species checklist arranged by family order. The illustrations offer vivid renderings of bark, buds, twigs, flowers, fruit, cones, needles, leaves, and even the various shapes of leaves within a species. "It is an invaluable contribution to our nature literature", to quote Peter Matthiessen. It's a celebration of trees, encouraging recognition and protection of their environmental importance to the planet.

Mary Earl Rogers

Issue Sponsored by Frohmiller Construction



U.S. Forest Service Renewing Call to Restore Forests to a Natural State as Wildfires Consume Western Acres



From New Mexico to Colorado and points beyond, wildfires have ravaged acre after acre of land and destroyed hundreds of homes in 2012. The U.S. Forest Service is on a mission to restore forests to a more natural state and resume the process of allowing fires to occur as part of the landscape.

Forest experts from around the country say a combination of fire suppression and the waning of the timber industry over environmental concerns has left many forests a tangled, overgrown mess, subject to superfires that are now consuming homes, crops, and millions of acres at an alarming rate.

"The Forest Service is on a mission to set the clock back to zero and the urgency couldn't be greater," Tom Tidwell, chief of the U.S. Forest Service, told the Associated Press in a June interview. The plan calls for accelerating restoration programs by 20 percent each year in key areas that are facing the greatest danger of catastrophic fires. While most of the restoration plans will begin in the West, the recent outbreaks of wildfires poses a question for Maine and other New England states as well. In an era of tight budgets and taxed resources, many forest officials acknowledge that restoration will be a challenge. How would we fair if a major forest fire broke out in Maine? is a question many experts are asking.

The past two decades have brought major weather disasters to New England including hurricanes, droughts, and the ice storm of 1998. Millions

of acres of forest were ravaged and the results can be seen today as dead and damaged trees litter the forest floor, contributing tons of dry, burnable wood to the urban and wild forest lands. The average cost of wildfires in Maine each year is \$500,000. Most of the fires are manmade and are usually contained in a small area. Are we doomed to relive the forest fire of 1947 when a wildfire destroyed 851 homes and 397 cottages, killing 16 people, in Acadia National Park? Many called that terrible disaster "the year Maine burned". One only has to take a brief walk in forests and trails around Bath to see the potential for fires to start, either through human neglect or by a natural lightning strike.

Aside from weather conditions, ravaging pests and disease eventually weaken and kill trees adding yet more combustible debris to the forest floor. The Maine Forest Service is quick to point out that it's not only the traditional and common pests and diseases they have to deal with, but also invasive species. Increasing world trade harbors a wealth of invasive plants and animals that thrive in the U.S. while destroying local species. Maine is susceptible to importation from the air, the roads, and ports of call along the coast.

America's forests have been especially vulnerable to forest fires this year with massive droughts in Texas and Arizona and exceptionally early heat waves across the country contributing to disasters waiting to happen. We can all do our part to avoid catastrophe in and around our homes and communities by cleaning up woodland debris, being especially careful with outdoor cook fires and brush fires, and storing high-flammable chemicals in a safe place. Be aware that in Maine, the law holds the individual responsible for any fire he or she starts and for the costs and damages associated with the fire.

Solutions in battling future wild fires will depend on setting priorities and forming partnerships with states, communities, and even water utilities given the impact fires have on watersheds. "Fire will play a significant role in our landscape for the rest of time," said Corbin Newman, a regional forester in the Southwest. Sources—AP & Maine Forest Service

JOIN US AT OUR NEXT MEETING!

The Bath Community Forestry Committee meets the second Wednesday of the month, September-June from 7:00 - 9:00 P.M. in the Bath City Hall. The public is welcome. We meet in the second floor conference room. For more information, call 443-8345. See us at www.bathforestry.com

TREES AROUND BATH—Cornelian Cherry

The Cornelian Cherry is not a cherry tree at all. It is a dogwood that does not look like a typical Northwood's dogwood. It can be the crowning jewel of your spring flowering trees with a yellow as bright as any forsythia bush. The Cornelian cherry dogwood has been cultivated since ancient times by the Greeks and Romans and eventually found its way to continental Europe during the Middle Ages. All of these civilizations cherished the tree for the berry which was eaten consistently until eventually becoming an ornamental tree in gardens around the world.

