Mission Statement:

The Native Tree Society (NTS) is a cyberspace interest groups devoted to the documentation and celebration of trees and forests of the eastern North America and around the world, through art, poetry, music, mythology, science, medicine, wood crafts, and collecting research data for a variety of purposes. This is a discussion forum for people who view trees and forests not just as a crop to be harvested, but also as something of value in their own right. Membership in the Native Tree Society and its regional chapters is free and open to anyone with an interest in trees living anywhere in the world.

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Official membership in the NTS is FREE. Simply sign up for membership in our bulletins board at http://www.ents-bbs.org. Submissions to the website or magazine in terms of information, art, etc. should be made directly to Ed Frank at: edfrank@nativetreesociety.org. The eNTS: the Magazine of the Native Tree Society is provided as a free download in Adobe® PDF format through the NTS website and the NTS BBS. The editorial staff of eNTS: the Magazine of Native Tree Society are solely responsible for its content.

COVER: Romania. Photo by Anthony Croft 2012

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I want to remind the readers of this magazine that the articles presented here are only a part, usually just the beginning, of the discussions being held on our BBS at [http://www.ents-bbs.org](http://www.ents-bbs.org). The full discussion can be read by clicking on the link embedded in the title of each individual article.

- Edward Frank

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Editor's Corner
By Edward Frank

Webmaster, BBS Administrator, eNTS Magazine Editor-in-Chief
edfrank@nativetreesociety.org

I always seem to place some portentous post here about the future of the forests or some commentary by one of our esteemed members. This month I thought I would do something different and simply post a series of quotes I found interesting, thoughtful or humorous.

"Small minds are stuck in the same rut, while great minds think alike." - unknown

"Oh, I call myself a scientist. I wear a white coat and probe a monkey every now and then, but if I put monetary gain ahead of preserving nature...I couldn't live with myself" - Professor Hubert Farnsworth

"If you want to be a better photographer, stand in front of more interesting stuff." - Jim Richardson

"In the absence of clearly-defined goals, we become strangely loyal to performing daily trivia until ultimately we become enslaved by it." -- Robert Heinlein

"Knowledge embiggens the mind." - Jebidiah Springfield

"I want my story to inspire people to help protect and connect the last remaining wilds of the eastern U.S. and Canada," - John Davis

"Keep your love of nature, for that is the true way to understand art more and more." - Vincent van Gogh

"The most beautiful experience we can have is the mysterious—the fundamental emotion which stands at the cradle of true art and true science." — Albert Einstein

"What is a scientist after all? It is a curious man looking through a keyhole, the keyhole of nature, trying to know what's going on." - Jacques Cousteau

"I love science and it pains me to think that so many are terrified of the subject or feel that choosing science means you cannot also choose compassion, or the arts, or be awe by nature. Science is not meant to cure us of mystery, but to reinvent and reinvigorate it." - Robert M. Sapolsky

"That's one small step for [a] man, one giant leap for mankind." - Neil Armstrong

"Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature -- the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter.” — Rachel Carson, Silent Spring

“Our ability to perceive quality in nature begins, as in art, with the pretty. It expands through successive stages of the beautiful to values as yet uncaptured by language.” — Aldo Leopold

‘Few are altogether deaf to the preaching of pine trees. Their sermons on the mountains go to our hearts; and if people in general could be got into the woods, even for once, to hear the trees speak for themselves, all difficulties in the way of forest preservation would vanish.” — John Muir

“Someone told me that each equation I included in the book would halve the sales.” — Stephen Hawking on "A Brief History of Time

Ah, but I was so much older then, I'm younger than that now - Bob Dylan

“There is a cult of ignorance in the United States, and there has always been. The strain of anti-intellectualism has been a constant thread winding its way through our political and cultural life, nurtured by the false notion that democracy means that "my ignorance is just as good as your knowledge.” — Isaac Asimov
**Measurement Certification**

by edfrank » Fri Aug 03, 2012 3:04 pm

NTS. As we add more members from various areas of the world, the question is raised concerning how we can certify new member's measurements and accept them for in our database. By far the best way is to actually have that new person go measuring with another member who already has a good track record of producing good measurements. I have some other thoughts for how to deal those people who are starting to do measurements, but are not close to another NTS member with measuring experience. I would like to see comments by others.

I received an email from a newer member who has purchased a Nikon 550 hypsometer. This was my reply:

*The biggest concern from NTS is whether you are using the proper instruments and the right methods. The latest Nikon 550 models have two routines built in to measure height. One is called simply the two point method and the other the three point method. The two point method requires that you take a height of the tree above eye level and a second reading of the distance the base is above or below eye level. This is the method that you want to use. It uses the sin(angle) x distance process that will yield an accurate height. If you use this method, your heights will be fine. You really can’t screw up and get a height that is too tall unless you measure the base of one tree and the top of another.*

*The three point method built into the Nikon 550 uses the distance/slope or tangent method. Any measurements taken of height using the three point routine will be WRONG no matter how perfectly you do it. Do not use the three point routine in the instrument. Use the two point method only.*

*Get a field book, write down the raw numbers measured by the instrument (shown on the display on the side) and the height calculated for both the portion of the tree above eye level and the bottom portion of the tree. Be sure to note whether the base of the tree is above or below eye level.*

Do you have a GPS? They are nice to locate the trees measured, but are certainly not required.

Get girths for the trees for which you measure heights. Measure a 4.5 feet and note if the tree is a multitrunk tree or a single trunk tree. If multitrunk list the number of trunks. If there is an obstruction, knot or something at the 4.5 feet height and a slightly higher or lower girth measurement point is more appropriate, measure at that point and measure the height above ground level for that girth measurement.


I should also have mentioned crown spread measurements, encouraged taking photos, encouraged adding the data to our database, and providing a map of the location when posting to the BBS.

Edward Frank

—

**Re: Measurement Certification**

by dbhguru » Sat Aug 04, 2012 10:18 am

Ed, You did a good job of laying out the requirements. You make the statement that basically the three point method is verboten. It actually is a convenient technique to have to get quick approximations, but Oh Boy, I say this with trepidation for reasons that the faithful will well understand. In some century in the future, maybe the brain-programming so thoroughly done by the timber profession will wear off. But in the interim, we'll be faced with at least one or two more generations of timber professionals who will go their graves defending a flawed process.

Robert T. Leverett
How long before a tree rots away?

by edfrank » Mon Jul 30, 2012 7:16 pm

How long before a tree rots away?
July 30, 2012 - 07:15
By: Ida Korneliussen

http://sciencenordic.com/how-long-tree-rots-away

Various comments:

Will Blozan wrote: Jess Riddle and I cored yellow birch growing on a fallen hemlock log in the Smokies that were ~90 years old. The log was still above the ground level and not yet punky.

Joe Zorzin wrote: Again, I fantasize what the forests looked like before the pale faces showed up- there must have been a tremendous amount of "woody debris" in the forests, which made for an incredibly rich habitat- we have a hint from surviving old growth, but only a hint and then we can fantasize before the Indians arrived and their forest burning....
the full richness of nature, of which we know so little.

Larry Tucie wrote: Ed, Will, Joe, I wish we could know how long the downed trees of Southern Forests lasted before the arrival of Formosian Termites and many other insect Pests. A tree falls here and in a matter of one decade to two it's gone, three at the most. Exceptions are some Pine Stumps they may last up to 50-75 years (close estimation). Cypress tree stumps as long as a century or more. There may be other species that remain depending on location.

Rand Brown wrote: I remember being rather taken aback the first time I saw pine stumps slowly sinking into the ground from the termites, leaving a ring of bark behind. Knock one over and it's basically hollow inside.

Don Bertolette wrote: My time in the Southwest supports the notion that ponderosa pines have remarkable decay resistance in part due to their extractives and in part due to the remarkably dry climate of the Southwest. I know there are papers out there on how long, but I can't recall them off the top of my head. I can however provide some anecdotal information.

My first year as a GS-3 Forestry Aide with the BLM in eastern Oregon, I served on a survey crew doing Original Corner Restoration. Using K & E Mountain Transits like the original surveyors used in the 1880's, with declinations corrected to match them, we used the original survey notes to as close as possible duplicate their survey line...many times we found their original Bearing Trees, and with the notes were able to identify original corners, (scribed rocks, preferably tall, four-sided rocks, scribed on each of the edges to assign location). We occasionally found their intermediate chaining points (a branch lopped off at an angle at one end, stubbed off at the other, then hammered into the ground for distance measurement points) still intact. Most remarkable, we occasionally would find planks the surveyors had fashioned to practice scribing the numbers and letters on Bearing Trees (such as SEC 1, T3N, R8E).

That was 1967, some 80 years after the passage of the original surveyor. When they actually did survey the sections they were assigned. But that's another story...; > }

It was a wonderful job for a guy starting out his career in Forestry, first time away from home, staying in remote government cabins for a week at a time, all in John Day River country.

Chris Morris wrote: Perhaps Native American use of fire in eastern forests would have reduced the amount of woody debris on forest floors.

However, we certainly do know that there was tons of wood in various streams and rivers [a great interest of mine] The 160 mile long wood debris raft on the Red River when Europeans arrived in early/mid 1800s in Louisiana is a great (although extreme) example. From what I recall, the research suggests some large pieces of wood could take a couple hundred years to decompose in streams [there are still large Chestnut logs in Appalachian streams], with a few last even longer [over 1300 years for a few in one study Pacific NW].
Don Bertolette wrote: Chris, Two different scenarios operating here, one of high relative humidities (Eastern forests) and low RHs (Western forests). In the case of rafts of river run (or lakes for that matter) timber destined to mills, not only did the lumber companies transport their product by water, they stored them in ponds; for as long as they remained underwater, they wouldn't rot (same thing happens with wood buried in peat bogs, mud slides, etc. think 'anaerobic'). Thinking of Byzantine boats recently discovered by Nat'l Geo, with much of their wooden hulls still intact, after thousands of years.

Re: Tiny Beetles Take a Large Bite Out of the Forest, CO

☑ by Larry Tucei » Thu Aug 02, 2012 10:35 am

NTS, A link with some good information on the Mountain Beetle infestations.
http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/insect/05528.html/

Larry Tucei

Re: Desolation Wilderness, CA

☑ by Ranger Dan » Fri Aug 03, 2012 4:49 pm

Western white pine, yep. Coincidental that the topic would come up. I just got back home from another vacation in the Sierra, visiting with a friend in Tahoe who really knows his Sierra trees. On our trip to Sequoia National Park we hiked though a long stretch of countless amazing and gorgeous specimens of P. monticola on the trail from Wolverton to Pear Lake, in spectacular subalpine parkland. (maybe I'll post some images some day.) There are many over six feet in diameter, with striking red bark in huge polygonal plates and sculpted, knobby bases (so very different from the ones in the Pacific Northwest). There is also a fine grove of foxtail pines on the ridge above Emerald Lake, and the hike goes through the red fir zone where many individuals are over 5 feet in diameter. There aren't enough superlatives to go around for the amazing development of all the trees of the Sierra Nevada. Even lodgepole pines, boring little poles elsewhere in the mountainous West, grow into enormous and fascinating sculptures, each one with unique character. What is it about the Sierra that has created such a wonderland of superlative trees? And then there are the Sequoias, worthy of another category altogether for themselves other than "tree". But even if they were not there, the forest of the Sierra would still be the finest on Earth in my view, and on top of that, beset in such mountain majesty...paradise.

Dan Miles
Canyons Rule, WY

by dbhguru » Fri Aug 03, 2012 11:31 pm

NTS, Monica and I left Pocatello, ID on Wednesday and drove up to Yellowstone. We took plenty of pictures at spots we don't usually visit. We then went east, driving through Shoshoni Canyon in the Absorakas. We found a spot to stay overnight. Lots to tell, but this Internet connection is too weak. I'll present two images now, with lots more to come when we get home. Shoshoni Canyon cuts through a volcanic deposit. ED probably understands the geology.

Re: Canyons Rule, WY

by dbhguru » Sat Aug 04, 2012 9:46 am

Joe, Yes, I've been envious of your geological prowess. It seems to come natural to you. I strain to understand the complex processes that my eyes see, but my brain doesn't decode.

The lodge we stayed at in Shoshoni Canyon was originally built by the niece of one William F. Cody, alias Buffalo Bill. The current owner is a part Shoshoni Indian from the Wind River Indian Reservation. We had a marvelous time. He took a liking to Monica and me and shared many stories. He was a rancher on the Wind. He has an encyclopedic knowledge of the surrounding terrain. Plus, you wouldn't believe the wildlife that visits the lodge and cabins. It is grizzly, moose, elk, and mountain lion country. When the berries are ripe, the grizzlies come up from the river corridor. One does not venture far from his/her cabin. Here are 4 images from where we stayed. It was just about night. The light was failing. I apologize for the less than stellar photography.

The next image looks across ShoShoni Canyon to the lava cliffs.
The lava erodes into a myriad of intriguing shapes.

Looking down the canyon from the lodge.

Robert T. Leverett

**Medicine Bow, WY**

by dbhguru » Sat Aug 04, 2012 10:06 pm

NTS. Today Monica and I climbed Medicine Bow Peak in the Medicine Bow Range of the Wyoming Rockies. The summit is 12,013 feet, and we felt every foot of it. But it was worth the pain. What a great place.

Here is a view from the trail looking south toward Old Main, the Diamond, etc. Old Main is 11,755 feet elevation. The Diamond is 11,720 feet. Please remember to double click to see the images in larger format.

Here are two shots of Monica on the trail. She did fabulously. There were lots of people climbing the peak, and all were in excellent shape.
The rocks near the summit are fascinating. We needed Ed for an interpretation. Lots of quartzite, but there were other types of rocks as well. Some are ancient. The peak on the horizon is Elk Mountain, a detached part of the Medicine Bow.

The flat summit in the distance is Browns Peak.

Here is a distant view of Medicine Bow Peak.

Sugar Loaf.
Libby Lake. Elevation 10,722 ft.
Re: Medicine Bow, WY

by dbhguru » Sun Aug 05, 2012 10:02 am

Joe, Ed,  Ed, your explanation is correct with respect to the talus slopes. The overall topography is glacial, as to be expected. Lots of erratics. Joe, there are places where the rock is excellent for climbing, but nobody climbs the loose stuff.
Humboldt Redwoods State Park

by Mark Collins » Sun Aug 05, 2012 3:22 pm

I spent the weekend exploring a small part of Humboldt Redwoods State Park. For the most part, it was more practice just wandering around the forest and developing an eye for trees and oddities in the forest. The rivers and creeks in the area are low this time of year as we await the fall and winter storms to arrive.

Below is a picture of the wonderful Eel River, with a view towards the Founder's Grove in the distance. To the left are logged hillsides with second or third generation redwoods.

One of the coolest parts of this particular trip for me was waking up in the middle of the night to frogs croaking and a full moon shining into the forest. Some of the redwoods can take on a white appearance. In the full moon, the white redwoods were glowing. For a minute, it looked like someone had set up a spotlight in the forest and shined the light upwards towards the canopy.
Despite seeing many people hiking the trails this weekend, it's still exciting to personally see incredible trees for the first time.

The redwood above was one of the largest I saw all day, right along the trail.
The redwood sprouts growing at the base of the trees are bright green this time of year. It seems that they are taking advantage of the summer sun to get some grow time in. I wanted to check on an albino that is growing in the park to see how it is doing. It looked like it usually does, no major new growths that I could see.

Other than that, another great outing in the redwood forest!

Mark Collins
Nice American chestnut in Montreat, NC

by Will Blozan » Sun Aug 05, 2012 4:38 pm

NTS,

One of my clients in Montreat, NC has a magnificent specimen of American chestnut that although infected with blight, has a perfect crown and tons of burs. Last year’s burs are littering the ground—likely 200 or more—and some still have nuts. I plan to harvest some nuts this fall. The American Chestnut Foundation came up on Friday to see the tree and they plan to collect pollen from it next spring. I measured the diameter at 9.5” and it stands 47.4’ tall.
Re: Medicine Bow

by dbhguru » Sun Aug 05, 2012 10:21 pm

Don,  Reasonably prepared for the UV. Sun was intense. Here is the last batch of Medicine Bow images.

Lake Marie and 11,755-ft Old Main.

Monica contemplating the superlative scenery on her perch above Lake Marie.

Will Blozan
Looking across Marie toward Sugar Loaf.

The 11,720-foot Diamond

SURPRISE!!

We were grateful to Medicine Bow for the gifts it bestowed on us.

Robert T. Leverett
Vedauwoo, WY

by dbhguru » Mon Aug 06, 2012 9:30 am

NTS, Yesterday, Monica and I said goodbye to the spacious Rocky Mountain West with a brief stop at Vedauwoo in the Laramie Range, 30 some miles west of Cheyenne, WY. The area excels in fantastic rock formations of pegmatite granite. Here are 5 images. Elevations are between 8,400 and 9,000 feet. I used the area a lot when I was stationed at F.E. Warren AFB in Cheyenne. It is a magical area. No big trees, but plenty of old ones. I doubt that the interpreters really appreciate how many old trees there are in Vedauwoo. It was a sacred site to the Cheyenne and Arapahoe Indians.

Robert T. Leverett
Daphne Koller: What we're learning from online education

by edfrank » Sat Aug 04, 2012 2:58 pm

Daphne Koller: What we're learning from online education

http://www.ted.com/talks/daphne_koller_what_we_re_learning_from_online_education.html

Daphne Koller is enticing top universities to put their most intriguing courses online for free -- not just as a service, but as a way to research how people learn. Each keystroke, comprehension quiz, peer-to-peer forum discussion and self-graded assignment builds an unprecedented pool of data on how knowledge is processed and, most importantly, absorbed. Daphne Koller is bringing courses from top colleges online, free for anyone who wants to take them.

Coursera https://www.coursera.org/ We are a social entrepreneurship company that partners with the top universities in the world to offer courses online for anyone to take, for free. We envision a future where the top universities are educating not only thousands of students, but millions. Our technology enables the best professors to teach tens or hundreds of thousands of students.

Moodle Online Course Format

by James Parton » Mon Aug 06, 2012 12:00 pm

ENTS, Online education certainly has it's place. It's often cheaper than in-facility schooling and can often be done at the student's leisure. Courses can be very simple, taught by a single teacher or individual or from a large university with many resources. Online courses can be taken for a profession, job etc OR for a hobby, special interest or a spiritual need.

This brings me to the New Order of Druids. I have been taking an online course through them for two years. The main courses take most individuals three years to complete and then there are upgraded bonus courses beyond these. Once a grade of coursework is completed the student who has passed the course has a chance to go on and mentor it. Something I currently do. NOD uses two methods to present it's courses. The courses themselves can be purchased in book form for a very reasonably price or downloaded in pdf form from the NOD website. The upgraded courses are available for a reasonable cost as an upgraded member. There is also the free forums which require a final exam. The courses teach many things. Druidry is a spirituality based in Celtic culture and is not a dedicated religion in itself. Most there are pagans but any religion, including Christians can be there. Celtic Christianity has been a part of druidry for more than 1500 years. And yes, Trees are a part of what druidry is. Druids hold nature sacred and the courses reflect this in their exercises.

NOD uses the Moodle format to present it's courses to members and present it's grades to students. Moodle may be of use to ENTS as well. It would certainly be a good way of teaching measuring techniques. I could see Will Blozan , Bob Leverett and Ed Frank as NTS tree measuring Mentors!

http://moodle.org/

James E Parton
Re: Measurement Certification

by pattyjenkins1 » Mon Aug 06, 2012 2:30 pm

I'm thrilled to see this discussion. Especially since I hope to be able to recruit recreational tree climbers into the work of measuring trees, and they'll probably all be inexperienced. So I hope you guys will come up with a set of guidelines that will make it possible to validate data without having to jump through too many hoops. Also—I have pretty solid experience with Moodle, having spent a year putting up the TCI Online Basic Tree Climbing Course using that software. I'd be happy to help with an online certification course if you decide to move forward with that.

Patty Jenkins
Executive Director
Tree Climbers International, Inc.

Re: Canyons Rule

by dbhguru » Mon Aug 06, 2012 9:45 pm

James Parton wrote:  *Enviable Bob strikes again! Great photography my friend.*

Thanks. But these places darn near photograph themselves. The contrasting colors and shapes and clear air make photography a snap. Here are two images from Vedauwoo. The first highlights typical scene involving large rocks.

The second shows a small ponderosa growing out of a small crack in the rock.

Many small pondies in Vedauwoo are quite old. Doug firs there are probably between 300 and 500 years old, and there are many.

Robert T. Leverett
More photos of Medicine Bow

by dbhguru » Tue Aug 07, 2012 8:23 pm

NTS, This is a photo looking northward toward Medicine Bow Peak. My previous shots from the climb were from the side of Medicine Bow looking in the direction of this photo. Schools House Rock, the Diamond, and Old Main are seen in the image. Medicine Bow Peak is the slightly rounded summit in the distance.

Re: Tallest known Bigleaf Maple (s) ??

by Will Blozan » Mon Aug 06, 2012 4:34 pm

Mario, I think BVP had one close to 160' but I am not sure where it is. Here in the east any maple over 130' is great and there are a scattering of reds over 140' and one sugar known over 140'. I think the tallest is a red maple Jess Riddle and I measured at 143.6 (?) in GRSM ca. 2007. We had a 144' sugar but my last measurement was 142', also in GRSM.