This tough, long-lived tree grows to about 25 feet high and 20 feet wide and can tolerate most any place in your yard, but prefers a bright, sunny spot with rich, well-drained soil. The tiny, canary-yellow blooms form in clusters about the size of a quarter and are one of the earliest blooms of the spring, arriving two-three weeks ahead of the traditional magnolias, and lasting three-four weeks. The blooms appear on the previous year's wood. The tree's fruit is a bright red, oblong, olive-shaped drupe about 1/2" to 5/8" and contains a single seed. The fruit is not poisonous and is savored by many a bird.

The Cornelian Cherry provides dark green, glossy foliage which accents any garden and the intriguing, exfoliating bark adds diversity and texture to any corner of the yard. As the tree grows, the lower portion of the trunk can be pruned of limbs to form a well-rounded and "tree-like" silhouette. Trimming the lower trunk of branches will also allow the tree to reveal its unusual bark in muted shades of tan and gray. The fruit will appear mid-summer and peak as a dark red or maroon cherry in the fall. Found in zones 4-8, this tree is pest free and is recommended for borders, hedge rows, screening, and foundation planting. Varieties include the 'Nana', a small-leaved, low-growing shrub; 'Variegata', with white margins on the foliage; and 'Golden Glory', an upright, abundantly-flowering variety.

A Cornelian cherry resides in Bath on the Front St. side of the Patten Free Library to the right of the stairway leading up to the Library. (See picture to the right in the left, upper corner.)



Cornelian cherry dogwood—*Cornus mas*



Scientific classification

Kingdom: Plantae
Division: Magnoliophyta
Class: Magnoliopsida
Order: Cornales
Family: Cornaceae
Genus: *Cornus* L.
Species: *Cornus mas* L.
Common Name: Cornelian cherry

2012 Landscape Awards

Hampton Inn

Accepting the BCFC 2012 award for best business landscaping were Jenn Libby and Brigit Cavanaugh of the Hampton Inn for "exemplary design, selection of plantings, and hard work" that have contributed to beautifying the waterfront along Commercial Street, said Tom Barrington, chairman of the BCFC. The role that businesses play in improving the urban forest and visual appeal is critical to the economy of Bath, said Barrington. For a large corporation to spend the time and money to improve the entire corner of the waterfront is exemplary, agreed Committee members.

905 Middle St.

Harriet Smith of 905 Middle St. received the BCFC residential landscaping award. "Why my property when there are so many beautiful properties in Bath?" she exclaimed. Most Committee members would answer that question with a resounding, "it's not just the large and ornate properties of Bath that add to the urban appeal of a community – it's the homeowner with small parcels of land who are creative with their landscapes and who produce the small shining gems that define a city". Bath prides itself in



Above: Tom Barrington, Chairman of the Bath Community Forestry Committee, presents the organization's Residential Landscaping Award for 2012 to Harriet Smith of 905 Middle St.

beautiful homes, trees, and landscapes. "We need to reward both businesses and homeowners who work hard in making a beautiful community for all to enjoy," said Mr. Barrington, chairman of the BCFC.



Left: Hampton Inn Landscaping

Below:
Tom Barrington of BCFC, Jenn Libby, General Manager, and Brigit Cavanaugh, Customer Relations Representative for the Hampton Inn



Maine's Natural Areas Worth More Than You Might Think!

The Manomet Center for Conservation Science in Massachusetts recently completed a study assigning a dollar value to nature in Maine. Not counting tourism dollars, the revenue derived from the outdoors accounts for approximately \$14 billion per year. The value is determined toward the future and assesses quality of life and the availability of good drinking water. For example, recognizing the value of a forest that filters and slows runoff from rain will pay dividends later, according to the study.

"Valuing Maine's Natural Capital", was conducted in collaboration with experts in Maine, Massachusetts, and Vermont. "We're trying to start a conversation about these uncaptured values," said John Gunn, a forest ecologist and senior program leader with Manomet who is based in the organization's Brunswick office. Gunn said respecting and protecting natural environments now—even if it means leaving them untouched in the face of pressure from the real estate market and economic development activities—could pay huge dividends in the future if it prevents super-expensive projects like installing public water filtration systems or repairing wide-scale flood damage. When we make decisions in Maine we

need a better way to incorporate the value of natural resources.

"We may never know the exact price of our natural resources, but assigning some value to natural capital is clearly more accurate than assigning none, as is currently the norm, said Dr. Austin Troy, author of the study. While the \$14 billion in uncounted value researchers identified may not seem like much to some, the study points out that the state derives about \$6.5 billion per year from forest-based manufacturing, recreation, and tourism. "There is far greater value to Maine's natural abundance and wildlands than aesthetics and recreation," the study states.

Traditionally, the conversation around the value of the environment is based on how much the land would be worth for housing or business. "Doing that calculation begins to capture some of the other values," said Gunn. "The development values may be limited but some practices might potentially have negative impacts on those values." Included in the value of the environment is a forest's capacity to capture greenhouse gases—which helps fend off the expensive effects of global warming—and natural filtration systems that help provide one of the

necessities of life on Earth. "Without that dollar price, nature's benefits have historically been undervalued or deemed to be zero. The result of that approach isn't good," states the study.

Coastal and noncoastal wetlands and urban and suburban forests received the highest per-acre value in the study. The ability of these environs to filter water and sustain a high quality of life puts them at the top of the list. For example, the EPA put a filtration waiver on the Sebago Lake watershed because the water is clean enough allowing 200,000 customers in the Portland Water District access to clean water. If the watershed is degraded in the future, taxpayers will be faced with approximately a \$146 million water filtration plant.

Gunn hopes the study will help people realize their actions today have consequences that will be felt in the future. The study ranked all of Maine's natural places and Cumberland County ranked the highest, at between \$1,000 and \$2,500 per acre of value per year. Washington and Penobscot counties were also high in the ranking with a value between \$700 and \$1,000 per acre.

*Excerpted from the Bangor Daily News
by Christopher Cousins*

Hemlock Demise a Part of Nature's Cycle

The woolly adelgid is marching across the eastern U.S. destroying eastern hemlocks at a very fast pace. The woolly adelgid is an exotic species that attacks the hemlock leaving a white coating on the boughs limiting new growth and causing death within four-10 years.

The direct effect of hemlock death will be to the habitat for songbirds, ruffed grouse, and whitetail deer. All rely heavily on the shelter the hemlock provides in the cold winter months. Deer cannot survive harsh winters without the hemlock and cedar canopies. The interlocked boughs shelter the animals like a huge forest umbrella. Hemlock stands are rapidly disappearing throughout New England with the onset of the woolly adelgid.

The hemlock wooly adelgid is spread by birds, mammals, and the wind. These insects feed on the sap at the base of the hemlock needle and are covered with a fine, white, waxy coating that protects them from predators. Since they are entirely female, hemlock wooly adelgids reproduce in large numbers. A female can produce up to 300 eggs at a time, and they usually reproduce twice a year. Because of their protective covering, control has proven rather difficult. Several methods have been tried. Insecticidal soaps and horticultural oils have shown good results and cause minimal harm to beneficial insects. However, horticultural oils can damage hemlock trees during the growing season, especially in dry weather.



Imidacloprid trunk injections or soil drenches have also shown some success.

While hemlock destruction stresses wildlife, it also opens up avenues for species that thrive on dead trees like woodpeckers. Eventually, the hemlock will die off opening up areas for new green growth which will attract cavity-nesting species and herbaceous foraging critters that eat greens springing from the newly sunlit spaces constituting yet another phase in forest succession.

Losing a species, whether flora or fauna, is nothing new. In New England we have lost millions of elm trees, beech trees, and now the hemlock. We, as humans, want life to remain the same—as we have always known it to be. Transformation is the life of change and change is the only constant in life. Hemlocks can live for centuries and hopefully a few will carry on the legacy of longevity.