Will Blozan

Tallest known Bigleaf Maple (s) ??

by mdvaden » Mon Aug 06, 2012 10:19 am

Anyone know what the tallest known height is for Bigleaf Maple? Not a point champion, but particularly the height. I found one reference online to one in Washington at 158' tall.

Would be interested to know by state too, like Oregon's, Washington's or California's, if available.

I was curious, because yesterday I spotted a tree I thought to be a bay laurel in a north California redwood grove, then noticed the leaves were maple, and it would almost have to be a Bigleaf maple. Got a fast number on it of 155 feet for the first twig I could get a window too. Didn't really have time yesterday to get more accurate. It should be between 152 to 160 feet.

M. D. Vaden of Oregon

Re: Humboldt Redwoods State Park

by Mark Collins » Mon Aug 06, 2012 11:41 pm

Thanks Ed and Bob, glad to share. Bob, sometimes I wish I had a prettier face than my own to put in the photos! Sometimes I'm all I've got, and you are right, without a person for scale, the trees can look rather ordinary in a regular photo.

Mario, it would have been a real treat to run into you at the park. I've been inspired by your photos and discoveries over the years.

James, from my understanding, the albinos receive nutrients from the parent tree. Sometimes they are just a few sprouts here and there, but other times I've seen them as tall as approximately 20 to 30 feet or so. Often the white sprouts are mixed with dead
branches. Here's one I found last week in a different park with a higher concentration of white branches.

Mark Collins

Re: Humboldt Redwoods State Park

by gnmcmartin » Tue Aug 07, 2012 4:05 pm

James:

If you are visiting Yosemite, of course you can see the Mariposa Giant Sequoia grove, with the incredible Grizzly Giant tree, and the Fallen Monarch. But, Sequoia National Park is not very far away. I highly, highly recommend you visit, and take the Congress Trail Walk, and also take the walk to Tharp's Cabin--built in a hollow log--to see Crescent meadow, which is unbelievably beautiful. Actually the Congress Grove trail connects with the Crescent Meadow trail, but it may be easier to make them separate walks from the two separate parking lots. You can look at the trail map and decide for yourself.

For me, the Congress Trail walk--a loop of 2 or three miles--sorry, I can't remember exactly--is as spectacular as any "tree walk" you can take anywhere. It culminates in what for me (yes, I know tastes and impressions vary) is the most spectacular group of trees on God's Green Earth, the "House Group." There are much larger individual trees on the trail, including the "Senate Group," which is no more than a hundred yards away. But for a towering group of trees growing close together, the House Group" takes the prize! Yes, there are close growing redwoods about as large and even taller, but the visual impression made by the House Group for me stands alone! Those fluted reddish brown trunks rising up to their incredible crowns about 300 feet above are an image that will always be with me. I visited that place 15 or 20 times, and wish I could see it one more time.

Of course, the famous General Sherman tree is at the trailhead.

Mark:

I am sorry my monitor may not be the best, and I can't really see the details in your picture that includes the logged hillsides. But, I want to mention that in the park, the big redwoods are a bottomland forest. Many of the hillsides you see in the park were not logged--they are virgin growth. But the trees are much, much smaller. You should take one of the trails that goes up onto one of these hills, and you will observe a forest, which because it grows on the very well-drained hillsides, is completely different from that on the bottomlands.

But if you go to the end of the road that runs along Bull Creek, you will leave the uncut bottomland forest and enter an area that was logged. Most of the Bull Creek watershed WAS logged, including the hillsides above the creek as you pass out of the original land purchase funded by Rockefeller. The Save-the-Redwoods League worked for many years to purchase the whole of this watershed, and a number of years ago completed the purchase. I recommend you all join the League and support their on-going work.

Gaines McMartin
**Tallest Tree South Of SF Bay Confirmed**

by M.W.Taylor » Tue Aug 07, 2012 7:18 pm

I finally measured the tall redwoods Zane Moore reported from Big Basin State Park a few months ago.

With the help of Zane, his father Steve and Big Basin park ranger Susan Blake, I came up with 327.39 (99.7m) feet for the tallest and 323.8 feet for the nearby 2nd tallest redwood which grows in the same grove. I measured to under the duff layer at the tree's base. Zane went to above the duff layer. The prism/pole with Impulse200LR "leap-frog" survey was used. The numbers were not added up until the very end. The window to the top was from way up on a nearby hill. Judging by the attached picture I hit the true top of the trees. I used the same window Zane found and used earlier where he got 326.8 for the tall one. This grove also has other trees over 300 feet. It was very dark and shady in there. Seemed to be rather dense forest for the southern range.

The tallest redwood or any tree of any species known to grow south of SF Bay (the region consider the southern range for the species) was Old Tree at 305 feet. Centurion, a eucalyptus regnans in Tasmania was 326.9 feet (99.6 meters) when last measured by Steve Sillett by direct tape drop a few years ago. Centurion could be taller by added growth since the 2007 measurement, but this is not yet confirmed.

As usual, Zane continues to shatter tree height records.

Zane's spot-on measurements for these two redwoods would indicate to me that his other tree height measurements are accurate too.

Michael Taylor
WNTS VP
American Forests California Big Trees Coordinator
http://www.landmarktrees.net

Attachments

**Re: Moodle Online Course Format**

by James Parton » Tue Aug 07, 2012 1:49 am

Moodle is pretty impressive but it is only as good as the coursework and grading system put into it. The New Order of Druids has a well structured course of study and a good set of Mentors/Council Members overseeing the students there. NTS certainly has the data and the knowledge to utilize Moodle but the question is "Does anyone have the time to design a course of study and then find mentors for it?". We certainly have some very good tree measurers. Tree Climbing also could be a course written there too, but this one requires much more "hands on" than an online course alone could give.

Just some thoughts folks. I see Moodle in use a lot on NOD and mentor the Bardic Course there through it as well as submitting my own essays to my druid mentor there.

James E Parton
**Re: Moodle Online Course Format**

by pattyjenkins1 » Tue Aug 07, 2012 2:07 pm

Just a quick reply on the Moodle course: Our basic tree climbing course is designed so that people don't graduate from it until they 1) complete the coursework and quizzes online, 2) do several practice climbs after learning practical techniques from the DVD which goes with the course, and 3) pass a climbing skills test with a "Reviewer," an advanced climber approved by Tree Climbers International with rescue training, etc. I could imagine that NTS might be able to set up a similar system for "measurement certification."

As an aside--we're headed up to Portland for the ISA Convention, running the "Fun Climb" on Saturday Aug. 11th at Laurelhurst Park. If any of you are in the neighborhood, please stop by and say hello! Won't get back to the BBS for a couple of weeks.

Patty Jenkins

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**Re: Measurement Certification**

by M.W.Taylor » Tue Aug 07, 2012 7:38 pm

The ht-subroutines from both the Trupulse and Nikon can be used incorrectly and result in tremendous error.

The biggest folly is using the prism with the Ht-Subroutine.. A horrible way to measure a tree.

For example:

A recent survey by BLM contractors in Southern Oregon reported a 334' douglas fir. The contractors measured the tree with an Impulse200LR and prism, with the Impulse200LR in filter mode all the time and in the Ht-Subroutine.

The BLM surveyors pasted a reflector on the side of the tree and walked 120 feet away. Then the surveyors performed the Ht-Sub routine, using the prism distance as the initial Hd and then angle to top, then angle to bottom. Their results were 45 feet too high. The reason is because they used the prism as the horizontal distance to top but they measured overhanging branches due to being so close (They should have been 500 feet back to actually see the true top).

Their vertical angle was inflated because they hit overhanging leaders from beneath the tree and also their base-line was inflated due to assuming the side of the trunk to be the perpendicular point directly under the top.

The correct way to use the Ht-Subroutine for Laser Tech forestry lasers is to take device out of "filter mode" during the Ht-Subroutine part of the survey and then take the Hd(horizontal distance) to the same top as you are measuring the upper angle to. For the base angle use the side of the trunk around averaged ground level.

The most accurate way to measure a tree from the ground with Impulse200LR in my opinion is the following:

Impulse200LR with remote trigger. Tripod mounted. With Impulse in Vd mode (vertical distance mode), filter off. Take a vertical distance to the top of the tree from as far away as possible. This is the distance from the top of the tree to the centroid of Impulse200LR. Then filter on and do a leap frog survey back and forth to a prism mount on a pole will allow you to carry survey to the base of the tall tree in order to calculate how much more height to add or subtract to the total for ground level adjustments.

Michael Taylor
Re: Measurement Certification

by dbhguru » Tue Aug 07, 2012 9:29 pm

Michael,

As we all know, the kind of error committed by the BLM contractors gets repeated over and over and over. Some catch on when we explain what goes wrong, but others just don't get it, or choose not to get it, and continue doing the same thing.

I constantly scratch my head trying to understand what is so difficult to understand about the correct procedure. I have come to think it is the overpowering timber mindset that a tree is essentially a series of logs stacked on top of one another. The crown feeds the trunk, but is otherwise unimportant.

The simplified tangent method for measuring tree heights made sense when we didn't have lasers, but no longer makes sense as the primary height measuring technique. However, I've finally come to accept that most silvicultural professors will continue to teach the flawed tangent method as sufficient. I think prides and egos are involved more than commonsense. Human nature is human nature. Still, I hold out hope that progress will be made. It only takes a few to get the ball rolling. Fortunately, we have Dr. Don Bragg to present the sine method to colleagues. I trust him completely to know who to go after.

Robert T. Leverett

We Have Reached 1000 Facebook Likes!

by edfrank » Tue Aug 07, 2012 9:50 pm

We have reached 1000 Likes on our Facebook Page.

That is pretty good and one of the largest of the various tree focused pages. The International Society of Arboriculture is larger with 6,268 likes, but both of these are a drop in the bucket when compared to George Takei's Page with 2,420,067 likes. It is still a milestone for the NTS Facebook Page.
Re: Measurement Certification

by KoutaR » Wed Aug 08, 2012 12:51 pm

Ed, There are at least two methods to screw up heights with a rangefinder with built-in clinometer and with the 2-point method:

1. The equipment is rotated around its length axis when you push the button. -> The clinometer gives too big angle. (Though the equipment must be MARKEDLY rotated.)

2. The equipment is not still enough and you accept the first reading. If the clinometer was swinging to the wrong direction when you push the button, it gives too big angle. Make always at least a few shoots.

The new Nikon model with the 3-point routine seems to be Forestry Pro, without the number 550.

http://www.nikon.com/products/sportopti ... /index.htm

Kouta Rasanen

Conjoined or hugging? trees

by Coll » Sat Aug 04, 2012 5:45 pm

There is an article titled "Inosculation" (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inosculation) in Wikipedia. The phenomenon consists in two trees fusing their cambium, and growing together. According to this article, the trees thus joined are said to be "conjoined". At the end of the article, in the section "references" there is a link to Ed Frank article "Multitrunk and other tree forms" (http://www.nativetreesociety.org/multi/index_multi.htm). The article describes "hugging trees (formerly conjoined)". Now my question: Is "hugging trees" a widely used term, in which case the Wikipedia should be corrected, or is it only a local denomination? Are there other additional sources for reference? I will appreciate comments, particularly from Ed Frank.

Josep Collellmir

Re: Conjoined or hugging? trees

by edfrank » Sat Aug 04, 2012 7:58 pm

Coll, I devised the term Conjoined when initially working on the Multitrunk and Other Forms document. I could not find any name for them at the time aside from the occasional use of the term "fused." I also had used the term fused in referring to one of the images above the description itself. I am not sure when the initial version of the webpage was first produced and published to our discussion list.

The original text of the Inosculation article was published to Wikipedia in 2004. http://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Inosculation&diff=500150667&oldid=3251579 In the original version there were the terms Grafting and Pleaching used, but not conjoined. It is interesting to see that some of the revisions were made by current NTS members, such as M. D. Vaden. I am not sure when the term conjoined first appeared in the Wikipedia article or who made the addition.

From my perspective, I wanted the term conjoined to just refer to those that had actually grew together, so I changed the term to hugging to also include those trees that were entwined and rubbing but either had not actually grown together or where it was unclear if they had done so.

In light of your question and considering the terms usage on Wikipedia, I have revised the description on our website to include both terms:

Category 5: Conjoined and Hugging Trees
Sometimes two trees may grow to large size adjacent to each other and grow together. These may be of the same species or even trees of two different genera or families. These consist of two
basic forms:  a) Conjoined - two trees that have become grafted together. Generally this grafting is between two trees of the same or closely related species or genera. (see Inosculation: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inosculation ) These are also sometime called Fused Trees; and  b) Hugging - two trees that are not grafted together, but are physically touching, rubbing, intertwined, or entangled. These need to be considered on a case by case basis. In general the standard height, girth, and crown spread measurements can be made for each individual of the conjoined or hugging pair.

As for other references - I really don't have any. The term was created as part of a framework to suggest how these different tree forms should be measured. Nobody else is doing or has done anything like that besides the Native Tree Society. It is likely that I made up the term, and because of us it was added to the Wikipedia article. I don't know what else to say.

Why did I want to use a term like conjoined instead of fused? The reason is that often you get multitrunk trees growing from the same root mass to form a large mass near the base of the tree. Essentially the trunks are all part of the same organism, even if we have chosen to define a tree as a single trunk for measurement purposes. The process whereby these merge is generally referred to as fusing. The clump of wood at the base before it splits into individual stems somewhere higher on the many trunks is called a fused mass.

I decided on the term conjoined to distinguish it from the common usage of fused used when referring to trunks of a multitrunk tree that have grown together at their base. It is meant to refer to two or more trees that have grown together that are distinct individuals, each having their own individual root system, or that may even be trees of different species. These are of two different things and therefore I choose to use two different terms.

Edward Frank

"Diseased Trees New Source of Climate Gas"

by Joe » Wed Aug 08, 2012 5:42 am

http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/08/120807151309.htm

Diseased Trees New Source of Climate Gas

ScienceDaily (Aug. 7, 2012) — Diseased trees in forests may be a significant new source of methane that causes climate change, according to researchers at the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies in Geophysical Research Letters.

Joe Zorzin

Re: "Diseased Trees New Source of Climate Gas"

by Joe » Thu Aug 09, 2012 8:29 am

Another link to the same story in the Yale News is: http://news.yale.edu/2012/08/08/diseased-trees-are-source-climate-changing-gas

On that site they have a picture: http://news.yale.edu/sites/default/files/tree-flame.jpg?1344441616 “A flame fueled by methane shoots out of an oak tree being cored at Yale Myers Forest” which may be of some interest to you tree core folks.

Joe Zorzin
Forest Reserve Science Advisory Committee

by dbhguru » Wed Aug 08, 2012 9:13 pm

NTS,

In Sept, we’ll have the first official meeting of the Forest Reserve Science Advisory Committee set up by DCR to monitor and advise on the Mass Forest Reserves. I am a member of the committee representing the Native Tree Society. So, NTS will be represented in a major initiative to advise on protection and monitoring of the Reserves. I’m looking forward to participating on our behalf. TNC, TTOR, Mass Audubon, UMASS, Harvard Forest also have representation.

I’ll keep everyone informed and seek advice from the rest of you as time goes on. MTSF and MSF are part of the system of reserves. It is a pretty visionary system. My friend Joe Zorzin was on the Steering Committee that advised on the design of the system of reserves, parks, and working forests. Although he represented consulting foresters, he was one of the most persistent and eloquent voices for the reserves. We owe Joe a lot. He had to literally battle other forestry voices to insure timber propaganda wasn’t presented and accepted as fact.

Robert T. Leverett
Co-founder and Executive Director
Eastern Native Tree Society
Co-founder and President
Friends of Mohawk Trail State Forest

Amana, Iowa

by dbhguru » Wed Aug 08, 2012 8:55 pm

NTS, Monica and I passed through Amana, Iowa a couple days ago. Amana is the home of the famous Amana Colonies. We stopped by a wetland and I photographed the large area of American Lotus there. Here are several images of American Lotus. Native Americans used them as a food source. They are spectacular plants.
Tomorrow, we'll stop by Cook Forest, PA and then head to the New York Catskills. After that, we'll be home and I'll write up a series of trip reports.

Robert T. Leverett

Mario, it would have been a real treat to run into you at the park. I've been inspired by your photos and discoveries over the years.

Mark ... **Could be a toss of the coin** on that this time around - lol

Visit #1 to the Grieg, French, Bell loop was solo, and the shot 2nd, below, was that day, along with a maple measuring. The top photo was the following day ... **may or many not be your cup of tea.** A networking photoshoot thing with a Eureka model.

Actually, I got a hoard of photography done the past few days. I did a bunch of photos with the model below at Avenue of the Giants, plus at a huge log stack in Eureka.

Then an arborist and his wife, came from South Africa, and I took a bunch of photos of them at Jedediah Smith redwoods and Prairie Creek redwoods. Just general redwoods and forest photos stuff. The weather and lighting was pretty darn good during the visit. It will be a memorable week, and with new friends.

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**Re: Humboldt Redwoods State Park**

by **mdvaden** » Thu Aug 09, 2012

Mark Collins wrote: Thanks Ed and Bob, glad to share. Bob, sometimes I wish I had a prettier face than my own to put in the photos! Sometimes I'm all I've got, and you are right, without a person for scale, the trees can look rather ordinary in a regular photo.
This was only the second photo shoot where I've used flash on stands before. I prefer ambient light. Two Canon 430EX II flashes. Actually came out a bit better than I expected.

I've driven by the grove and loop several times, but never stopped there before. It's almost mesmerizing. Little rolling hills of redwoods and redwood sorrel that eventually meet some new growth. But an awesomely beautiful place. I think a few TV commercials for pharmaceuticals have been recorded here, and I can see why. The location in itself is virtually healing.

Here's one standing in a nice Redwood Sorrel area.

I'm beginning to like the Humboldt redwoods quite a bit more the past few visits, as I find more alternative spots for various kinds of weather.

M. D. Vaden of Oregon
Green Frogs

by michael gatonska » Thu Aug 09, 2012 6:40 pm

I captured this soundscape during the green frog breeding season in Litchfield, CT. Setting up my equipment near a pond where they had congregated to compete for call time and recognition, I was able to listen to and record some very vigorous calls. Males song an accented 'twang' sound, similar to the banjo, or in my opinion, more akin to the sanxian, which is a Chinese three-stringed fretless lute which is plucked.

Acoustic communication is essential for the frog's survival in both territorial defense and in localization and attraction of mates. Sounds from frogs travel through the air, through water, and through the substrate (the surface where a plant or animal grows on).

Unfortunately, for female frogs, increasing noise from nearby traffic, airplanes, construction and other human ambient noises have been shown to slow their abilities to listen for and locate male frogs that are calling for their services during the mating season. Unfortunately, many species of frogs have struggled to adapt their calls to the growing demands of increased environmental noise, which environmentalists say could lead to less reproduction and declining populations of these frogs.

Frogs produce a rich variety of sounds, calls, and songs during their courtship and mating rituals. The callers, usually males, make stereotyped sounds in order to advertise their location, their mating readiness and their willingness to defend their territory; listeners respond to the calls by return calling, by approach, and by going silent. These responses have been shown to be important for species recognition, mate assessment, and localization.

Females must recognize the male they choose by his call. By localizing where his call is coming from she can find him. An additional challenge is that she is localizing his call while listening to the many other frogs in the chorus, and to the noise of the stream and insects. The breeding pond is a very noisy place, and females must distinguish a male's calls from the other noise. How they recognize the sound pattern of the male they are pursuing from the surrounding noise is similar to how intelligent hearing aids help people hear certain sounds and cancel out others.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ozsCvy9Pu0

Michael Gatonska

Re: Green Frogs

by AndrewJoslin » Fri Aug 17, 2012 10:13 pm

Not to get picky on you Ed but that green frog photo you posted is a bullfrog. The easy way to tell the difference is the green frog has a “seam” or ridge on each side of it's head that runs all the way back to its rear. The bullfrog's seam turns down just after its ear.
Today I was happy to see a Northern Leopard Frog, a Pickerel Frog and a Green Frog, all in one walk in the woods. Pickerel Frog has a really odd call, here's one calling with a background of Spring Peepers chorusing
www.youtube.com/watch?v=RvamqQXtzO8

Andrew Joslin

Re: Humboldt Redwoods State Park

by mdvaden » Thu Aug 09, 2012 7:52 pm

Mark Collins wrote: Mario, the only thing missing from your photo shoot is a tree measuring laser or two! :)

Almost got some photos of us measuring Arco Giant up at Prairie Creek, but we only had like an hour to spare before leaving to get back home. So I took the couple to see a special valley and got the rest of photos in there since they may not return for a long time. The husband, an arborist, helped me measure Arco Giant. I did Founders Tree on my own a couple of days earlier.

So definitely had the laser out there.

One of my favorite laser photos is one of Atkin's Impulse 200 LR with redwood tree reflections, from a couple of years ago.