Excerpts from Maine Sunday Telegram

BCFC Summer Intern

"When I first got to Maine, I couldn't get over how many trees there were," said Kelly Swarthout, a 20-year old intern working with Tom Hoerth, city arborist, this summer. Bath is an excellent example of an urban forest, she added, and it is neat to see a city with a forestry committee as well as many people caring about their trees. Ms. Swarthout is studying Urban Forestry at the University of Wisconsin at Stevens Point and is a resident of Neenah, Wisconsin.

"I think Tom (Hoerth) is an excellent teacher...he's very patient with me ...he doesn't make my job feel like work, and he is very friendly and knowledgeable," said Ms. Swarthout. When asked about her pursuit in forestry, she said she was drawn to forestry because of her love for trees and plants and wanting to preserve forests and maintain beautiful urban forests. "I want to return to visit the trees I've planted this summer."



Kelly Swarthout and Tom Hoerth, City Arborist

"To protect, to expand, to preserve, and use wisely, the forestry resources and green-spaces found within the City of Bath, Maine."



Tree City USA Award

Tom Hoerth, Bath city arborist, and members of the BCFC accepted the 2011 Tree City USA Award for Bath at the annual Arbor Week Celebration ceremonies in Portland in May. 2011 marked the 15th year Bath has received the award which is given to municipalities across the country for dedication to the care and planting of trees with emphasis on trees as a significant contribution to the vitality and economy of a community. This year Bath also received the Tree City USA Growth Award for tree care programs that significantly go above and beyond the standards for Tree City USA. Bath and Portland were the only Growth Award recipients this year in Maine.



NEW BANNER FLIES HIGH over Front Street for the annual Arbor Day Week Celebrations. The BCFC is proud to display its dedication to the trees of Bath and its 15th straight year as a Tree City USA.

Glowing Gem at the Gateway

Now that summer is in full bloom, Druid Park shines like a chest of gems overflowing with the colors of amethyst, ruby, emerald, citron, and sapphire. This is the fifth summer since the dedication of the new Druid Park, a project resulting from years of hard work by the Bath Community Forestry Committee, Bath Cemetery and Parks, and Bath citizens. The lovely gardens at 1 Oak Grove Avenue bring smiles and pleasure to the many travelers that pass by on a daily basis. Help us continue making these gardens shine by sending a donation to the BCFC-Druid Park Fund, 1 Oak Grove Ave., Bath, ME 04530. "Gerry" Coombs and her devoted Monday morning gardeners and the entire BCF Committee thank you.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Summer 2012 Workshops & Upcoming Events

August 15, 2012 7:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Wells Reserve, Wells, ME

Bird banding demonstrations led by June Ficker. See science and research in action. Free to the public; no reservations necessary. Call 207-646-1555

September 8, 2012 9:00 a.m.—11:00 a.m.

Seaward Mills Stream Conservation Area, Vassalboro, ME

Alewives and Maine Streams, Lakes, and Rivers at

Contact Kennebec Land Trust 207-377-2848 for details.

September 21, 22, 23, 2012 Gates open at 9:00 a.m.

Maine Organic Farmers & Growers Association, Unity, ME

If you've never been to the Common Ground Country Fair, it is an experience like no other. All events organized around a theme of an organic lifestyle. Go to www.mofga.org for full details.

September 22, 2012 9:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

Friends of Merrymeeting Bay, Richmond, ME

Swan Island Outing with Jay Robbins

For details call Jay at 207-737-2239; \$5 donation

October 6-7, 2012 MAA and New England ISA

6th Annual Women's Tree Climbing Workshop-Level II

Workshop is for previous attendees or experienced climbers only. Contact number is 207-222-4278.

September & October, 2012

Bath Community Forestry Committee, Bath, ME

Time to get out into the community and snap some great photos of Bath's trees for the 2012 BCFC Photography Contest. Watch for further announcements in October or call 443-8345.



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2012 Committee Members

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Thomas Barrington, *Chairman*
Ed Benedikt
Bruce Brennan
Carol Carriagan
Geraldine Coombs
Elizabeth Haskell
Thomas C. Hoerth, *Ex-Officio*
Aaron Park
Mary Earl Rogers
Margo Smith
Kurt Spiridakis

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