M. D. Vaden of Oregon

Looking back over the journey just concluded

by dbhguru » Fri Aug 10, 2012 5:23 pm

NTS. Monica and I rolled into Florence, mid-afternoon, after a rain-drenched trip through the Catskills. It was a re-introduction to the green East. For me, the return is mixed. I prefer the West, but most of my tree mission is in the East, so there you go.

I plan to write a complete description of our trek in the coming weeks. Basically, it will be a better accounting to go with images that I’ve already sent. For example, Shoshone Canyon east of Yellowstone is a great place to visit. Monica and I stayed at a lodge (Elephant’s Head Lodge) that was built by a niece of William F. Cody. The owner of the lodge is a part Shoshoni Indian with an incredible story to tell. The canyon, itself, is up to 3,000 feet deep and is cut by the Shoshone River going between Rattlesnake and Cedar Mountains. The volcanic Absaroka Range provides incredible rock scenery in every direction. I wish I had been able to spend more time in the canyon.

Here is a geological look at Shoshone Canyon from Bill Butler's Internet description of ancestral rivers of the West.

"The standard answer is that Shoshone Canyon is the result of the river being superimposed over the top of the mountain. Thus the sequence of events would be:

1) The Rattlesnake Range was uplifted during the Laramide period of mountain building (50 to 70 million years ago).
2) Subsequently the Rattlesnake range was buried by sediments “washed in from elsewhere”, and the result was a level surface that buried the mountain range.
3) The Shoshone River developed eastward over the top of the buried mountain range.
4) Renewed regional uplift has led to recent erosion.
5) The softer sediments to the east and west of the range were eroded away, and except for erosion caused by the river, the mountain range has been exhumed. Rattlesnake Mountain is the remnant to the
north of the canyon and Cedar Mountain is the remnant to the south.

This process, if true, would be a classic example of superimposition.

While the above sequence has been accepted for years, it may not be what really happened. It appears that Shoshone Canyon may be an example of “Antecedence” instead of superimposition.

If in fact, Shoshone Canyon is actually an example of antecedence, then the following sequence would be true.

1) During the mid Tertiary, much of the area in the vicinity of Cody, WY was beveled down to Mesozoic layers. This includes two anticlines that had been uplifted in Laramide time just south of Cody. (The remnants of both of these anticlines are included in the visible portion of the upper right corner of the picture.) The Rattlesnake Range did not exist yet.

2) The Shoshone River established its course eastward over what would become Rattlesnake Mountain.

3) Then as the Rattlesnake Range was uplifted (most likely within the last 10 million years), the river cut the canyon.

The antecedence model appears to fit the observations better than the superimposition model. Thus Shoshone Canyon is presented here as an example of antecedence and not superimposition.”

In the above explanation, the Rattlesnake Range is misnamed. It is actually the Absarokas. Here are two more images from within the canyon.
**Re: Looking back over the journey just concluded**

by dbhguru » Sat Aug 11, 2012 8:56 am

Joe, Yes, I groove on geology. I just wish I was better at it. Soooo complicated. Monica and I visited the Dinosaur National Monument and they give a tour. You get to see fossils still in the rocks. Neat stuff. I recently got an email from a friend who quoted a political pundit bemoaning what has happened to his party. I'll let you guess as to which party. One of his staffers told him that dinosaur fossils were a hoax. Oops, somebody forgot to tell the dinosaurs that. Can you imagine? Well, actually, I can imagine. The moron element in this country has exploded. Gone through the roof. I imagine they'll think the new Mars rover is a hoax.

Regardless, of the fool element in the country, here are two more canyon images. Forest fires in Montana made photography more of a challenge, but these two made it. Location is Ten Sleep Canyon in the Bighorns.

First, an excerpt from Wikipedia on the canyon.

_Ten Sleep was an American Indian rest stop, so called because it was 10 days travel, or “10 sleeps,” from Fort Laramie (southeast), Yellowstone National Park (west-northwest), and the Indian Agency on the Stillwater River in Montana (northwest). There are numerous archeological sites throughout the area, with frequent discoveries of artifacts such as arrowheads, pictographs and petroglyphs. Ten Sleep was also the site of the Spring Creek Raid, one of the last feuds of the West's Sheep and Cattlemen's War. It was there in March, 1909 that cattlemen attacked sheep herders and their flock, killing three men and shooting hundreds of the sheep. Caught and convicted, this was the end of major conflict, although it was many years before the two livestock growers' groups resolved their differences._

_The yellowish-gray to white sandstone which forms much of Ten Sleep Canyon is named the Tensleep formation (Pennsylvanian), and dominates much of the western slope of the Big Horn Mountains._

And now, the images.
Ten Sleep Canyon isn’t one of the deeper ones we visited, but it has a spacious feeling that I like. I recommend the trip through it if anyone is traveling on U.S. 16 going toward or from Buffalo, WY. You cross 9,666-foot Powder River Pass on the way. Rocks there are estimated to be 3 billion years old.

Robert T. Leverett

Re: Looking back over the journey just concluded.

by dbhguru » Sat Aug 11, 2012 11:31 am

It has been pretty dry according to locals here in New England and the summer has been hot and muggy. I would imagine that the cool summers of New England past are going to be just that - past. Climate change is real! Actually, I already miss the high, dry of the West, and the cool nights, but alas, I have work to do here. So, I’ll stop complaining and buckle down. But Monica and I are going to try to figure out a way to spend at least 3 months in the West next summer - maybe three and a half.

Right now, I still have the West on my mind. The opportunities to document trees and forest sites in Colorado are for all practical purposes, unlimited, and Wyoming has more possibilities that I had here-to-fore realized. Then, there is Don up in Alaska. He has the extreme challenges of geography (not to mention huge bears), but one can take it a site at a time.

I do believe that there is a worthy western mission despite what our tiny acknowledged WNTS membership can hope to accomplish in the near term. What is most exciting is that with Michael, Zane, and others on the West Coast cranking, the future is brighter than ever before. I also want to explore a little more of northern New Mexico. The Sangres north and east of Santa Fe are calling out. I hope you can join us next summer. One thing is certain. There is a wealth of ancient trees in the West to document independent of tree size. For example, the Colorado Plateau is vast and loaded with old pinyons and junipers. I see them all over the place. Endless opportunities for photography and documentation.

When you go into the gorges and canyons, Doug Fir, Ponderosa Pine, Colorado Blues, etc. present themselves in pristine form. The more rugged terrain tends to be overlooked because it isn’t continuous forest and often not of commercial interest, but prime habitat for us. We march to the beat of our own drums.

Robert T. Leverett

This really bums me out (MA)

by Marc Depoto » Fri Aug 10, 2012 11:25 pm

State’s grandest white oak felled by arsonist
NEW BRAIN TREE’S GENTLE GIANT
By Kim Ring TELEGRAM & GAZETTE STAFF
Wednesday, August 8, 2012
http://www.telegram.com/article/20120808/NEWS/108089940/0/FRONTPAGE

Re: This really bums me out

by dbhguru » Sat Aug 11, 2012 8:15 am

I knew the tree. It was a fine old oak and a great symbol. It wasn’t as tall as indicated in the article, but who cares. It has been years since I visited it, but remember it well.

After my initial visit, I actually found a larger white oak called the Huguenot Oak, which still stands, but is gradually dying back. The Huguenot oak predates a middle of the 1700s Huguenot settlement. I don’t know anything about the origin of the New Braintree Oak. In terms of accessibility, the New Braintree Oak was more accessible - too accessible.

As to degree of punishment of the offenders, I’ll pass, but there certainly should be some. I am heartened at the number of people who related to the old tree.

Robert T. Leverett
Re: This really bums me out

by PAwildernessadvocate » Sat Aug 11, 2012 11:03 am

I don't remember all of the details anymore, but several years ago in Warren, PA a couple of idiots late one night set fire to a building on the immediate south end of the Hickory Street Bridge in order to create a diversion for first responders, while they broke into and robbed a drug store in town on the other side of the Allegheny River. Well, there was a very nice large stately old oak tree (red oak I think) on that property in close proximity to the structure that was set on fire. The fire damaged the oak tree terribly before it could be extinguished. The decision was made to cut down the old oak because it was so badly damaged. What a stupid way for such a nice old tree to go! I don't remember for sure but I bet you it was at least a 4’ to 5’ dbh tree. To my knowledge there was no problem with the tree prior to the fire in terms of being rotten in the middle or otherwise in decline.

Kirk Johnson

Video: Forests of the Allegheny River Islands

by edfrank » Sat Aug 11, 2012 8:40 pm

Forests of the Allegheny River Islands: Interim Report

Video of a talk describing the results of forest research on the islands in the Middle Allegheny River in Warren and Forest Counties, PA by Edward Frank, Dale Luthringer, Carl Harting, and Anthony Kelly of the Native Tree Society between 2003 through Dec 2011. About the report: “This report compiles the results as of December 2011 for the ongoing project of documenting forests and trees of the islands of the Allegheny River Island Wilderness and nearby islands in the middle Allegheny River in north central Pennsylvania. The islands included in this report are located in a stretch extending from the Buckaloons Recreation Area, seven miles downstream of Warren, Pennsylvania through Holeman Island, four miles downstream of Tionesta, Pennsylvania. This includes all of the islands in the Allegheny River Islands Wilderness, a number of forest service islands, and several private islands. Major islands investigated among others include, Crull's Island, Thompson's Island, Courson Island, Hemlock Island, King Island, Baker Island, and Holeman Island. At the present time some of the islands have been visited multiple times by groups of people, while others have seen only a quick scouting survey, or have not yet been visited.” Talk was given by Edward Frank at Cook Forest State Park, PA on July 7, 2012.

NTS, This is a video of a talk I gave on July 7, 2012 at Cook Forest State Park, PA. The latter part of the video has not been edited as I like, but unfortunately my laptop is not new enough to complete the editing without crashing repeatedly. The complete talk is still presented and is just over an hour in length.

“Trees and Forests of the Allegheny River Island Wilderness and Nearby Islands: Interim Report through December 2011” by Edward Frank, Dale Luthringer, Carl Harting, and Anthony Kelly

Native Tree Society Special Publication #10


Edward Frank
Romainia - Mountain Forests

by hamadryad » Sun Aug 12, 2012 2:49 pm

Just got back from Romania, a great trip all round visiting the last villages to still be working the trees and land the old ways, living in wooden thatched houses that are a unique style to the region. I was there to learn about rural Romania, pollarding, lime burning etc. Unfortunately I did not come across any pristine forest, but spoke to an archaeologist who assures me that pristine forest does exist in the Carpathia regions (mountain range) I hope to return sometime next year to that zone. However I did discover beech forest managed heavily by man managed for many many generations, a landscape entirely worked and worked hard by the peoples of the region (Alba county)

These mountain forests have been repeatedly felled and regenerated some through the coppiced stools of those felled. A remarkable area with the most rapid and healthy regrowth and re generation, which is undoubtedly due to the cycle of felling and harvesting sustaining a stage of succession in the fungal community that is of course mycorrhizae, with Ceps and Chanterelles being a huge by product supplying a massive export from the region in the main harvest. Collection points throughout the region buy the fruits of this very productive system off the local gatherers and many are shipped to Italy and other European countries, along with Bilberries and other fruits which are also abundant because of the mosaic forest/pasture habitat that is sustained by the communities activities.

The purpose of the trip in co-operation with Grampus (http://www.grampusheritage.co.uk/) was to learn about the old ways and skills of the region and design projects that will sustain the skills and knowledge of these communities for the long term. Sadly the younger generations are leaving the old villages to seek work across Europe and live a modern life, and who can blame them? and its most urgent we rescue these traditional skills, peoples heritage, culture and knowledge before its too late. it was evident that the decline has begun to show, it was sad to see such a wonderful way of life in decline. this way of life must be preserved, we have so much to learn from it about truly sustainable ways of land management on a landscape scale, for they have made it an art for thousands of years here.

A local woman feeding her cow (milk for cheese etc) with ash "Shreddings" normally done when hay is exhausted over a long winter and supplementary fodder must be added to the diet. These cows and other livestock are kept in barns all winter and overnight (Wolves and Bears roam wild here) This Lady and her son very generously not only shared information about the ways but gave us this demonstration. A priceless and rare image.

The Carline thistle a prairie/pasture lime stone perennial
Trees are ring barked long before they are harvested, a practice evolved of the economy of effort needed to eek out a living from hard land. the wood seasons standing and dries making it half the weight, a bit of lateral thinking!

The wood working skills of these Romanian villagers is outstanding

Beech with bilberry
Fomitopsis pinicola a.k.a the red banded polypore, common on broadleaf and spruce in the region (here on Fagus sylvatica)

These Fagus are ring barked as described (different times) one is now ready to be harvested for use, the other in another year or so.

Bilberries doing well in a forest clearing created by felling

Fagus with F. fomentarius
The tree hunter my ol mate Rob McBride standing in amongst regrowth from a felled Q. petrea, which made up the majority of this particular woodland.

Nothing is wasted, the wood stack to the left is strips from the offcuts from milling timber, they will be used for many items, the bark covered outer planks are often used to create fencing boards. The stack further to the rear is produced from pollards and has many uses.

This scene shows the high pastures used for hay production, cattle never graze here, they are taken to higher pastures, these hay meadows reserved purely for winter feed production. This produces a rich wildflower habitat where butterflies and many species of Grass hopper thrive.
Willow pollard close to homestead and a typical Romanian haystack, brought down from the high meadow to be kept close to the overwintering cattle as snow in winter means getting out is impossible, everything is based close to home in preparation for the snow.

There are so many skills to preserve, tapestry is a common theme.

Even an old Hay fork broken has a use! recycling taken to extremes is a common theme.

Everything is done for economy of movements; here an Ash (F. excelsior) pollard used to supplement winter hay stocks is right next to the barn the cows are kept in overwinter, keeping transport to a minimum.
Re: Romainia - Mountain Forests

by hamadryad » Sun Aug 12, 2012 4:28 pm

James Parton wrote: *I have worked with two guys from Romania and one woman. It makes for interesting conversation. The Carpathian culture looks not much different from the Appalachian one I know. They do things more as we used to do a few decades back. Thatched barns I don’t think were ever common here though wood shingled barns were.*
From what I saw wooden slates were also common and suspect this came later, and was more common in the valley depths as opposed to high on the hillsides here. modern tiles also making an appearance, probably introduced by the Turks/Romans?

Anthony Croft

**Kip and Laura's Place**

by dbhguru » Sun Aug 12, 2012 5:01 pm

NTS, The attached Word File provides an account of Monica's and my stay in Durango, CO, from June 26th until July 20th. Both Monica and I loved the time we spent taking care of Kip and Laura Stransky's house. But the account covers much more. Hope it is enjoyable.

[attachment](Kip and Laura’s Place.doc) (2.15 MiB)

Robert T. Leverett

**Kip and Laura’s Place**

By Bob Leverett

(with editorial emendations by Monica Leverett)

**Introduction**

For the past 7 years, save 2007, Monica and I have made a trip from our home in Florence, MA, to the Rocky Mountain West. We have special places we visit on the way, and we add a few new locations each trip, but our main focus are sites in Colorado and Wyoming. For me, the western excursions are more than a serial stream of vacations; they are a necessity. I need the open spaces of the West, the high, dry air, the mountains, the canyons, and the uncluttered roads. I need high light levels, and freedom from the noise and congestion of the East, which I find increasingly claustrophobic. Monica is most understanding of my need to go west, so around the middle of June, off we go. Well, it isn’t quite that simple. Let me explain.

We’re not rich, so budgeting for a long trip presents us with challenges. Or at least, that would be the case were it not for some extraordinary friends. We often house sit for two to four weeks, and that reduces our expense to a manageable level. This past June 26th to July 20th, we “house-sat” for friends, Kip and Laura Stransky, in Durango, Colorado. This is the account of our experiences during that time period.

**Durango and Environs**

Durango is in the Rockies, but that doesn’t peg it precisely, because the Rocky Mountains encompass a vast geographical area. They are considered to be one of the longest mountain chains on the planet – extending over 3,000 miles, and the terrain is very varied. The Rockies are generally dated to between 55 and 80 million years before the present. This was the main uplift, called the Laramide Orogeny, but, as we see them today, the individual ranges weren’t uplifted all at the same time. Ages of today’s ranges vary from as young as nine million years (Grand Tetons) to as old as eighty. In fact, the Rockies aren’t a range of mountains, but a chain of ranges and sub-ranges with varying geological histories, dating back to a common origin – I think. Local names prevail throughout. In southwestern Colorado, we find the San Juans. Their origin is considered to be around twenty-five million years before the present. They were our destination. Durango is located in the shadows of the San Juan Mountains and their sub-ranges, the combination of which comprises Colorado’s most extensive mountainous region. The San Juans boast thirteen peaks rising to the elevation of 14,000 feet – fourteeners, as they are called in Colorado. Colorado has 53 or 54, which is all of them for the Rockies. Outside Colorado, Wyoming’s Gannett Peak comes closest to reaching the hallowed threshold at 13,804 feet (NAVD 29). Beyond the fourteeners, the San Juans boast the largest geographical area of land over 10,000 feet within the lower 48 states plus Hawaii.
With the San Juans as a backdrop, the town of Durango sits at an altitude of 6,512 feet, or so the sign says when you reach the city limits. I don’t know where that elevation was taken, perhaps at the courthouse. The Animas River runs through Durango, and has its lowest elevation, somewhat below 6,400 feet, at the southern boundary. Elsewhere around Durango, ridges and mountains are everywhere to be seen. Elevations range from about 6,400 to over 7,000 feet within the settled area of Durango. Raider Ridge east of Fort Lewis College has points over 7,000 feet. Animas City Mountain is 8,163 feet and is part of Durango, although not a settled part.

Outside the town to the north, the land builds up in elevation following the scenic Animas River Valley until the San Juans are encountered. U.S. 550 crosses 10,640-foot Coal Bank Pass and 10,910-foot Molas Pass on its way to the historic mining town of Silverton. To the west, U.S. 160 climbs to about 8,400 feet going to the small town of Mancos. This is also the route to Mesa Verde National Park. Eastward, U.S. 160 ambles for a number of miles, crossing a small outlier range of the San Juans called the HDs. It is a long haul to snowy Wolf Creek pass at 10,860 feet and down to the wide San Luis Valley, largest high mountain valley in North America.

When you drive into Durango, via U.S. 160, from east or west, you see that the town is almost encircled by mountains. U.S. 550 South is the only direct route that allows one to avoid a significant mountain pass with winter implications. The closest Interstate in Colorado is I-70, which is around 150 miles distant. Lack of an Interstate is often considered a drawback to living in Durango, but in my view, the lack of a throughway like I-70 is a blessing. It keeps Durango from being too convenient, thus preserving some of the region’s culture and history that would otherwise eventually be swallowed up in development such as is seen on the eastern front of the Rockies. The kind of development that has exploded in the Denver corridor gobbles up open space, and conditions the population to a lifestyle that is distinctly urban with all the negative implications. So far, Durango has escaped that menace. I hope that doesn’t change.

Kip and Laura’s Place

One area near the southern border of Durango lies on what is called Florida (pronounced Flo-REE-da) Mesa, which is bounded by the Animas River to the west and the Florida River to the east. Kip and Laura live on the mesa, just off U.S. Route 550. Their property ends on a steep bank going down to the flood plain of the Animas River. My GPS gave the elevation as 6,630 feet. Kip and Laura’s home is a place of sweeping panoramas. Looking westward, beyond the Animas River lies the La Plata sub-range of the San Juans. The mountains visible directly from the house rise to almost 13,000 feet. So, the view from the kitchen is a picture window classic, morning, noon, or evening. And the sunsets are often vivid. I’ll present the first image from Kip and Laura’s place as a not untypical sunset that we observed. It produced contemplative feelings that gave us cause to think about what is really important in life – musings about quality over quantity, simplicity over complexity, and space over sprawl.

I should point out that the climate on the Florida Mesa varies greatly. I can’t speak to the winters, but during summer, it can be hot in the day. However, the evenings cool off, usually into the mid-50s. That’s good sleeping weather and there is usually a breeze that wafts in, billowing out the curtains on the south and west sides of the bedroom.
Here is another view from behind Kip and Laura’s house emphasizing the sunsets. The high peak in the left side of the image is 12,790-foot Lewis Mountain, named for a Lieutenant Colonel killed in the Indian wars of the region. Durango’s Fort Lewis College is also named for the good colonel.

Now for a daytime view looking northward. In the next image, the main part of Durango lies in the basin near the center of the photo and extending to the left. The vegetation in the immediate foreground includes pinyon pine, juniper, and native grasses. Kip keeps a substantial level of cover for the small animals that can make use of it, e.g. rabbits.

I should explain that attention to wildlife needs on the property fits with Kip’s background with the Colorado Division of Wildlife. In retirement, he’s able to pursue his gardening impulses, but he never strays far from his roots. He’s been known to deposit a deer carcass behind his house so he and Laura can watch mountain lions feed. I think that is just pretty darn cool.

So far, I have focused mainly on the land surrounding Kip and Laura’s place. But I’d like to bring their actual home to life as Monica and I experienced it over the course of the nearly four weeks we stayed there. From here on, I’ll refer to the place as KLP, i.e. Kip and Laura’s Place.

KLP is not merely a house or a home in any of the conventional uses of the term. KLP is a vegetative and wildlife sanctuary. The physical house is immersed in nature. It offers an intimate connection to the surrounding vegetation, wildlife, and scenery of the region while providing the comforts of a physical structure that is welcoming and convenient without sacrificing its connectivity to the Earth. That is a mouthful, but I hope it conveys the difference between how most of us live and KLP. Here is an example. We could look out a window virtually any day and often witness a scene such as the following.
We could go out on the deck and watch the wildlife from an even closer vantage point. The deck is mainly on the north side of the house, but a corridor wraps around to the west side that provides access to bird feeders.

Monica loved the deck. In the mornings she enjoyed her first cup of coffee sitting out there. She was surrounded by Kip’s flowers arranged in pots (she kept them well watered), pinyons with avian life, an apricot tree that provided fruit during our stay sufficient to feed all Durango, and a partial view of distant mountains. Some homeowners might fear the close proximity of the pinyons that lean over the house, but they act as extensions of the house, providing a transition from indoors to out-of-doors, a surprisingly seamless transition. Then there is the apricot tree on the east side of the main deck.

I developed a special relationship with that apricot tree. I would go out in the morning and find a fresh supply of apricots strewn around the deck and walkway, which I would dutifully sweep up. Next morning would be a repeat. One morning, I grew weary of the cleanup and said some choice words to the fecund apricot tree, then went indoors to get a broom. Upon returning, the tree immediately dropped two apricots squarely on my head as I stepped out the door. I got the message. Nice, nice apricot tree.

Here is a look at the deck. Notice the green hose. That was Monica’s job. You can also see some apricots in the upper right corner.

I observe that homeowners throughout Durango may also see deer in their yards, but the deer might or might not be welcome. But in KLP, the deer are an integral part of the environment – co-residents. So are raccoons and other smaller animals, and occasionally, a mountain lion will pay the property a visit. In fact, one made swift work of 17 chickens in the chicken coup on one occasion when Laura went to check on them. You take the good with the challenging.

I don’t want to leave the impression that KLP is untrammeled nature. Kip is a master gardener and the house is surrounded by exquisite floral displays. In addition, apricot trees uncharacteristically blend with pinyons and junipers to provide a more domestic ambiance. Down stairs, Laura has a piano and organ. Plenty of refinement. But, you quickly come to realize that everything cooperates with everything else in a way that makes you feel as if you are simultaneously one with the land, one with the house, and one with the wildlife. Neither Monica nor I could ever recall experiencing anything quite like the feelings that we had, and of course the spiritual imprint of Kip and Laura permeates all corners.

**The Daily Routine**

In addition to maintaining a presence, our role in house sitting was to care for the two cats, which we came to love, feed the chickens, collect their eggs, feed the birds, feed the fish, and do a not inconsiderable amount of watering. Oh yes, and to periodically make a run to get fresh water for the house since the well does not produce enough to support cooking, bathing, cleaning, etc. Kip has a truck and a 250-gallon tank and also a trailer with a 500-gallon tank. Leery of the trailer, I used the truck and the 250-gallon tank. Monica and I worked as a team. We felt accomplished in our maintaining potable water for the house, and also learned a thing or two about water conservation. Laura had given us some hints before she and Kip left for China.
I should mention that irrigation water is used from the ranch across the road to provide for watering the outdoor plants. I had to keep a filter clean and to be sure to follow a protocol that kept all areas sufficiently watered. I got pretty good at it, if I do say so. It gave me a feeling of contributing and earning my keep. Then the deer ate all of Kip’s lilies and I felt that I had somehow let KLP down. However, it is all part of the cycle. Kip and Laura enjoy the flowers when they have them and then are gracious in surrendering the delicate blossoms to a different cause. They are not trying to control nature or sterilize their surrounding so that they become separated from the natural surroundings. That’s what most of us do, but it isn’t Kip and Laura’s way.

One of the main reasons to house sit was to provide companionship to the cats. The two cats, Eddie and Pippin, are both characters. They are inside cats although they have a large area in which to roam, including two outdoor spaces that are fenced to prevent escape.

Eddie was named by one of Kip and Laura’s high school exchange students, who decided he was special – Special Ed. It didn’t take Eddie long to own me body and soul. He was master and I was his vassal. He was laid back, and I had no fear of being scratched. If there was a possibility of food or a treat, Eddie was there in a heartbeat, earning our nickname for him of “Fast Eddie.” He also was quite enterprising: he learned how to open the greenhouse door if it wasn’t locked, and had artistically “improved” the outdoor screen door trying to get out to be with us. He just wanted to be with people.

Pippin was a different story. He had issues, and was definitely a slightly anxious, though lovable, cat. He made quite an impression on Monica, who came to understand him and his personality and his needs in a deep way. Pippin has gorgeous green eyes, and likes to be a meditative sphinx with front paws extended. I liked Pippin, but was always wary of him. He would lie on his side, wanting his back scratched, but once that operation commenced, he sometimes changed his mind, and would suddenly take a swipe at me. I learned to be ready to quickly pull back. Yet he was always happy to see us, and clearly liked getting attention. Sometimes we sang to him. We both miss the cats even now. They are an integral part of the energy signature of KLP, and help make the place what it is.

Monica was supremely disciplined about our chores. Once up in the morning, she in soldierly fashion assigned us our duties. On a typical day, I started our morning coffee and retrieved the paper. I would then go across the road and insure that the irrigation water was running and that a cow had not stepped on the filter. I’d clean it, then return and get watering underway. We’d have our morning walk down the road. The same dogs always barked, and across the road was a field with a small prairie dog town. That’s something you don’t see every day, at least next to your house. We would watch them scurry around.

After our walk, we’d collect the chicken food and go feed the girls, as I called them. I usually collected the eggs because a couple of the girls pecked a little, and that made Monica nervous. Upon return, we’d have fresh eggs and some scrumptious bacon from Nature’s Oasis organic foods store – one of the best we’ve ever shopped. It was about a maximum of fifteen minutes from egg retrieval to the cooking pan. Now that, folks, is the meaning of fresh.

On our morning walks, we’d look over across the Animas River Valley and contemplate the view. The cool dry air of the morning made me feel pretty chipper. By contrast, a walk around the block here in Florence in the humid air is more of a chore. I miss our morning Florida Mesa walks.

I was especially interested in the topography. The nearer ridges on the other side of the valley reach elevations of around 8,200 feet. The valley floor is about 6,400 feet. Farther distant, the high peaks of the La Platas rise to elevations of 11,000 to nearly 13,000 feet. The mix of closer and more distant peaks produces a range of colors and textures that constantly beaconed to be photographed. In time I identified every major peak, using topographical maps and a compass. I am compulsive about knowing the landmarks.

I would be remiss if I didn’t discuss Kip and Laura’s bed. It sounds like that might be a little too personal, but their bed is unique. Kip and Laura are both tall
people, especially Kip. The windows in their bedroom are fairly high, and both want to be able to see out when lying in bed. So they built up the bed. In fact, they built it up so high that they had to give us shorties makeshift stools so that we could climb aboard. Once in bed, it seemed a long way to the floor. I worried about rolling out for a night or two, but then settled in just fine. The payoff is definitely there. A delightful nightly breeze would come in and we could see out to the clouds, moon and stars. It felt so wholesome. The nights were a wonderful experience, and I still think about them. I vote for Kip and Laura’s bed for top sleeping arrangement of the year.

**Side Trips**

While house sitting, we took some side trips, and I hosted a tree-measuring event that involved the Durango Herald newspaper, Laser Technology Inc. from Denver, the U.S. Forest Service, and Great Old Broads for Wilderness. The event was organized to re-measure three champion trees, the tallest of their species in Colorado, and perhaps the entire Rocky Mountain chain, if western Idaho is excluded. First was a Rocky Mountain Ponderosa Pine at 160.6 feet in height. Second was a Rocky Mountain Douglas Fir at 160.1 feet in height. The third was a Colorado Blue Spruce at 159.0 feet in height. All are extraordinary trees. Steve Colburn, North American Sales Director for LTI, helped in the measurement. The event was an even greater success because of Laurie Swisher, old growth specialist for the San Juan National Forest. Laurie contributed greatly in identifying species and age characteristics, and in confirming ages of 3 of the trees. After our outing, Laurie returned to core two of the three trees we measured. The pine is 270 years old. The spruce is 227. Laurie also aged a large Ponderosa that we passed on the trail at between 380 and 390 years. Combining Laurie’s tree ages with our heights established a precedent. Hopefully, a partnership is developing between the Western Native Tree Society (WNTS) and the Forest Service to document notable trees in the San Juans. It is the kind of partnership I’ve been seeking, since I want our WNTS data to count for something. Through Laurie, I think it will. Oh, yes, and we made the front page of the Herald.
The most scenic of our side trips was a climb part way up 12,972-foot Engineer Mountain. We combined scenery with outstanding tree confirmations by yours truly. First, I’ll present my confirmations. I measured a 135-foot tall Englemann Spruce growing at an altitude of 11,050 feet. For me that is a record height for the altitude for any species. And so far as I know, it is a record for the entire Rocky Mountain biome at 11,000 feet or more. And just below Coal Bank Pass, there is an Englemann Spruce I re-measure every year that is now 142.0 feet in height. It grows at an altitude of 10,560 feet or two miles. This is also a record height for the altitude. In fact, I could generate a half dozen more height records for the respective altitudes in the San Juans. Where might they receive competition? At the altitudes quoted, it won’t be farther north. And I doubt that New Mexico to the south can better the numbers, being drier and hotter. How can I be so sure? Going farther north, the timberline drops dramatically, so that you don’t get trees at all at 11,000 feet when you hit Wyoming. In southern Montana, the timberline is around 10,000 feet, and so on.

While I measured trees, Monica documented the wild flowers. For Monica, the wild flowers alone on Engineer Mountain made our trip worthwhile. We would like to have gone to the top, but we decided that our conditioning wasn’t up to trying to make it, so we called it quits at 11,850 feet for me, and 11,800 for Monica. Last year, we turned around at 11,600 feet. Next year?

Here are four views near the point we turned around. We’re in alpine tundra. The first image looks back on the trail. The tiny figure in the background, center is Monica.

One of the most attractive features of the San Juans is their multicolored rock strata. You can see it in the photograph below. The peaks in the center right are well above 13,000 feet. You pass them on the west when crossing 10,222-foot Lizard Head Pass on part of the San Juan Scenic Byway. Last year Monica and I camped at Lizard Head and gazed into the western slopes of the mountains seen in the image.

Turning the camera around 180 degrees, the West Needle Mountains dominate the skyline. They reach altitudes of 13,200 feet and slightly more. Beyond them are the Needle Mountains crowned by three fourteeners, Eolus, Sunlight, and Windom.
When taking the Durango to Silverton scenic railway, the route follows the Animas River through a spectacular gorge that threads its way between the West needles and the Needles. Monica and I have taken the trip twice, and will likely take it again next summer.

And now to the flowers. Indian Paintbrush anyone? The color of the paintbrush growing high on Engineer is spectacular. There are other species growing in the meadows, but the paintbrush steals the show. The image below highlights the paintbrush. The peak is Engineer.

While in the meadow, we met some people who had met other people who had seen large bear tracks across a snowfield down the ridge to the left in the second photograph. There aren’t supposed to be any grizzlies in the San Juans, but reports occasionally come in from people who swear that they’ve seen one. The San Juans are vast. Who knows?

On another side trip, we went to Vallecito Reservoir east of Durango. There is a series of U.S. Forest Service campgrounds near the shores of the reservoir that I had been directed toward to hunt for large Ponderosa Pines, and one in particular that was purportedly around 13 feet in girth. The best I could find was one that measured 11.4 feet in circumference. However, I did find lots of old pines and some fairly tall ones. Two reach 135 feet in height, which appears to be the maximum for that region. Many of the older pines top out at between 110 and 125 feet, but they experience some kind of growth barrier after that and quit going upward. A third Ponderosa inside a campground made 131 feet. It is shown in the center of the photograph below. Monica and our Subaru are in the image for scale.

The pines often look shorter than they are because their needles are long and that makes the tops appear closer to the observer. One develops a feel for tree height by subconsciously evaluating a variety of distance and shape factors. It is a species-dependent
talent. Each species has a visual signature that provides clues as to girth and height as seen from varying distances. Friends of mine such as NTS president Will Blozan possess a sharper eye than I have, though I’m not bad. Will often estimates the height of trees to a foot or two of measured height – or even closer.

A Dose of Culture

Our side trips were not all nature oriented. We visited the famous Strater Hotel to hear Honky-tonk piano at the Diamond Belle Saloon. The Strater was a favorite place of western novelist Louis L’Amour because the piano music inspired him in his western literary recreations. Evidently, he always asked for Room 222 directly above the saloon. We got to hear Johnny Maddox play, which would have been a treat had it not been for an obnoxious group at an adjoining table. Political discussions don’t go well with ragtime piano music, but we still managed to get a demonstration of Maddox’s talents still lively in his late 80s. You can Google Johnny Maddox to learn about his distinguished career. Oh yes, and the Strater claims its share of old hotel ghosts. The ghosts all seem to have a lingering awareness of their commercial contributions, and decide to stick around as opposed to moving toward the light. And finally, there’s always a connection, real or imagined, forged between these old hotels and Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid. That famous pair did get around. Who knows?

We also attended several concerts put on as part of the Music in the Mountains Festival held at Durango Mountain Ski Resort. We attended one concert with Dick White and Faye Schrater, and the other with Steve and Bea Colburn. We also attended Dick and Foxie Mason’s 30th wedding anniversary. Dick and Foxie have a beautiful home at the base of an imposing wall of cliffs. Our friends Dr. Nancy Weiss and Carol Wise were able to join us at the celebration. Carol is a former fund raiser with TNC, and an incredibly good one. She wasted no time promoting my article that was on the front page of the Durango Herald, and before I knew it, I was getting invitations from ranchers to outfit Monica and me for trail rides to search for more big trees. Carol accomplished in minutes what I could not have done in days.

We socialized with our dear friends Paul and Beverly Dittmer and Dick White and Faye Schrater. Dick and Faye are responsible for Durango becoming our other home, since they arranged the first of our many house-sitting assignments. Dick will be mayor of Durango next year, and we will be house-sitting for Dick and Faye for three weeks next summer. We owe much to the Dittmers for connecting us to the organizers of Music in the Mountains, and others.

Monica also used our visit to reconnect with friend and composer Katy Freiberger. Katy is from Dallas, Texas, but owns a home in Durango. She is a jewel and has introduced Monica to many members of Music in the Mountains. Monica is presently working with a student in the Five College area to get a performance of Katy’s award-winning song cycle “The Coffee-Pot Face.”.

I’ll close our social activities with a scene looking eastward from Durango Mountain while at a concert. The weather was building up to a storm and the color palette presented to us with reflections from the clouds, mountains, rocks, and vegetation. The mountains are the West Needles.

Looking Back on Our Time at KLP

Many people have comfortable homes and artfully landscaped yards. We have a beautiful home in Florence, MA, and people constantly comment on how good it feels. The same can be said for the homes of many of our friends. Everybody’s home is
special in some way, but for Monica and me, KLP was just what we needed for the time and circumstances – a healing environment close to Mother Earth.

In KLP, Kip and Laura have created a sanctuary that embodies their values in a variety of ways. For years, they have served as surrogate parents to foreign high school exchange students. They have hosted students from Asia, Africa, Europe, and South America. The students quickly take to Kip and Laura and come to consider them their “other parents”. Pictures of Kip and Laura’s “other children” hang on a wall and keep memories fresh. Other artifacts adorn the walls, and the pantry shelves hold foods with unreadable labels in kanji and cyrillic script.

Kip and Laura are known for their mission work, so it comes as no surprise to their friends when visitors speak of them in glowing terms. Simply stated, Kip and Laura have big hearts with room for all, and by all, I mean denizens of the non-human as well as human world. At KLP, all critters are welcome. For instance, Kip is an accomplished birder. So, as one might expect, KLP has several bird feeders, and they are functional. Hummingbirds are a given, and we fed black-chinned, broad-tailed and rufous hummingbirds while we were there. We really got to know black-headed grosbeaks, a new bird for us Easterners, and we saw an occasional oriole. Laura calls in and feeds the crows every morning, but we didn’t master her technique. I sounded more like a buzzard than a crow. Monica did much better, but still only succeeded in getting some crows one morning. However, in Kip and Laura’s view, if the raccoons get the bird food, so be it, and they did more than once while we were there. The effect of the inclusiveness is a wonderful ambience that creates a mutual bonding of species. We had never experienced anything quite like it. Would we house-sit for Kip and Laura again? Absolutely.

The conclusion we came to from our experiences is that KLP is hallowed ground that has absorbed Kip’s and Laura’s qualities as caretakers. But I would be remiss if I didn’t acknowledge that those qualities are a reflection of Kip and Laura’s religion. They are members of a local Lutheran church, which we have come to recognize as a community of gentle souls who walk the talk. Monica has played for the congregation at Sunday services. Although Monica and I are not church-goers at this point in our lives, if we were, Kip and Laura’s church is the one we’d both choose.

I grew up in the southern Bible Belt where every Sunday I heard sermons that were often more militant than loving. Many sermons come across as unnecessarily judgmental, and the radio and television sermons were, in truth, obnoxious. They still are. Big evangelical egos supplanted real spiritual feeling. I got fed up with the pretense and drifted away from regular attendance. But Kip and Laura and their church are the real deal, and KLP fully reflects their spirit. Thanks to Kip and Laura for a wonderful time at KLP. Both Monica and I carry the memories of those sunsets and thirst for more. Health allowing, next year we’ll stand on some Durango mesa and gaze again into that dazzling evening spectacle.

I’ll now close with a final Florida Mesa sunset. It vividly states what no words from me can accurately convey.

Robert Leverett
Green and Yampa River - Dinosaur National Monument, CO

by dbhguru » Sun Aug 12, 2012 8:04 pm

Mark, Thanks. Glad you enjoyed it. The possibilities in colorful Colorado are endlessly deep.

After we left Durango, we went back to Crestone and then up to Dinosaur. Attached is an image from Monica's iPad that we took while in the national monument. The contorted geology is revealed so clearly. The river is 2,550 vertical feet below us. One heck of a view and the other side of the narrow ridge we were on has an equally impressive view. Heck, everything is impressive. Oh yes, please double click on the image to expand it. Looks so much better.

Robert T. Leverett

Once again, LARGE SIZE doesn't equal OLD AGE, (GA)

by eliahd24 » Tue Aug 14, 2012 12:01 pm

Hello NTS family. It is with some sadness that I write to let you know that a Georgia state champion Oak has recently come down. It was located on private property just beside Emory University in Atlanta, GA. It had a large (widening) split in the crown and coming down the trunk. I had previously identified it as Northern Red, though upon closer inspection I believe it may have been a Black Oak. Regardless, it is now dead. It was truly a beast at 20'1" cbh x 123.4' tall x 115' spread.

Grand (young) oak

But the real reason I'm writing is to let you know just how young this tree was. It took 3 days to remove the giant crown and trunk of this tree. At the end of the 3rd day, all that remained was a 3 foot high stump that was big enough to serve as a stage for the homeowners kids to play on. I was able to locate a single defined pith and counted 88 rings from bark to pith. I figured I'd round up and call it 90 total. 90 years old and 20 FEET in circumference! Some of those rings were nearly 1" apart! This bad boy was putting on 4+ inches of girth per year in some years. The guesses of its age were consistently around 150-170 by most folks (novices and experts alike). We all thought it was pre-Civil war, but no. Not even close!
So, once again the amazing growing ability of an open grown oak tree in a region with 50" rain/year is shown. And large size does NOT equal old age!

Oh and here's a link to a YouTube video I took during the last stages of trunk removal:

http://youtu.be/ONdW9dVPy_E

Eli Dickerson

Stray Photographs from the Western US

by dbhguru » Mon Aug 13, 2012 8:53 am

NTS,

...I'm sorting through the photos I took with Monica's iPad and wanted to share a few. The iPad's camera does a good job of dealing with high light levels with a mix of shadows. Attached is an image from our first hike up onto the Diamond in the Medicine Bow Mountains of southeastern Wyoming. The Diamond is one of the points you hike to from Lake Marie. Its elevation is 11,720 feet. I'm sending a higher pixel version than I normally include. Double clicking on the attachment will expand it so that the full detail can be seen. I expect all of you know to do that, but some photos posted to the BBS are very low resolution and don't expand.

...The Medicine Bow range is one of Monica's and my favorite locations. The alpine zone of the mountains is highly accessible, and incredibly photogenic. At 12,013 feet, Medicine Bow Peak is the highest point in the Snowy Range part of the Medicine Bows. The range extends into Colorado where Mount Zirkel is the highest point at slightly over 12,200 feet. Interestingly, the continental divide runs through the next range to the west of the Medicine Bows, the Sierra Madres. That ranges is actually lower than the Medicine Bow.

Robert T. Leverett

The highest part of the Wyoming Medicine Bow is named the Snowy Range, however, that isn't because of snow, but the brilliant, white quartzite rock that caps the range. It is visible for miles and is usually mistaken for snow. However, the Snowy Range does get quite a bit of snow. I think somewhere between 200 and 300 inches annually.

There once lived a subspecies of bison called the mountain bison and it roamed the Medicine Bow. Old bleached bones have been found. Very interesting. Also, as one might expect, the Medicine Bow were sacred to Native Americans. It goes with the territory.

The University of Wyoming at Laramie has a mountaineering school of some sort. They use the Snowy Range as a training ground. Technical climbs of 1,000 vertical feet are possible, and there is the remains of an old airplane crash on the side of Medicine Bow Peak. Can't remember when it occurred, but parts of the aircraft can still be seen.

On our climb up Medicine Bow Peak everyone we encountered was in excellent physical condition (no surprise there). It was inspiring to see so many bronzed, fit people. There are no tourist trap places around the area, so you see mainly people who come to hike. Most refreshing.
Re: Kip and Laura's Place, CO

by dbhguru » Mon Aug 13, 2012 11:33 am

Larry Tucei wrote: Bob, Mark is so correct your writing is outstanding as usual. The photos were also good and from your description KLP sounds like a great place to be. I plan on coming out next summer. Hopefully I can help you with some tree discoveries and whatever else you many need.

Larry, Sooooper Doooper! We'll have a blast, and we'll have lots of folks ready to help us locate big trees. Biff Stransky was a Forest Service employee in recreation. He knows where many big trees are that he says are a must to see. We've just begun our exploration of Colorado's La Plata. Sky's the limit. Here's another stray photograph. It is on the side of Engineer Mountain. Engineer will be one of the destinations next year to see if we can improve on 135 feet at 11,050 feet.

Robert T. Leverett

Bulletin of the ENTS, Volume 7, No. 2, Spring 2012

Edited by Don Bragg Mon Aug 13, 2012 5:54 pm

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would be candidates for submission. So everyone -
get off the dime and write up your research findings.

Edward Frank

SCOPE OF MATERIAL
The Bulletin of the Eastern Native Tree Society
accepts solicited and unsolicited submissions of many
different types, from quasi-technical field reports to
poetry, from peer-reviewed scientific papers to
digital photographs of trees and forests. This diverse
set of offerings also necessitates that (1) contributors
specifically identify what type of submission they are
providing; (2) all submissions should follow the
standards and guidelines for publication in the
Bulletin; and (3) the submission must be new and
original material or be accompanied by all
appropriate permissions by the copyright holder. All
authors also agree to bear the responsibility of
securing any required permissions, and further
certify that they have not engaged in any type of
plagiarism or illegal activity regarding the material
they are submitting.

For complete submission instructions see the latest
issue of the Bulletin: http://www.ents-
bbs.org/viewtopic.php?f=17&t=4416

Bulletin Articles Needed

by edfrank » Wed Aug 15, 2012 12:02 am

NTS, I want to strongly encourage members who
have science based articles or projects related to trees
and forest hanging in the wind, partially completed,
or even sitting away in a drawer somewhere, to finish
them. When complete, please submit them to the
Bulletin of the Eastern Native Tree Society for
consideration for potential publication. Dr. Don
Bragg is doing an excellent job with editing the
Bulletins, but can't do much without appropriate
materials submitted for inclusion. Perhaps more
formal write-ups of site descriptions of note, etc.
Wooden Clinometer

Sky Davis posted this photograph to Facebook today. I thought it was cool and wanted to share it here. It is a wooden clinometer:

How does it work? You go out the distance marked on the scales - either 50 feet or 100 feet from the base of the tree. Hold the wooden block level (in the position shown) at your eye, and line up the wire with the top of the tree. Read the height on the appropriate scale in "16's" of feet. 16 feet is a log length. You can see that works the tan 45 degrees is 1 so at fifty feet, if the top of the tree is at 45 degrees, the tree is approximately 50 feet tall (various error types not withstanding) that is a little over 3 log lengths. That is the height of the tree above eye level. Next check where the level line at the base intersects the tree and add that distance + or - to the total tree height.

Edward Frank

Tim and Bob Duo in Mohawk (MA)

NTS, Today District Director Tom Zelazo and yours truly walked the Mahican-Mohawk Trail looking for signs of adelgid and formulating a plan to prioritize treatments that may begin in September. Along the way we renewed acquaintances with old friends. Here's an image of the Dr. John Waldman Beech.

John's beech has grown to a height of 115.3 feet with a girth of 8.3. I also took a couple of shots of the Northern Sentinels, which are drop dead gorgeous pines. The one Tim is leaning on is 10.7 feet in girth and right on 138 feet in height.
On our return trip, we stopped for me to re-measure a white pine grown in the Rachel Carson stand. Bingo! It is no 150.1 feet tall and 9.9 feet in girth. It becomes number 127 over 150 feet in Mohawk. Despite the fungus that is causing New England pines to shed needles, the Mohawk pines will survive, at least for a few more years. Having just returned from an extraordinary trip out West, I was happy when my reaction to Mohawk had not changed. It was a great place when I left. It is a great place on my return.

I’ll be concentrating on prioritizing hemlock treatments over the next few weeks. Lots to do. Here is a shot Tim took of me next to Jake. Jake’s crown has been thinned by the fungus. I hope the champion recovers full foliage next season.

Robert T. Leverett
Re: Somewhere ......

by Rand » Thu Aug 16, 2012 11:56 am

dbhguru wrote:Rand, The main and subordinate rainbows were brighter, especially the main one. My photography failed to capture their vividness.

That's a bummer. I hate it when that happens. I chased a rainbow at the Black Canyon of the Gunnison that had faded by the time I got a good angle on it. The light started out good (right):

Then I saw a rainbow, but the light shifted by the time I found a good place to get out of my car and get a good angle on it (below):

Re: Tim and Bob Duo in Mohawk (MA)

by Joe » Thu Aug 16, 2012 7:43 pm

Larry Tucei wrote: I hope science can do something about it. I often wonder why the Forest service doesn't react more quickly on these types of attacks.

Oh, I wish somebody would do much more to solve these tree disease problems. As a practicing forester, I see every day countless white pines that are severely damaged from the white pine weevil. Since that insect doesn't kill the trees- apparently little has been done to fight them, though the problem has been here in New England for generations. But, the damage causes tremendous economic loss to the owners.

Regarding the chestnut blight, somebody from the American Chestnut Foundation told a story at a chestnut field event a few years ago- that when the problem arose, the word went out to cut all the chestnut before they died- but now it's believed that many might have been resistant- so that was an overreaction. It seems that ecological problems are almost as difficult to deal with as political problems- not because people don't want to solve the problems but we humans just aren't smart enough- and we only succeed through trial and error.

Joe Zorzin
The explosive eruption of Mount St. Helens in Washington State on May 18, 1980, was such a moment. Situated on a subduction zone where the Juan de Fuca Plate in the Pacific descends under the North American Plate, Mount St. Helens is one of a number of Cascade Range volcanoes that stretch from British Columbia to northern California. The peak is the most active volcano of the group, sitting over an area where the Earth's surface holds in the melted solid rock. Landsats 2, 3, 5 and 7 captured the Mount St. Helens eruption and subsequent recovery of its surrounding ecosystem over the last 32 years. The scenes collected by Landsat 2 and 3 from 1980 to 1983 show vegetation in red. Natural color images appear with the launch of the new Thermal Mapper instrument on Landsat 5 in 1984 and continued with Landsat 7.

The first three seconds of the visualization depict the condition of the volcano prior to the morning of May 18. It has a conical, glacier-clad peak like the others in the Cascades chain and had been inactive since the mid-nineteenth century. Scientists began actively monitoring Mount St. Helens in March 1980 when the volcano "reawakened" with a 4.2-magnitude earthquake and started venting steam.

On the morning of the now-historic eruption, a 5.2-magnitude earthquake triggered the sequence of events that would be life altering to many in the area. A massive slab of the northern slope of Mount St. Helens collapsed and roared over the landscape in an enormous debris avalanche—the largest in recorded history. With a gigantic hole ripped down the volcano’s side, superheated gases and rock fragments exploded laterally instead of vertically—something that had not been witnessed and recorded before in modern times.

The blast raged with wind speeds reaching 200 to 250 miles per hour (320 to 400 kilometers per hour) at temperatures of 680°F (360°C), flattening and scorching trees. For more than nine hours after the lateral blast, Mount St. Helens gushed an ash plume that reached 15 miles high into the atmosphere, and in 15 days, circled the globe. Deadly pyroclastic flows, at least 1,300°F (704°C), spewed from the crater and covered 6 square miles (15 square
kilometers) under feet of choking pumice.
continued....

This video is public domain and can be downloaded at: http://svs.gsfc.nasa.gov/goto?10550

Posted by Edward Frank

Re: NASA | Forest Recovering From Mt St Helens Eruption

by Rand » Thu Aug 16, 2012 11:47 am

Pictures from my visited of St Helens in the summer of 2010. I would have taken a shot of hiked up into the crater if they hadn't been having some sort of geologist's shindig at the time with helicopters flying in and out. I hear their fines aren't very forgiving. Anyway I found a set of photos on flicker from a group that hiked into the crater:

A view of the toe of the debris/pyroclastic flow where it entered Spirit Lake

And finally a picture from a campground just outside the blast zone to the east of the volcano to give you an idea what the original forest looked like.

Rand Brown
# 128 - YIPPEE (MTSF, MA)

by dbhguru » Fri Aug 17, 2012 12:51 pm

NTS. Yesterday, Monica, friend Marjorie Barrell and I went to Mohawk to revisit some favored sites and look for more hemlock woolly adelgid. I did find a small amount of adelgid on the summit of Thumper Mtn. That's the bad news. Thumper is a small ridge with lots of heart. It is a very aesthetic spot - one of Monica's favorites. Here is a scene going up the ridge.

Monica and Marjorie at the top. It was here I found adelgid on two summit hemlocks. Other trees are in fine shape.

We'll be hunting for adelgid over the next few weeks and trying to determine the extent of coverage, the characteristics of the sites, etc. Everybody agrees that now is the time to catch it and do treatments. NTS role will be to find the occurrences, describe them, and help prioritize the treatments.

The thinning of the crowns of the Mohawk pines continues to be disturbing. So far researchers who have identified the fungi haven't determines the long term impacts. But I am hoping that it will not get steadily worse. According to researchers, the fungi seem to favor extremes, i.e. pines growing in very wet or dry areas. However, my observations in Mohawk is that the fungi are not that discriminating. I see the impact across the spectrum of growing environments. Since I observe the crowns of the Mohawk pines more than any other human in the known universe, Tim is relying on me to classify the level of defoliation for different areas. That is another job for the coming weeks.

On the good news side, we revisited Marjorie's favorite pine. Here are two images of Marjorie in silent communication with her tree.
Naturally, I had to re-measure Marjorie's pine and it is 151.0 feet. It becomes number 128. I evidently hadn't found the top on my past measurement and had the pine at 148.0 feet on March 16, 2010. I don't think it grew 2.1 feet since that last measurement, although close. Regardless, it is now a member of the exclusive 150-Club. I'm glad Marjorie's tree has entered the club. She relates to her tree at a deep level. I was impressed.

I also went over to the Jake Swamp tree and photographed its crown. Nowhere in New England can one witness the view of a higher twig of a tree above its base. While I was in Colorado, Tim Zelazo took a group around inspecting the damage to the pines from the fungus. One person was a U.S. Forest Service researcher who was mightily impressed with the pines in Mohawk, observing that they didn't have ANYTHING in the New England research forests to compare with what he was seeing. Smart researcher. Which brings me to a point:

Now that I'm back and in the swing of things, I am thinking fresh thoughts about Mohawk and its significance. How much importance, value, worth, etc. is there intrinsically? How much is there because of the intense amount of attention that it has been given by NTS? I'm a little too prejudiced to be counted as an objective contributor. But I'm wondering what some of the rest of you think. How much importance can reasonably be given to the elements I report on. You all have seen many images taken in Mohawk and have read the statistics and have a pretty good basis of comparison to other sites in Massachusetts, New England, the Northeast, and the entire East. Is Mohawk Trail State Forest of principal value more because so much of New England has crappy, abused forests as described by myself and Joe Zorzin? Beyond its obvious aesthetic appeal, what value can realistically be placed on Mohawk's reserve of exceptionally tall pines? Examining other potential sources of information about the trees exposes a void. For example, if we relied on sources like the University of Massachusetts forestry school to keep us informed about the exceptional trees of Mohawk Trail State Forest, the place wouldn't be a bleep on the forest radar scope. I'm serious. In the past, Mohawk would have fared little better via official DCR literature. Thankfully, that is now changing, and changing rapidly, but we are obviously deeply involved in the transition, and will likely remain so. I'm so focused in promoting Mohawk that I seldom think about the what would happen in our absence, but I expect a gradual return
to anonymity. Then, maybe not. Maybe the ground has been sufficiently seeded over the past 25 years as to permanently change the culture.

Related to the above musings, why have we in NTS had to work so hard to bring this state park-forest into public consciousness? Just wondering? I would appreciate any comments/observations the rest of you would be willing to make. I like to have fresh thoughts when talking to members of the public who show interest in Mohawk, but wonder why they hadn't heard about the place's exceptional trees before.

Robert T. Leverett

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FkUoOBvhdzO

I believe one of my soundscapes will be Red Oak Leaves

Composers Garden & Nightloops
Alexander Baker
Attila Fias & John Kameel Farah
Clémentine DeLaHaut
Daniel Blinkhorn
Dinah Bird
Dirk Hüstrunk
Els Viaene
Étienne Noiseau
Felix Schröder
Georg Klein
Jair-Rohm Parker Wells
John Blue
John Arndt
Jonathan Prior
Jose Manuel Garcia
Karen Hancock
Lasse-Mark Riek
Mark Matthes Kammerorchester
Michael Farley
Michael Gatonska
Miquel Parera Jaques
Nikolaus Gerzewski
Patrick Franke
Peter Cusack
raw audio (Gabi Schaffner)
Samuel Mittelman
Sandra Cuesta
Sherre Delys
Sirpa Jokinen
SouthernCrossReview
Stijn Demeulenaere
Susi Mahacke Production
Suspicion Breeds Confidence
Udo Noll
William Engelen

… further updates will follow after 18th of August.

Michael Gatonska
Re: Somewhere ....

by Don » Fri Aug 17, 2012 3:27 pm

They're so ephemeral, those rainbows...at the end of a long day while working on North Rim of Grand Canyon, near Cape Royal, we were drawn to Royal Point, as sunset and a storm neared. Its normally a fifteen minute walk, but we made it in ten, to see the storm front just overtaking the edge of the South Rim. The alignment of the sun and the clouds, and the curve of the Canyon as it changes cardinal bearings from nearly South to nearly North created an unusual rainbow (at least in my experience) as it completed a circular rainbow.

We quickly grabbed our cameras out of our daypacks and attempted to capture it...only to find that we'd have needed a very wide angle lens, and our point and shoot cameras weren't up to the task.

Well, it did get permanently inscribed in our memories, as did the thunder and lightning storm that soon chased us back to our work vehicle, with several very nearby, simultaneous thunder and lightning down-strikes (we made the return trip in five minutes!). August on the North Rim, in the middle of the Monsoon season is often a humbling time, the power of the elements there are often heart stopping.

Thanks Ed for thinking of the beautiful original version of "Somewhere...", one of my favorites!

Don Bertolette - President/Moderator, WNTS BBS
Restoration Forester (Retired)
Science Center
Grand Canyon National Park
BJCP Apprentice Beer Judge

View my Alaska Big Tree List Webpage at:
http://www.akbigtreelist.org

Re: # 128 - YIPPEE (MTSF, MA)

by Larry Tucei » Sat Aug 18, 2012 8:09 am

Bob, Congrats on another 150' White Pine. Without you leading the way for the Forests at MTSF I don't think they would have been noticed by as many, me for example. You have brought the MTSF to the people and the right people. But not just MTSF many other Forests! NTS is one of if not the best group of tree advocates in the country. Without you, Will, Ed, Don, Don, Lee and many others places like MTSF, Cook, Congaree, etc., would not get the true recognition that they deserve. Places like these need to be protected, studies and cherished by all! Thanks Bob!!! On the last comment “but wonder why they hadn't heard about the place's exceptional trees before”. In Mississippi for example we have many National Forests, State Parks, etc., but often they don't get the recognition or appreciation that they deserve. In this modern age we seem to be forgetting our bond with the natural world, you and others has pointed this out on many occasions. I guess it’s up to us at NTS to make sure places like these are on the radar. One of most important things I think is to get our children introduced to the Forests for they are the future! Maybe MTSF could have a childrens trail with numbered stops and a small booklet for parents to help the children learn the different Trees, Plants, etc.

Larry Tucei

Re: # 128 - YIPPEE (MTSF, MA)

by dbhguru » Sat Aug 18, 2012 10:02 am

Larry, Most of the time I just lower my head and charge with little thought to why's and wherefore's, but on occasion, I reflect back on what has happened over the past 25 years here in erudite Massachusetts and puzzle over the dynamics. We're supposed to be in the forefront, intellectually, but when dealing with forest topics, it is not necessarily the case. To understand the political environment, one must punch
through lots of layers (for lack of a better term). There is the government layer, which we might call officialdom, mostly state and local, but some federal. There is the environmental organizations layer; the timber community layer; the academic layer; and there are individual nature writers, photographers, etc. The general public absorbs information about forested properties and forest issues through these layers. Some important professional groups work at the big picture, research level, e.g. Harvard Forest, and others are focused on individual wooded properties such as the Friends of the Holyoke Range. One comes into contact with representatives from most of these layers on an important forest issue. So what’s my point?

The hard thing for me to get into my noodle is that places like MTSF, MSF, Ice Glen, and Bryant Woods passed virtually unnoticed through all the layers - except us. This means a lot of experienced, highly educated people are only now seeing what is in the named places with a comparative and more appreciative eye and realizing their importance as sources of state pride worth protecting. The exceptions are organizations such as Mass Audubon and Harvard Forest that we work with directly.

As a bottom line, I’m trying to sort it out so that when I give public talks, I can give credible explanations to satisfy the puzzled looks I sometimes get. I’m usually in evangelist mode and don’t stop to reflect on why what I’m saying may sound improbable to some of my listeners (Is this guy giving us the facts? Why hadn’t we heard of these places before?). The attendees may like me, personally, or at least my enthusiasm, but I expect that they leave unconvinced that what I’m told them is indeed true. It does seem improbable, which makes its authenticity all the interesting.

I hope what I’ve said above doesn’t sound like complaining. I’m not. I’m thankful for our progress. I’ve simply reached a point where, in reflection, I’d like to better understand the dynamics of what has been going on. Maybe there’s a book in there somewhere.

Robert T. Leverett

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**Re: # 128 - YIPPEE (MTSF, MA)**

*by Don* » Sat Aug 18, 2012 10:28 pm

Bob- I noticed that the third image had a tree with a tag on it. Having worked for several land management agencies and attended several forestry schools, I recognize that as part of the record keeping system, so that the scientific method can be maintained, so that researchers can verify one’s work. But even tags get worn, chewed, taken off over time (30-40 years is about as much as I'd expect them to last, on average, across regions). Where do you see NTS in this scheme of things? What is the likelihood that future researchers will be able to: find individual trees, access associated published data, record growth data after we've gone beyond our ability to get around in the forest?

Don Bertolette

**Re: # 128 - YIPPEE (MTSF, MA)**

*by dbhguru* » Sun Aug 19, 2012 5:43 pm

Don, The tags are ours. We put them on to allow us to monitor growth of individual trees over the years. Alas, the information has not been in demand. I use the tags to identify candidates that are about to break some dimensional threshold in reporting to others. There may come a time when the tags serve other functions to include monitoring the health of individual trees.

In terms of the future, I expect that the tags will continue to serve limited purposes. I'd like to acquaint others who might like to do research. Mass Audubon, Harvard Forest, etc. know the tags are there. They definitely are under-used. From my particular perspective, I'll continue to make data available on individual trees to DCR. They get all my data, but is is overwhelmingly dimensional data as of specific dates.

Robert T. Leverett
Western Native Tree Society
Colorado Summary

by dbhguru » Sat Aug 18, 2012 11:05 am

NTS. The attached spreadsheet gives a summary of prominent and representative tree measurements for Colorado. Hundreds of trees have been measured, but no point in including the ordinary.

WNTS-Best-a.xls

I have no idea how many secluded ravines there are in Colorado with Ponderosas, Doug Firs, Colorado Blues, and Englemanns reaching the big numbers. Finding out is a mission that I’d like to undertake. We would be breaking new ground. Here is a sample of what is out there on the Internet relative to the maximum dimensions achieved by several species.

Englemann Spruce

USDA Natural Conservation Service

Heights to 60 meters

Utah State Extension Service

Growth Characteristics: Engelmann spruce is a large tree, averaging 30 inches in diameter and 90 feet in height.

Wikipedia

Picea engelmannii is a medium-sized to large evergreen tree growing to 25–40 m (82-131 ft) tall, exceptionally to 65 m (213 ft) tall, and with a trunk diameter of up to 1.5 m (4 ft, 9 in).

Montana Plant-Life Association

Description

General: straight, spire-like evergreen tree up to 50 m. tall, the trunk seldom over 1 m. thick.

North American Silvics

Growth and Yield- Engelmann spruce is one of the largest of the high-mountain species. Under favorable conditions, average stand diameter will vary from 38.1 to 76.2 cm (15 to 30 in), and average dominant height from 14 to 40 m (45 to 130 ft), depending upon site quality and density (20). Individual trees may exceed 101.6 cm (40 in) in diameter and 49 m (160 ft) in height (60). Engelmann spruce is a long-lived tree, maturing in about 300 years. Dominant spruces are often 250 to 450 years old, and trees 500 to 600 years old are not uncommon (13).

Some Other species in North American Silvics

Colorado Blue Spruce

Growth and Yield- Blue spruce is apparently a long-lived tree, surviving up to 600 years or more. Diameter growth is slow; trees 10 to 13 cm (4 to 5 in) in d.b.h. may be 125 to 135 years old; at 46 to 56 cm (18 to 22 in), they may be 275 to 350 years of age (84). The "1982 National Register of Big Trees" lists the largest blue spruce as 154.4 cm (60.8 in) in d.b.h. and 38.4 m (126 ft) tall, on the Gunnison National Forest, CO.

Ponderosa Pine

Growth and Yield- Ponderosa pine grows to impressive size. Stems 263 cm (103.5 in) in d.b.h. and 70.7 m (232 ft) in height have been recorded (13). Diameters at breast height of 76 to 127 cm (30 to 50 in) and heights of 27.4 to 39.6 m (90 to 130 ft) are common throughout most of its range. Trees often reach ages of 300 to 600 years.

Douglas Fir

The interior variety of Douglas-fir does not attain the growth rates, dimensions, or age of the coastal variety. Site class for Rocky Mountain Douglas-fir is usually IV or V (site index 24 to 37 m or 80 to 120 ft at age 100) when compared with the growth of this species in the Pacific Northwest (1,43). On low sites, growth is sometimes so slow that trees do not reach saw-log size before old age and decadence overtake them. Interior Douglas-fir reaches an average height of 30 to 37 m (100 to 120 ft) with a d.b.h. between 38 and 102 cm (15 and 40 in) in 200 to 300 years. On the best sites, dominant trees may attain a height of
49 m (160 ft) and a d.b.h. of 152 cm (60 in) (23). Diameter growth becomes extremely slow and height growth practically ceases after age 200. Interior Douglas-fir, however, appears capable of response to release by accelerated diameter growth at any size or age (35). The interior variety is not as long lived as the coastal variety and rarely lives more than 400 years, although more than 700 annual rings have been counted on stumps (23).

Red Spruce

Growth and Yield- Red spruce is a medium-size tree at maturity, reaching 30 to 61 cm (12 to 24 in) in d.b.h. and 18 to 23 m (60 to 75 ft) in height in the Northeast, and up to 35 m (115 ft) in the Appalachian Mountains. Its maximum age is about 400 years (22). The American Forestry Association lists a tree 133 cm (52.5 in) in d.b.h. and 33.5 m (110 ft) tall in Great Smoky National Park in North Carolina as the largest living red spruce.

Need I comment? Ball's in our court.

Robert T. Leverett

**Now 222 Confirmed Redwoods Over 350 feet**

*by M.W.Taylor* » Sat Aug 18, 2012 5:53 pm

The attachment below is the "latest and the greatest" effort to document all coast redwoods over 350 feet. All trees on this list have been measured with either tripod mounted Impulse200LR by Chris Atkins or myself or direct tape drop by Dr. Stephen Sillett. All LiDAR trees from the Save the Redwoods League LiDAR fly-overs have been verified from the ground.

This new list in includes all known 350'+ redwoods by Save the Redwoods League scientists Dr. Stephen Sillett and Dr. Robert Van Pelt and all my other tree colleagues who search for, climb and measure the tallest redwoods. One particular new redwood on the list is quite remarkable. "The Pole". Its dbh is 7ft but it stands over 350 ft tall!

There are now 223 coast redwoods confirmed taller than 350 feet !!!!!

**Re: 222 Confirmed Redwoods Over 350 ft. LiDAR project concludes**

*by M.W.Taylor* » Sun Aug 19, 2012 4:31 pm

Will Blozan wrote: Michael, Great list of great trees! The "Pole" tree sounds really impressive. I am inspired to list all tuliptrees over 180' as an eastern surrogate for your west coast "super trees" list. Or maybe all trees over 180' (this would be two species; e. white pine and tuliptree). Such a list would be relatively short and easy to manage. Now we just need to come up with names...

BTW, do you have an average range of error for the LiDAR hits versus the laser heights? That would be useful information to know.

Will,

In the flat areas like Humboldt Redwoods State Park the LiDAR was usually within 3 feet accuracy and tended to be on the conservative side. For steep hill areas the LiDAR often over-estimated by 20 feet more more due to the fact that redwoods tend to lean down-hill in notch canyons as they seek the open areas for more light. If the tree grows near a ravine this over-estimation from LiDAR was more the norm than the exception. Perhaps only 50% of the LiDAR hit list trees from Redwood National Park were actually trees over 350 feet. From Humboldt Redwoods State Park nearly 100% of the LiDAR returns that came back as being over 350 feet were actually trees over 350 feet when confirmed from the ground or climber deployed tape. It depends on the terrain and how well the ground/trunk interface was captured. For steep and dense canopies the ground determination is a great challenge.

Michael Taylor
NTS: The Magazine of the Native Tree Society - Volume 2, Number 08, August 2012

**Medicine Bow - The Narrative**

by dbhguru » Tue Aug 21, 2012 2:18 pm

NTS, The attached WORD file provides an accounting of Monica's and my time in the Medicine Bow in early August. I hope it affords some enjoyable reading.

**Scenic Medicine Bow by Bob Leverett**

**Introduction**

Since 2005, Monica and I have spent a month or more each summer in the American West, save 2007, when we were selling my Holyoke house. The Rocky Mountains are the primary destination of our western excursions, but those venerable summits cover a lot of territory. So we must be selective. Let me explain.

The Rocky Mountains are vast. They form a chain of named ranges, stretching over 3,000 miles in length. Their northern origin is in British Columbia and Alberta, and they end in northern New Mexico. As a consequence, they are generally considered to be the second longest mountain chain on the planet, trailing the incomparable Andes of South America. However, to get a feel for just how much distance we’re talking about, the Rockies are double the length of the Appalachians (1,500) miles, over four times the length of the Cascades of California, Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia, and seven and a half times the length of California’s Sierra Nevada. In places the chain is 300 miles wide. So when speaking of visiting the Rockies, qualifiers are necessary.

The geological province of the Rockies is usually divided into northern, middle, and southern sections. The three sections are further divided into separate ranges. Altogether, there are over 100 ranges within the chain. And to further complicate the matter, the ranges usually include sub-ranges, which are still called ranges on the maps. Naming mountainous areas brings into play geology, history, and politics. History and politics generally obscures the geology. I have read descriptions by unaware authors that speak of the sub-ranges as virtually distinct mountain areas. Actually, the relationship between chains, ranges, and sub-ranges, usually over-extends the mountain interest of most people, but for me the distinctions are as important as any political subdivisions. I would admit that range distinctions are not necessary to their appreciation, but correctly naming the components helps to sort out what can be a bewilderingly complicated landscape.

Some people who have seen the Rockies from Canada to New Mexico consider the northern section to be the most scenic. To my mind, all three regions are equally worthy, but for time and distance reasons, we typically concentrate on the middle and southern sections, which by the way, include the highest parts of the entire chain. For example, the fifty-three peaks of the Rockies exceeding 14,000 feet are all in Colorado. A total of 691 peaks in the chain exceed 13,000 feet of which 51 are in the Middle Rockies and the remaining 637 in the southern Rockies. The United States has them all. I’m unaware of any careful count of peaks over 12,000 feet, but the number far exceeds a thousand.

Before leaving this altitudinal profile, and just for comparison, California has 147 peaks over 13,000 feet and Alaska has probably around 60. I say probably, because the criteria for what constitutes a separate peak have not been standardized between Alaska and the lower 48 states. Authoritative lists give 41 for Alaska, but that is based on 500 feet of geographical prominence between a peak and the next higher one to it. (The elevation must drop 500 vertical feet to the lowest point of the saddle joining the peak with its nearest higher neighbor.) The lower 48 rules are 300 feet for western mountains and 200 feet for eastern ones.

On this trip, we concentrated on areas in Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Idaho, and Wyoming. Not surprisingly, the Tetons of Wyoming figured prominently in our itinerary as did the colorful San Juans and spiritually powerful Sangre de Cristos of Colorado. We hiked in all these ranges, beginning with the Sangres. Our first excursions were at altitudes of between 7,500 and 9,500 feet. We needed to get acclimatized (I’ll be giving an account of our Sangre experiences in a future article).
After leaving the Sangres, we continued with climbs in that altitude range in Colorado’s La Platas. We then decided we were ready for the big time. We climbed high onto 12,972-foot Engineer Mountain in Colorado’s San Juans, but stopping at 11,800 feet. Given the state of the weather and the steepness of the mountain, it made sense, and upon our return, we assumed that we were finished climbing at altitudes in that range for the season. Our later climbs in the Tetons were well under 10,000. But, before leaving the mountain West, it turned out that we had one last high altitude trek left in us. This is the account of that last adventure.

Going South

As we started home we were going to spend time in Wyoming’s Big Horn Mountains, then drive farther east to the Black Hills before leaving the western mountains. However, the smoke from numerous wildfires in Montana caused us to abandon our plans and turn south. The smoke was more than a nuisance; it was a health hazard. But fate smiled on us. Not far past Casper, Wyoming, we encountered clear skies because winds from the west kept the smoke at bay. It hung like a curtain in the sky. What a relief it was to see distant horizons! Following our chosen direction, we decided to revisit the Medicine Bow in southeastern Wyoming. Both of us revere those sacred summits. We had visited that range of the Southern Rockies together on several past occasions and had camped there once. The Medicine Bow scenery is spectacular, and alpine country with amazing floral displays is very accessible. To our thinking, the Medicine Bow is the perfect place for hikers and backpackers. There is technical climbing for those who can do it, but one can reach elevations above 11,000 feet on an excellent trail system without being exposed to dangerous climbing conditions.

Before getting into the specifics of our jaunts, let me give a little information about the Medicine Bow and environs. The Medicine Bow country is the setting for the much-acclaimed western novel by Owen Wister, The Virginian. The mountain range is 100 miles long and is partly in Colorado. At 12,951 feet, Clark Peak on the Colorado side is the highest point. In Wyoming, it is 12,013-foot Medicine Bow Peak. A number of other summits in Wyoming’s portion lie between 11,000 and 11,755 feet. The highest part of the Wyoming part is called the snowy range because of its 2.0 – 2.4-billion year old quartzite rock, which is often brilliant white, giving it the appearance of snow from a distance.

The origin of the Medicine Bow Mountains is usually described as continental compression that occurred during the Laramide Orogeny between 55 and 80 million years ago. Traces of multicellular animals may be preserved in this ancient rock, which makes it of special scientific interest. The mountains are convenient for wildlife enthusiasts who want to see wildlife from the safety of their vehicles and don’t want to worry about grizzly bears. There are none in the Medicine Bow, but there are moose, elk, mule deer, pronghorn antelope, mountain lion, and black bear. If there are any bison, I’m unaware of them. Monica and I were fortunate enough to see moose on this trip. In fact, it was our best ever moose sighting.

There are not only the Medicine Bow Mountains, but also a river named the Medicine Bow, and surprisingly, a town. I find the name both very western and very pleasing to the ear. Its origin is as follows. I’ve taken a quote from the town’s website.

"The name "Medicine Bow" is legendary and reputedly derives its origin from the Native American tribes that frequented the area, mainly the Arapaho and Cheyenne. Along the banks of the river, the
Native Americans found excellent material for making their bows. To them, anything they found good for a purpose was called "good medicine." Thus, the Native Americans named the river flowing through the area the Medicine Bow River, and since the headwaters of the river originated in the mountains to the South, they were called the "Medicine Bow Mountains".

I apologize for not having an image or two of the town and the river. Alas, I’m always too much in a hurry to get to the mountains. But there is reason. The mountains are what call to me, and one mountain in particular. The highest summit, Medicine Bow Peak, is something of a geologic mystery. Here is what Wikipedia has to say about the peak:

“The peak is part of a proterozoic quartzite ridge that juts above the Snowy Range. It was glaciated until quite recently, and year-round snowfields are still present on its flanks. Periglacial polygons, also known as "stone nets", are located above the timberline. Several glacial lakes are located at the base of the peak.

Geologic publications have suggested that the Snowy Pass Supergroup at the peak is significantly older than, and unrelated to, the orogeny of the surrounding Medicine Bow mountains.[1] These publications often refer to the mountain as "Medicine Peak", and its rock as "Precambrian Medicine Peak Quartzite". The quartzite, which lies unconformably on gneissic basement rock, has been analyzed for traces of Precambrian life. The findings may be pseudofossils.”

The Approach

We approached the Medicine Bow Mountains from the northwest, a high, dry region of Wyoming where mountains are distant features of the landscape. A past article in National Geographic described Wyoming as high, wide, and windy. It was an appropriate description then, and nothing has changed since. A map of Wyoming reveals the state as wide basins and plains interlaced with mountain ranges. Travelers can cross east to west and north to south with only casual interaction with high mountains. On must leave the Interstates and seek the more rural routes. One such route is Wyoming Route 130. We reached 130 by first connecting with I-80, traveling west on the Interstate for about 30 miles to make the connection with 130, east of Rawlins, Wyoming. The area we traveled through isn’t one of Monica’s favorites. It is dry and the landforms not of special interest, but once south of I-80, the scene changes. To the west, the Sierra Madre rise to provide the path of the Continental Divide. To the east, the Medicine Bow make their topographical statement. They stretch along the horizon, not as a sawtooth series of peaks such as is common in the northern Rockies, but as a flowing ridgeline with little hint of what lies on their eastern slopes.

Our first destination was the small town of Saratoga. It is a traditional stopover for us on our way to the Medicine Bow. We usually fill the vehicle with gasoline and often stop by the visitor center. The altitude of Saratoga is listed as 6,791 feet. Outside of Saratoga being a kind of gateway between the Sierra Madre and the Medicine Bow, it is a quite out-of-the-way place. However, the “Steinley Cup microbrew competition” is held annually in Saratoga. And oh yes, Saratoga and Encampment are fishing capitals within the Cowboy State.

Leaving Saratoga, we headed east on 130. We had in mind staying at a lodge in the Medicine Bow, and we did find a spot. The Ten Mile Inn, about 15 miles from Snowy Range Pass, has spacious cabins. We got one that suited our needs, and we were there at the right time. In the winter, the place is a snowmobile haven, and that would not be to my tastes. I’m glad our landlady is able to make a living in the area, and we may well stay at Ten Mile next year, but we wouldn’t want to stay there in the winter.

Our Arrival

After checking in and getting settled, we headed up to the high country. From about 7,500 feet elevation, Route 130 climbs to 10,500 feet at Lake Marie. The 3,000-foot gain in elevation occurs over 14 miles. The grade averages 4%, so travelers really aren’t that conscious of how much altitude is gained unless one observes the changing vegetation, particularly the trees – species and shapes. Near Lake Marie, one is reaching timberline, and the exposed
rock and scree make it apparent that a different eco-
zone has been reached. Then one comes into view of
a scene so lovely that one is transported away. It
gives one pause to meditate, which is what Monica
does when we reach the small glacial lake.

A bit farther up the trail, the footing became
more difficult. Instead of intermittent rocks, we were
on all rock, and the size of the individual rocks varied
significantly. It was no longer ideal trail conditions
for Monica or me. In particular, Monica is
uncomfortable on loose rock and as the size of the
stones gets larger, footing becomes increasingly
difficult for her. As a younger fellow, I rock hopped
with gleeful enjoyment. Nothing was too much to
tackle. As an older fellow, my testosterone-filled
days have passed, and stiff knees and declining
balance have taken their toll. We reached a point
where we decided that neither our feet or knees were
up to continuing if we wanted to have reserves for the
following day.

In the following image, Monica is paying
attention to her feet as rock size begins to vary. At
this point we were still okay, but shortly thereafter,
we were climbing up and down instead of moving
forward. The hazy horizon is courtesy of wildfires in
the Ferris Mountain area not far from Casper,
Wyoming. We were spared that on our way to the
Medicine Bow, but there had been movement of the
smoke southward so that distant horizons were no
longer clearly outlined.

Despite foot discomfort and a strong wind
encountered along the trail, our attentions never
swerved from the spectacular scenery. To the south,
the panorama continued to unfold with distant peaks
in Colorado’s towering Front Range trying to express
themselves in the increasingly polluted air of the Fort
Collins to Denver corridor. To the west, the Medicine Bow tail off gradually, giving way to the valley of the North Platte River and then on to the Sierra Madre. There’s lots of space to contemplate. However, to the east, the land suddenly plunges off the rock walls that define the eastern escarpment of the Snowy Range. Going up to the edge is a dizzying experience. One approaches the drop-off with caution, especially when the wind gusts, as it was doing on that evening. Speaking of wind, my hat blew off the top of my head several times. Fortunately, it has a tie to hold it on, so I wasn’t chasing it, just pulling it back onto my head from around my neck and trying to force it ever into a tighter fit.

The following scene looks northeastward. The conical peak right of center is 11,398-foot Sugar Loaf. Behind Sugar Loaf is the long relatively flat summit of Brown’s Peak that reaches to 11,722 feet. The alpine lake is Lookout Lake. The gap in the center of the image separates Brown’s Peak from the big ridge that includes Medicine Bow Peak.

Hugging the rocks, a small stand of young spruce caught my eye. The timberline lies between 10,500 and about 11,100 feet. It varies depending on the amount of exposure a spot has. Some spots receive almost constant wind and are devoid of trees. Other areas are sheltered and trees take hold. Places where snow is dumped don’t have trees. Any tree has a constant struggle to survive above 10,500 feet in this area.

After a climb to 11,160 feet, Monica and I turned around and descended. We were satisfied with what we had accomplished and decided that the next day we would try to hike to North Gap Lake. There isn’t much elevation gain, the scenery is spectacular, but you do have to scramble over rocks.

After our descent, we drove down the mountain and stopped at the Rendezvous Lodge, a good restaurant just east of Ten Mile Lodge. The main course satisfied our palettes. Then despite Monica giving me a sideways glance, I ordered a very hefty dessert, justifying it because of the energy expended on the climb up onto School House Rock. Monica was persuaded and shared the wild berry cobbler. Afterwards, we drove back to Ten Mile, and went promptly to sleep.

**Medicine Bow Peak**

After breakfast at Rendezvous Lodge the next morning, we headed for the high country. As we neared the parking area at Libby Lake, it occurred to me that I wanted Monica at least to have the experience of being on the side of Medicine Bow Peak. So we changed plans and started on the trail to the Snowy Range’s highest summit. The following image sequence tells the story.

The trail starts at about 10,700 feet and goes around the east side of Libby Lake. In the image below, the gap on the right separates Brown’s Peak from the Medicine Bow massif. This gap had been
the planned destination before we switched to Medicine Bow Peak.

Looking directly across Libby Lake toward 11,755-foot Old Main the view looked as follows.

Once around the northern side of Sugar Loaf, the terrain began to change. The full bulk of 12,013-foot Medicine Bow Peak loomed ahead of us. In the following image, the summit is almost in the center. It is rounded and a snowfield lies below. The conifers in the foreground are Englemann Spruce. There are small bodies of water scattered around. The impact remains from the mountain glaciers from 10,000+ years ago. In years when there's lots of snow, banks will persist into mid-August, and occasionally early September. By late September, snow begins to return to the high country.

Once up the trail and onto the slopes of Medicine Bow, the alpine country spreads out like a carpet with features embedded into it. Many species of wild flowers were evident on our climb. Going from the micro to the macro, looking into the distance, alpine lakes suddenly appear, and other peaks and ridges present themselves as inviting destinations for future treks. The visitor feels on top of the world, and those with strong religious convictions can be heard to proclaim that they are truly in God’s country. One can fully enjoy the experience, because the trek back down is not that long. Round trip distance is slightly less than four miles. And in our ascent, at these early scenic feasts, the trail had not become so rocky.
The lake in the upper left in the above image is South Gap Lake. There’s a hint of a lake beyond, shown as a dab of blue. I used a telephoto to bring the scene closer. The image below shows South Gap Lake and North Gap Lake beyond.

Two years ago Monica and I were on the shores of South Gap Lake when a very attractive, physically fit young woman was coming from the direction of North Gap. The three of us had a brief conversation. She was from Switzerland, working in New York City. She had gotten claustrophobic and needed to visit real mountains. So she backpacked to North Gap Lake and spent the night somewhere on its shores. Monica and I were impressed, and hope to do the same next year. The few people one encounters here are always a pleasure to meet. North Gap is just the kind of place we’re looking for: an experience that is semi-wilderness.

Some folks puzzle over the name ‘Snowy Range’ when they don’t see much snow in late summer. But as explained, the range derives its name from the brilliant quartzite rock that caps many of the upper slopes. The following image speaks volumes.

From the area where I photographed North and South Gap Lakes, turning my camera close to 180 degrees, I took an image of the cliff wall that runs from Lake Marie to the end of South Gap Lake. We had been at the south end of the wall the evening before. In the image below, the prominent sharp summit in the shadows is 11,755-foot Old Main. Lake Marie is the most distant of the water bodies.

The serious mountain aficionado comes to know the peaks, lakes, trees, flora and fauna, and very importantly, moods of the mountains. One watches for signs of building storm clouds. To be caught on Medicine Bow Peak in a summer thunderstorm is no laughing matter: one’s life is at risk. Most climbers and hikers try to get off the mountain before 1:00 or 2:00PM, some as early as 12:00 noon. However, on our day, it was apparent
that we were going to be blessed with topnotch weather all day. We only had to worry about absorbing too much ultraviolet sunlight at high altitude. But we had protection, so up we went.

The next image shows the steepness of the trail. Monica is watching her feet. At places we had to use our hands to surmount small ledges or large rock outcroppings. They aren’t dangerous, just hard for old folks.

We were among the oldest people that we encountered on the trail. However, it was inspirational to see a lot of physically fit people. Medicine Bow weeds out those who are not in good physical condition. It also weeds out folks who haven’t become acclimatized.

When I was a young buck in the Air Force, I covered the long stretch from Lake Marie up to School House Rock, out the ridge past the Diamond and Old Main, and on to Medicine Bow, crossing its summit, continuing on to the end of the high ridge, dropping down to the gap, and up onto Browns Peak. I then came back off Brown’s Peak and my late wife Jani was at Lewis Lake with our car. Though the trek was long, it was not dangerous. I did do a few technical climbs on Medicine Bow - never anything too challenging, but still dangerous, which brings me to a brief digression.

There is a fine line between hiking and mountain climbing. When you begin having to use your hands, the transition has started. A difficulty scale has been developed by climbers to rate the routes up mountains. Class 1 is just hiking. No use of the hands is needed and falls are not likely to result in serious injury. The main trail up Medicine Bow Peak is not Class 1. It is Class 2. In the late 1960s, I did class 3.5 to 4 when I climbed in the Medicine Bow during my Air Force years. On those routes, falls would have been near fatal or fatal. One definitely gains wisdom with age or loses one’s nerve.

As we continued up the mountain, Monica was a real trooper. I was worried about her knees on the descent, but she was resolute. We were pushing on, she said flatly. She had not come that far on such a perfect day only to let some rocks defeat her.

To be perfectly truthful, we didn’t go to the absolute top of Medicine Bow. We stopped at the altitude of 11,930 feet according to my GPS. The final scramble is on rocks that were accident producers. For us at this stage of life, it was too risky. There were people who were moving faster than we were, passing us, and this caused both of us to lose concentration. A small consolation was that others made the same decision to stop as we did.

So, alas, we fell short of the summit by 83 vertical feet. But where we stopped, we could survey the surrounding peaks and valleys just as well. Here is an image of the boulder field we were on. You can see across to Brown’s Peak at 11,722 feet. It’s the flat peak in the center of the image.
And one final image that looks westward to Elk Mountain on the horizon in the center of the photograph. Elk Mountain is an outlier to the main body of the Medicine Bow. At 11,156 feet elevation, the peak is a prominent landmark for anyone crossing the high plains. It is clearly visible for many miles to travelers on Interstate 80. Elk Mountain was originally called Medicine Butte.

There is a small town named Elk Mountain that was on the Overland Stage Trail Route. The route was moved from Medicine Bow to Elk Mountain when trouble with the Plains Indians led to a rerouting of the stage path. When it came time to route the Lincoln Highway (U.S. Route 30), Elk Mountain lost the battle for the route to Medicine Bow.

People We Met on the Trail

I’ll close the article with a brief description of some of the folks and animals we met. Most memorable may have been the three-legged dog that didn’t seem hampered at all. He/she hopped onto and over rocks as though they weren’t there. Second on the list is the young woman who climbed Medicine Bow Peak in flip-flops. If she experienced any discomfort, it wasn’t apparent. We were amazed. But then there was the unfortunate group of ten from Baltimore who had to give up. They really tried. I felt their pain, but the leader made the right decision. One of their junior members had to sit down on the way up because of altitude symptoms, and others were having problems as well.

At one point, I got too far ahead of Monica. She needed help getting over some rocks and a gentleman gave her a hand. Monica explained that she wasn’t a mountaineer, but he good-naturedly assured her that “You are now.” Young people often paused to give us the right-of-way. Some were impressed at seeing us climbing the peak. Monica and I felt good, as though we were part of a community of like souls, all of whom deserved to be on that mountain, a summit sacred to the Indians.

I am convinced that Medicine Bow Peak attracts quality folks. It is a place of high vibration. I expect that the spiritually advanced attribute the energy of the mountain to its predominance of high-grade quartz. We felt it, and I expect that somewhere around June 2013, the mountain will call us back. We will return.

Robert T. Leverett
Dinosaur Tree Treasures

by dbh guru » Tue Aug 21, 2012 8:51 am

NTS, I've been scanning my western trip photos for tree images. Here are some that highlight the junipers and pinyons Monica and I saw. Dinosaur NM was a treasure trove of old junipers and pinyons. Here is the first of two images of what we saw. Please be sure to double click on the images to get their full effect.

Larry, it is really difficult to say. The extremely old ones grow where the rock formation contains magnesium. I don't know if that is the case in Dinosaur. I plan to consult Dave Stahle. He'll likely know.

Another increment bore would be most useful. We could apply for a coring permit from the San Juan and Rio Grande NFs. Also, good news. Lee Frelich will be going out in June to be with us. Now if brother Will from North Carolina can also join us along with Don from Alaska, we'll really have a time. Here's another Dinosaur NM image.

Here is a sample of the junipers

Robert T. Leverett

Larry Tucei wrote: Bob, Wow those are ancient Junipers. How old would you estimate them to be? I may buy a Coring tool before I come out with you next year. I've been wanting one ever since I joined NTS back in 06.
Re: 222 Confirmed Redwoods Over 350 ft.

by gnmcmartin » Tue Aug 21, 2012 10:47 am

Michael:  Many many years ago, first in 1958, I visited the redwood country many times, and I may have visited the Humboldt Redwood State Park more often than the others. Way, way back, the tallest redwood was supposed to be a tree in the Founders Grove--I think it was called the Founders Tree, and initially was supposed to be 364 feet tall. Then the story was that a storm blew off a part of the top, and it was measured to be 346. Another report said that the initial measurement was recorded with transposed digits. Did you measure this one? And if so, what was the height? And was there evidence of a damaged top?

Another question: A bit out of the way, is a less often visited section of the park, which includes the Pepperwood Grove. In my memory--I was probably last there in 1970 or so--the trees there did not seem to rival those in other parts of the park. But, did you measure any there? Were there any in the 140 class?

Anyway, what an amazing piece of work you have done. I can only imagine the challenges involved in measuring these trees. Yes, the LiDAR helps you locate trees to measure, but that doesn't make the actual measurement any easier. I am stunned and amazed by what you, and others, have accomplished. Thanks! My wife and I have not given up hope of getting out there to see these trees one last time, and your list only adds motivation. My love affair with redwoods started when I was 7 or 8 years old, and I saw the picture of two very graceful tall redwoods in G.H. Collingwood's book, Knowing Your Trees.

I have another question. Where is Harper Flat, exactly? I have no memory of any place called Harper Flat from my visits to Humboldt Redwood State Park, and looking at a map of the park on-line, I can't find Harper Flat. I also searched for a possible Harper Creek. Am I having a senior moment? If so, forgive me. I noted a good number of very tall trees listed for Harper Flat.

--Gaines McMartin

Hopes for Chestnut Revival Growing

by Joe » Tue Aug 21, 2012 12:38 pm

In today's Wall Street Journal:

"Hopes for Chestnut Revival Growing Engineered Versions of the Once-Common Species, Long Ago Wiped Out by a Fungus, Take Root"

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10000872396390444233104577593571278706402.html


Joe Zorzin

Re: Hopes for Chestnut Revival Growing

by gnmcmartin » Tue Aug 21, 2012 2:24 pm

Joe:  Thanks for the update. I have been interested in this for many years, and had, until recently, more or less kept in touch.

I remember the first approach--it was to introduce a hypovirulent strain of the fungus, which once it entered a tree, could block the virulent strain. I think this worked to save the European chestnuts, but it never really worked here, unless inoculations were made all around the canker. Of course there were many cankers on most trees, and it was entirely impractical. So that was the end of that. At the time I had my eye on a piece of land to buy--it was literally covered with chestnut sprouts. I could buy this, introduce the hypovirulent fungus, and voila! an instant chestnut forest. But no.
Actually, about 20 years ago I had a tour and detailed explanation of the methodology being used at SUNY Syracuse from Professor Charles Maynard, who at the time, and maybe still today, was working as a tree geneticist there. As it happens, I came to know him because of his interest in Norway spruce. I have not been in contact with him for years now.

Then, again a number of years ago, there was a planting of chestnut seedlings in Rock Creek Park in Washington D.C. These were hybrids with the Chinese chestnut, but apparently did not have the gene for resistance to the blight, and the last time I saw those plantings, they did not seem to be doing well. Maybe some survived, but I never went back to look.

And now there is a planting--really I think two plantings--at the Virginia Arboretum--actually more properly, the Blandy Experimental Farm. Over the years my hopes and interest in these projects has waned, and I have become rather pessimistic. So pessimistic that when I saw the plantings at Blandy, my reaction was just Ho-hum, and I didn't even check with anyone to see exactly what chestnuts they had planted. I think there was a sign that said they were the hybrids, and it was a part of an experiment to backcross to try to isolate the resistance gene, but select for other American chestnut characteristics.

Reference was made in the article to a planting of the SUNY seedlings in VA. The Blandy Farm would be a logical place for that to have happened--I will inquire. Maybe I can observe the progress. If so, I will try to contact Professor Maynard to follow up.

Professor Maynard had high belief in the method he was working on as SUNY, and not so much in the hybrids. If there is new hope, he will be proven right.

And, as of last year, I had a rather nice 30 foot tall chestnut sprout on my timberland. I have seen a few over the years, but they all died. This one is the best yet. But, because I have a stress fracture in my foot, I have not been able to walk around much at my timberland this summer. Maybe next time I get up there I will check on this sprout. But I see no chance that it will survive for much longer--it is of sprout origin, so it can't be of any chance resistant strain.

But it is nice to see. Soon no one will see any more sprouts in Garrett county, MD. They are becoming more and more scarce.

When I first bought my timberland, there were two very large old 20 or 30 foot high "remnants" of the giant chestnuts that once grew on my property. They fell over years ago and have mostly returned to the soil. The wood is rot resistant, but eventually they give way and rejoin the soil.

Gaines McMartin

Re: Hopes for Chestnut Revival Growing

by Joe » Tue Aug 21, 2012 3:27 pm

Gaines, a year ago, I attended a Forest Guild event here in central Mass. where a rep from the American Chestnut Foundation gave out 3 chestnuts from backcrossed trees to those who wanted them. I have them planted in my lawn. So far so good. I'll be reporting on them as the years go by. The foundation retains rights to any chestnuts these trees produce for further research and dissemination.

Joe Zorzin

Re: Hopes for Chestnut Revival Growing

by Rand » Tue Aug 21, 2012 3:33 pm

Northern Michigan seems to have had better luck with hypovirulence than the rest of the chestnut's native range:

We waded through the bracken ferns that were taller than my 4-year old daughter Clare as Dr. Fulbright explained that he had been monitoring the progress of this stand for nearly 30 years. He explained that the stand had gone through a very significant decline
when the blight finally caught up to it, but now many of the trees had recovered dramatically. To the untrained eye, it looked very much like a healthy stand of trees now. Dr. Fulbright also noted that I was probably overly pessimistic in my reaction to the West Salem stand, which I described farther down on this page after my visit to it in June. That stand, Dr. Fulbright suggested, was going through the same stage of decline that the County Line stand did, but was just beginning to show signs of recovery. If that's true, then that is extremely good news.


It'd be interesting to know why.

Here's a couple of his other posts that I found interesting:


http://livingchestnuts.wordpress.com/2011/07/14/tioga-county-pa/

Suny-ESF has a couple of nice introductory pages on their chestnut program. First more info on the oxalate oxidase enzyme they are introducing:

http://www.esf.edu/chestnut/resistance-enhancing%20genes.htm

Next they describe the propagation process. It's just eye wateringly difficult:

http://www.esf.edu/chestnut/tissue-culture.htm

Rand Brown

Re: Hopes for Chestnut Revival Growing

by Larry Tucei » Wed Aug 22, 2012 12:03 pm

Joe, Gaines, Randy, all, I would really enjoy helping getting the Chestnut re-established. I wish I could have been around years ago to see the giant Chestnuts throughout North America. I was lucky enough to visit a large one in Northern Wisconsin thanks to directions for Paul Jost back in 09. So far it has escaped the blight and had lots of Chestnut Hulls on the ground. It may be possible to have some of those collected for growing in the future. From the posting back in 09 on ENTS,

"Thanks to Paul Jost for giving me directions to one of the largest Chestnut trees in Wisconsin and in the U.S. The tree had been trimmed by a local Arborist recently and may be declining with a hollowing core. Still a magnificent specimen and the first Chestnut I'd ever seen. My friend Joe and I drove about 90 miles to enjoy and measure this beauty. It was cold in the 30's that day for the high. We stayed with the tree for about an hour and it was a thrill for me to finally see a Chestnut. Paul had reported on this tree in the past and again my thanks to him for sharing this with me. The trees Measurements were CBH-12’ 7”, Height-48’ and Spread-52’x 30’. It is located on the corner of Manypenny and 7th Ave., Bayfield Wi. Some photos of the tree."

Larry Tucei
**Re: Rothkugel Plantation, WV**

by tkhackney » Tue Aug 21, 2012 6:07 pm

There is an on-going project to interpret the loop trail at Rothkugel Plantation, as well as develop a roadside pull-off at the trailhead location. Mapping and measurement are part of the overall project. I have been working on the pull-off through the Staunton-Parkersburg Turnpike Alliance and Appalachian Forest Heritage Area (AFHA). A new AmeriCorps member with AFHA will continue the interpretive and mapping part of the project when they arrive in late September. If anyone would like further information, or wishes to help with the project, I will put you in touch.

T. K. Hackney

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**Bridge of Flowers, MA**

by dbhguru » Wed Aug 22, 2012 5:21 pm

NTS, About 10 miles west of Greenfield Mass is the little town of Shelburne Falls, cite of the famous Salmon Falls of the Deerfield River. Native peoples fished there for centuries.

Today Shelburne Falls has become more prosperous because of the vision of its citizens. One vision started long ago. In 1928 and abandoned Trolly Bridge was transformed into a work of beauty. I never paid much attention to the Bridge of Flowers in past years, but Monica and I revisited it today. I’d like to share some images with everyone.

Here’s what you see at the start.
Then the beauty unfolds.
If you Google Bridge of Flowers, Shelburne Falls, you can get the history of the bridge.


http://www.bridgeofflowersmass.org/

http://www.facebook.com/pages/Bridge-of-Flowers/130369333692022

Robert T. Leverett
Re: Bridge of Flowers, MA

by dbhguru » Thu Aug 23, 2012 8:29 am

After leaving the Bridge of Flowers, we went to Mohawk to begin inventorying hemlocks in need of treatment that grow along the Mahican-Mohawk Trail corridor. I always get a lift when entering the upper meadow. Here are two images. The first is the entry into the meadow and the second is a shot of the big bluestem growing in the meadow. Big bluestem is way cool, although this year’s patch isn’t very tall due to the drought.

BTW, I got word that American Forests wants me to write an article about Cook Forest and Mohawk. I have to give them an outline first. It will be big publicity for both forests, but especially Mohawk, which is much less well known.

Robert T. Leverett

Ramon and Winnie Morse Oak, MS

by Larry Tucei » Fri Aug 24, 2012 4:19 pm

NTS, Another nice Live Oak for your viewing pleasure that I measured in Gulfport Ms. The Ramon Winnie Morse Oak measured CBH- 20’ 8”, Height- 60’ and Crown Spread- 138’ x 132’. The great tree had some huge limbs and is one of four larger Live Oaks in this section of the city. I have measured one of the four others back in 08 the Nora Fulton Oak CBH-24’ 3” and will get to the other two in the near future. The listing is now at 202 trees.
Re: Ramon and Winnie Morse Oak

Larry, The race is on. You must find as many 20-foot girth live oaks as Michael find 350-foot tall redwoods. The ENTS pride and reputation is on the line. Don't want you to feel any pressure. If you don't find another 21 live oaks that reach 20 feet in girth, somehow the rest of us will survive the unbearable humiliation. We'll banish any thoughts of committing .... Well, dare I say. Nope, don't feel any pressure. Uh, when did you say you'd make 223?

Robert T. Leverett

Our Changing Forests: An 88-Year Time Lapse, MT

Larry Tucei

Our Changing Forests: An 88-Year Time Lapse
by Andrew Prince, August 23, 2012


In trying to tell the story of our changing forests, we turned to the U.S. Forest Service for some historical context. Buried in the back of General Technical Report No. 23 was the pay dirt: a stack of 13 series of photos, more than 88 years in the making.

1909. Facing nearly due west from ridge northeast of Como Lake. Light selection cut in open ponderosa pine. Ground cover is comprised of perennial grasses and forbs, including basalmroot. A few low-growing bitterbrush plants can be seen in the vicinity of horses and in distance on left. A group of willows can be seen behind horsemen at left center. (Original captions)  Photo 87357/U.S. Forest Service, 1 of 9.

The photographs document the life of the Bitterroot National Forest in west-central Montana, from 1909 to 1997, though the project is still ongoing. Every 10 to 15 years, photographers return to the same 13 spots in the forest.
It's important to note that the first images in each series, from 1909, are not the "original" state of the forest. The project was started when photographer W.J. Lubkin was sent from Washington, D.C., to document logging activity on the land after it was sold and selectively cut in 1906.

Re: Our Changing Forests: An 88-Year Time Lapse, MT

by Don » Sat Aug 25, 2012 1:15 am

Ed- The Montana study reminded me much of the collaborative effort we at Grand Canyon National Park Science Center made to obtain reference conditions for The Park. We weren't able to put a decadal repeat photo series together, but what a fine thing for the Montana folks to find. We did obtain a wealth of photos from the turn of the century on, across a wide spectrum of the Park's forests and woodlands.

At the onset, we had little idea how much material we were going to find. After extensive searching we did uncover vegetation classifications from 1906-1910 (Lang and Stewart, for expansion of the railroad), 1935 (NPS's own "Bureau of Forestry", now defunct), vegetation studies by VanKat and White (1984), and a vegetation classification performed by myself and Spotskey (2002). See "The Colorado Plateau II: Biophysical, Socioeconomic, and Cultural Research, By Charles van Riper, David J. Mattson (Editors); Indications of Large Changes in Mixed Conifer Forests of Grand Canyon National Park!", VanKat, Crocker-Bedford, Bertolette, Leatherbury, and Sipes. This was one of several preliminary studies leading up to a more comprehensive examination under the aegis of the Science Center's Forest Ecosystem Landscape Analysis (FELA) and more thorough report.

A major difference between the Montana study and ours was the initial condition of the two areas. Montana's study was after significant post-harvest activities. Grand Canyon was, and still remains one of the primary research sources for a relatively undisturbed old-growth ponderosa pine forest ecosystem, across much of it's 150,000 forested acres.

Don Bertolette - President/Moderator, WNTS BBS

Re: Our Changing Forests: An 88-Year Time Lapse, MT

by jamesrobertsmith » Sat Aug 25, 2012 12:23 pm

This used to be one of my favorite pieces of art (still is). However, it used to end with the twelfth panel and since then Crumb has added three more panels for a more optimistic end:


James Robert Smith
Re: Tallest known Bigleaf Maple(s) ??

by KoutaR » Sat Aug 25, 2012 1:46 pm

Mario, The tallest laser-measured maple in Europe, we are aware of, is a 40.6-meter (133 ft) sycamore maple (A. pseudoplatanus). I have read velvet maple (A. velutinum) of Caucasus and northern Iran could reach 50 m (164 ft), but that is probably more an estimate than a measurement. I don't remember the source. I saw some really big velvet maples in Iran in 2003 but I cannot estimate their heights. Here is the base of one:


Another candidate for the tallest maple species is A. laurinum from the tropical forests of southeast Asia. Tree Flora of Sabah and Sarawak (Vol. 1) gives its max. height as 50 m (164 ft). Probably more an estimate than a measurement, again.

Kouta Rasanen

Re: Redwood Books

by Don » Fri Aug 24, 2012 12:56 am

Larry,
And others in the Southeast interested in the redwoods, feast your eyes on this:

REDWOODS, The World's Largest Trees by Jeremy Joan Hewes

One of the best redwood books that we have found for general information is: Redwoods, The World's Largest Trees by Jeremy Joan Hewes. This hardcover book has 192 pages, is printed in a 9.5"x12.5" format, and contains more than 300 photographs, with over 100 in full color, including several that are 18"x11.75". The price is $16.00 ppd.

Special Sale: As a result of a publisher buy out we can now offer the REDWOODS book for $9.98 (40% off list) plus $3.00 shipping or a total ppd price of $12.98 for this extraordinary book.

The books, booklets and other documents listed on this page are available from:

Redwood Technology, P.O. Box 1006, Huntsville, AL 35807

Don Bertolette - President/Moderator, WNTS BBS

Re: Redwood Books

by gnmcmartin » Fri Aug 24, 2012 3:13 pm

Folks: I bought this book when it was first published. I am glad it is still in print. This is a good book about redwoods, and has some really nice pictures. When I say it is about "redwoods," it is equally about the Sierra Redwoods, or Giant Sequoias.

I am sure one could find a some limitations with this book, but as far as I can remember--I haven't had this book out to look at for some time, until right now--
there are no gross inaccuracies or other off-putting issues, except, perhaps, its leaving some photos not precisely identified as to place or specific trees. For example, one picture includes what for all the world looks like the General Sherman tree, but it is not so identified (there is a picture of the General Sherman elsewhere in the book), and one or more of the pictures of close growing giant Sequoias may be of the Senate and House groups on the Congress Grove trail, but I can't be sure.

One thing that frequently irritates me in tree books is pictures that have the wrong caption. This book has at least two harmless ones. One of a man standing on a Douglas fir stump, implying it was a redwood, and another that mentions redwood regeneration, where the picture shows no such thing. Really, just quibbles.

It includes pictures of the logging of both redwoods and Giant Sequoias, and has other historic photos, including one of John Muir and Teddy Roosevelt standing with others at the base of the Grizzly Giant Tree. The tree is not identified in the photo as the Grizzly Giant—as in my earlier complaint—, but it clearly is. This photo was also the basis of the painting done by Albert Beirstadt, which could have been mentioned. There is, as with the General Sherman Tree, a color picture of the Grizzly Giant elsewhere in the book. But these are nit-picks. Anyone who is as nuts about Redwoods and Sequoias, as I am, would order this book before doing another solitary thing.

Of course, I could imagine someone doing a better book—any of you up for that? And want an advisor, editor—for free??

Gaines McMartin

**Neil Armstrong passes away at 82, August 25, 2012**

by edfrank » Sat Aug 25, 2012 3:57 pm

Farewell to one of humanity's greatest explorers.

Neil Armstrong's first step on the moon and his historic speech.
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9WDsgClroE](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z9WDsgClroE)

The landing on the surface of the moon occurred at 20:17:39 UTC on July 20, 1969. The first words Armstrong intentionally spoke to Mission Control and the world from the lunar surface were, "Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed." Aldrin and Armstrong celebrated with a brisk handshake and pat on the back before quickly returning to the checklist of tasks needed to ready the lunar module for liftoff from the Moon should an emergency unfold during the first moments on the lunar surface.

Although the official NASA flight plan called for a crew rest period before extra-vehicular activity, Armstrong requested that the EVA be moved to earlier in the evening, Houston time. Once Armstrong and Aldrin were ready to go outside, Eagle was depressurized, the hatch was opened and Armstrong made his way down the ladder first.

At the bottom of the ladder, Armstrong said "I'm going to step off the LEM now" (referring to the Apollo Lunar Module). He then turned and set his left boot on the surface at 2:56 UTC July 21, 1969, then spoke the famous words "That's one small step for [a] man, one giant leap for mankind."
Neil Alden Armstrong (August 5, 1930 – August 25, 2012) was an American NASA astronaut, test pilot, aerospace engineer, university professor, United States Naval Aviator, and the first person to set foot upon the Moon. Armstrong joined the NASA Astronaut Corps in 1962. His first spaceflight was the NASA Gemini 8 mission in 1966, for which he was the command pilot, becoming one of the first U.S. civilians to fly in space. On this mission, he performed the first manned docking of two spacecraft with pilot David Scott. Armstrong’s second and last spaceflight was as mission commander of the Apollo 11 moon landing mission on July 20, 1969. On this mission, Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin descended to the lunar surface and spent 2½ hours exploring while Michael Collins remained in orbit in the Command Module. Armstrong was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by Richard Nixon along with Collins and Aldrin, the Congressional Space Medal of Honor by President Jimmy Carter in 1978, and the Congressional Gold Medal in 2009.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neil_Armstrong

The cause of his death has not been released, but he is known to have been recovering from heart surgery.

Facebook Tree Pages and Groups

by edfrank » Sat Aug 25, 2012 9:04 pm

NTS, I have created a "list" on Facebook consisting pages which commonly feature trees:

Tree Related Pages

http://www.facebook.com/lists/10151039626131958

Here is a list of Tree Groups on Facebook. (Groups and Friends are different from Pages). For many of these you need to join the group or send a Friend Request.

Tree Related Groups

Worldwide news about ancient trees
http://www.facebook.com/groups/12187367897220/

Trees!
http://www.facebook.com/groups/2338448459/

Sveriges Arboristförbund SAF
http://www.facebook.com/groups/55063427199/

The Tree-Ring Times
http://www.facebook.com/groups/112766132098263/

TREES
http://www.facebook.com/groups/27642585597/

The Sisters Olive Trees of Noah
http://www.facebook.com/groups/215243588563980/

Tree Climbing Yogyakarta (INDONESIA)
http://www.facebook.com/groups/treeclimbingyogya karta/

Groene Monumenten
http://www.facebook.com/groups/305809972768801/

The Pontfadog Oak
http://www.facebook.com/groups/14102412642382/
Sacred Land  
http://www.facebook.com/groups/266865041283/

Oak at the Gate of the Dead  
http://www.facebook.com/groups/112373675444220/

Shropshire's Ancient Trees (SATS)  
http://www.facebook.com/groups/362470993779326/

Longleaf Pine Ecosystems  
http://www.facebook.com/groups/2218061737/

Tree Ring Laboratory, Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory  
http://www.facebook.com/groups/104945492901048/

Edward Frank

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**Linden in Charlottesville, VA**

by RyanLeClair » Sun Aug 26, 2012 2:09 pm

Hey NTS, I was in Charlottesville, Virginia a couple of weeks ago...found this linden growing in what I guess is the town square. It's either a T. platyphyllos, x europa, or T. americana...definitely not heterophylla or cordata. The circumference was 19'0". The height was very unremarkable, as main trunk broke up a long time ago. It's probably 65' tall. I say probably because it started pouring just when I was about to measure the height...oh, well. The tree seems to be mostly hollow, and it's sending up a lot of sprouts from the base (the leaf in the picture was on a basal sprout).

--Ryan
Central Sierra Expedition - Big Sugar Pines Down, CA, USA

by M.W.Taylor » Mon Aug 27, 2012 11:33 pm

I just got back from the central Sierra with Mario Vaden and Mike Hanuschik. The 3Ms on a mission to photograph champion trees for American Forests. There was some dispute whether Whelan Pine or Pickering Pine was the true champion sugar pine. Pickering indeed did have a larger base and 2 more feet of height...slightly more points. Whelan however is a much larger tree by volume. At 50 feet above the ground is the first branch which is 3 feet in diameter. At this point the trunk is still over 9 feet in diameter.

We ventured into the Pickering Pine grove and found the Pickering to be lying sideways. See attached. One Armed Bandit just above it in a flat bench area was lying sideways too...see attached. 2nd and 4th largest sugar pines likely blew over in the huge December 2011 storm. Some of the needles still show a little green on the fallen foliage. Pickering Pine's base collapsed and One Arm Bandit snapped in half at 35-40 feet above the ground.

Too bad the forest service is allowing clearcutting around the entire area leaving virtually no protective buffer zone. Additionally the area has hoards of free range cattle that trample everything in sight and leave the place a dusty, smelly mess. The springs and streams are being trashed by the cattle. The 4 roads that lead into this place are either gated or blocked with rock piles. Why does the USFS block access to this area ? To protect it ?

On a more positive note:

Whelan Rules !

The consensus seems to be *Tilia Americana*
Fallen Pickering Pine with shattered fence that once protected it

One armed bandit with snapped bole

Fallen Pickering Pine with collapsed base

One armed bandit's big branch that gave name to the tree

American Forests Champion Sugar Pine
Mario underneath the giant 9,000 cubic foot behemoth

**Hurricane Isaac**

by Larry Tucei » Tue Aug 28, 2012 8:16 pm

NTS, Another Gulf Coast Hurricane is just about making landfall now near the mouth of the Ms River. We in South Ms are in the Northeast quadrant but since this is just a Category 1 storm it’s not too bad. We are receiving a 6-10’ surge with winds at 39 mph with gusts to 60. The storms eye has about 80 mph winds. We are all glad it could have been a lot stronger storm. I’ll let you know more tomorrow. http://radar.weather.gov/Conus/southmissvly.php

Larry Tucei

**Re: Hurricane Isaac**

by edfrank » Tue Aug 28, 2012 9:50 pm

The answer my friend, is blowin in the wind, the answer is blowin' in the wind.
Re: Hurricane Isaac

by Larry Tucei » Wed Aug 29, 2012 6:52 am

Ed, That’s good! I loved that song. Its 5:30 am and the wind is gusting to 50-60. The storm is slowing down now moving at 6 mph. We will have these conditions all day. The worst thing is the rotation in the thunderstorms produce tornados during the banding. At night its hard to sleep soundly you hear the howling of the winds in the distance. We are good so far with minor damage here and there- some trees down in the area. Lets go surfin now everybody surfin now come on come with meeenee!!!

MOV05399.MPG
Larry Tucei

Re: Hurricane Isaac

by Larry Tucei » Wed Aug 29, 2012 6:38 pm

NTS, 10” rain so far here in Gulfport with 40-50 mph sustained winds gusts to 70. Flooding in low lying areas in Ms is starting to get worse as the copious amounts of rain are expected to continue throughout tonight and tomorrow. La is fairing much worse with up to 16” of rain in some places as of 600 PM. I’m 1/2 mile from the Gulf of Mexico but on high ground. The normal tranquil Gulf is a raging Ocean thanks to Isaac.

News footage from Gulfport, MS

http://video.foxnews.com/v/1814701843001/
Re: Central Sierra Expedition - Big Sugar Pines Down

by mdvaden » Wed Aug 29, 2012 10:19 pm

Here’s a few more photos from the weekend.

One is Michael Taylor by the Whelan Sugar Pine, the prostrate shot is Michael on top of the Pickering Pine. And another with some blue sky is the Ponderosa Pine Ruby at El Dorado NF.
Re: Romania - Mountain Forests

by KoutaR » Thu Aug 30, 2012 8:19 am

Note that I have never been to Romania. I have only done some "research" for a possible trip in the future.

Izvoarele Nerei Reserve is located in Semenic - Cheile Carasului National Park. It is said to be the largest (5012 ha) virgin beech forest in Europe (though Uholka - Shyrokyi Luh Reserve in Ukraine is also said to be the largest with 11 860 ha). The reserve can be visited only on a marked trail called Borlovenii Old Lake Secu. Beeches up to 54 m tall have been claimed to exist in the reserve. There is also a big wych elm \((U.\ glabra)\) which is claimed to be 43 m tall. I have seen it in a TV document, it is called erroneously \(Ulmus\ montana\). As this is deciduous forest, a measuring trip would be best to organize in spring or autumn. The park has a website here:

http://www.pnscc.ro

It is only in Romanian, but readable with the Google Translator.

Another 43 m tall wych elm has been reported from Calafat, Dolj.

62.5 m tall Norway spruce has been reported from Gosmanu-Tarcau Reserve. The location can be seen here:

http://www.panoramio.com/photo/46474808

62 m tall silver fir \((Abies\ alba)\) has been reported near the village of Cheia, Prahova County. The only tip for its exact location, I have found on the Internet, is "snappish river valley" translated by Google.

All these trees have probably been measured with tangent method and should be verified with laser or climbing. They would be European records if true.

For a listing of Romanian virgin forests, see:

See pages 67-86.

Retezat National Park with 38 047 ha is one of the largest "virgin" areas in southern Europe. It is mostly at higher elevations with coniferous forests and alpine areas; thus, there are perhaps no height records. The park has a website here:

http://retezat.ro/

Kouta Rasanen
Long Live Jake, MTSF, MA

by dbhguru » Thu Aug 30, 2012 10:01 am

NTS, Yesterday I went to Mohawk to do some pre-workshop planning. It is my intention that the workshop be thoroughly planned out with worksheets for measuring exercises on trees that have been measured to very high levels of accuracy. There's more work involved than just standing back and shooting a tree. We'll be computing offsets and resolving differences between results from different techniques.

Afterwards I went to do the post season measurement of the Jake Swamp tree. I exclusively used my TruPulse 360, setting it on my tripod. I began the measuring process by putting an orange disk at 4.5 feet above mid-slope using Will Blozan's thumbtack at 4.5 feet so that measurements stay consistent. I usually can't see the spot from where I see the crown, but managed to shift around until I did find a whole through the foliage to the marker and simultaneously to the crown. The image below shows the highest point of Jake's crown.

With good lines of sight and a steady measurement platform established, I went to work. The attached Excel spreadsheet speaks for itself. How do I resolve pre-season measurements with the latest results? The difference lies mostly in getting the base measurement consistent. If you can see the base very well, that becomes a source of difference and/or error. Having cleared a few limbs on diseased beeches, so that I have a clear sight to the marker, I'm set on the base for the future.

It is always interesting, if not entertaining when I tell others about Jake's status. Some believe me immediately. Others have their doubts, and on still others, the information doesn't seem to register. It is that way across the groups I speak to. One question that can be legitimately asked is: How do you know Jake is number one in New England? I always explain, that we can't absolutely know that unless we measure every legitimate contender. So, I say Jake is the tallest accurately measured tree of any species in New England. That can lead to questions about accuracy and who can achieve it. As we know, this can be a touchy topic. Usually, I handle it fairly diplomatically, but on occasion, my real viewpoint shows through. I've become rather intolerant of timber professionals and big tree hunters who just don't get it, and don't seem to want to get it. But attitude from me won't win support from those who have open minds. So, I plan to be on my best behavior for the upcoming Advanced Tree Measuring Workshop. If the people who choose to participate in the measuring exercises go through all the steps, it will become apparent what conditions must be met when using a measuring technique, and the consequences if conditions are not met. I'll include trees for which the tangent method works well from any direction, trees for which the method works for only some directions, and trees for which the method fails no matter where the measurer is positioned. Since we'll have American Forests present as well as LTI, we have an opportunity to really demonstrate the art and science of tree measuring as it needs to be done unless the measurer is playing games.

I realize that western Massachusetts is a long way away from many of you. However, if you can make it here and need support either knowing where to stay or having help with accommodations the sooner you can let me know that you plan to come, the better the position I'll be in to help you.

JakeSwampMeasurements.xlsx

Robert T. Leverett
Martha's Vineyard

by bbeduhn » Thu Aug 30, 2012 12:05 pm


Pagoda Tree Sophora japonica 19'9" cbh 79.5' height x ~70' avg spread
This is the oldest of its kind in North America and I would assume the largest in all respects. It was brought over by a whaling captain in 1833.

The arboretum has years listed for all of its exotic specimens. Heights are not particularly impressive but virtually all are less than 50 years old. It's interesting to see how fast exotics can grow in a northeast island habitat. The arboretum will very likely harbor the tallest tree on the island in another 20 years. Currently, white pine and Norway spruce are the tallest species on the island. I found a grove of white pines that might eclipse 100' but didn't get back to measure them. Most whites have angled tops due to wind. They generally angle to the east, the wind preventing them from getting very tall. In a grove, they may well top 100'.

The Japanese cedars are truly impressive. I'd only seen 20-30 footers before. This tree is very closely related to the Giant Sequoia, and can top 200' in its native habitat. The Dawn redwood is an early specimen. This was my first experience with Monkey puzzle trees. They are extremely exotic but very slow growing. There were six, all from 1968, ranging from 7' to 18.4'.

Brian Beduhn
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<th>Latin</th>
<th>Height</th>
<th>Year planted</th>
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<td>Abies nordmanniana</td>
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<td>1962</td>
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<td>Abies nordmanniana</td>
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<td>1962</td>
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<td>Nordmann fir</td>
<td>Abies nordmanniana</td>
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<td>Alpine fir var</td>
<td>Abies Lasiocarpa Martha's Vineyard</td>
<td>42.8'</td>
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<td>Cedar of Lebanon</td>
<td>Cedrus Libani</td>
<td>56.5'</td>
<td>1962</td>
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<td>Cedrus Libani</td>
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<td>1962</td>
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<td>Monkey puzzle</td>
<td>Araucaria araucana</td>
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<td>Sciadapytis verticillata</td>
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<td>Pinus lambertiana</td>
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<td>Abies procer</td>
<td>52.8'</td>
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<td>Pinus parviflora pentaphylla</td>
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<td>Castenea mollissima</td>
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Wiltshire oak tree declared UK's tallest

29 August 2012 Last updated at 14:20 ET
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-wiltshire-19402113

Re: Wiltshire oak tree declared UK's tallest

by Jeroen Philippona » Thu Aug 30, 2012

Larry, This oak seems not to be very tall to you, compared to the up to 160 ft oaks in Congaree, but that is an old growth area much more to the south. The UK has no old growth forests left (the nearest old growth oak forest is the Bialowieza forest in Eastern Poland), and, unlike France and Germany, it has no tradition of old planted oak forests for high quality wood production.

In the Bialowieza old growth forest there are many oaks of 40 - 42 m (131 - 138 ft) and the laser record is 43.6 m (143 ft), which is till now the laser record for Europe for that species. In the Netherlands the two tallest measured oaks are a Quercus robur of 41.8 m and one of 40.0 m (137.14 and 131 ft). In Belgium the record is 40.6 m (133.2 ft).

In France the tallest laser measured oaks are Quercus petraea, in the Forest of Bercé 48.4 m (158.8 ft), in the Forest of Tronçais 43.4 m (142.4 ft). Those are all planted forests, with a known planting history from the time of King Louis XIV, 1680 - 1700. In Germany Kouta measured 44.6 m (146.3 ft) for the same species.

The two species are very related, there are some ecological differences but Q. petraea indeed tends to grow taller, with longer trunks.

The tallest American northern red oak (Q. rubra) we measured in Europe till now is 39.6 m (130 ft) in the Netherlands.

Jeroen Philippona

Re: Wiltshire oak tree declared UK's tallest

by Jeroen Philippona » Fri Aug 31, 2012 7:01 am

Larry Tucei wrote: What I find interesting is that I've measured some Oaks in Central Ms that are reaching that height but are not yet 100 years old. I wonder how tall would you think the old Forests of England might have been. I guess the northern climate keeps the trees from reaching heights of 150?

Larry, I think that in the best locations, sheltered like the Stourhead location, with good soil and watersupply, Q. robur in old growth forests in England could grow to 140 ft and Q. petraea perhaps to 150 ft. The forest with the tallest Q. petraea is in Western France, latitude 47° 48′ 23.19″ N and 0° 23′ 17.63″ E, whereas Stourhead is near Coordinates: 51.090°N 2.266°W (see website http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stourhead and a page I made on trees of Stourhead: http://www.monumentaltrees.com/en/gbr/e ... stourhead/).

Perhaps the old growth forests in France had taller oaks than in England, because of the longer, warmer growing season, but only in sheltered locations with optimum watersupply. Your MS location has another climate at latitude 30 - 35 N. Mid France is the same latitude as Seattle or northern Maine and the UK lies more to the north than Vancouver. Indeed we should have a world NTS meeting!

In Europe there is a European Champion Tree Forum but it is still in its childhood, because of the many countries and languages.

Jeroen Philippona
Why do we find trees so rapturous?

by RyanLeClair » Thu Aug 30, 2012 5:08 pm

This is an excerpt from a Sam Harris article: http://www.samharris.org/blog/item/drugs-and-the-meaning-of-life/

"The mere existence of psychedelics would seem to establish the material basis of mental and spiritual life beyond any doubt... Aldous Huxley ... in his classic essay, The Doors of Perception ... thought that if the brain were a kind of “reducing valve” for “Mind at Large,” this would explain the efficacy of psychedelics: They could simply be a material means of opening the tap."

I want to pose this question: why do tree-lovers like us find trees so stunning? Are our "taps" open even without the use of mind-enhancing drugs? (Although, I'm sure at least one of us here has "experimented" a bit ;) )

Re: Why do we find trees so rapturous?

by gnmcmartin » Fri Aug 31, 2012 3:05 pm

Ryan: Thanks for this--I find it very profound. I think the cause of a love of trees can be connected to some very important things about the human mind and how it functions on various levels. I like Huxley's idea that if people, some maybe more than others, didn't have the ability to use a "reducing valve," or close some gates or paths into the mind, we might not be able to function for our survival.

I have often thought about how more primitive man, who had to work so hard at survival, might have looked at trees-- whether they may have, from time to time, stopped to glory in their beauty. Not everyone, in fact, I think very few people, really look at trees and see what some other people see. Trees are very, very complex visual things--their forms, their color, their textures, all requiring a special depth and subtlety of perception needed to see them in all their three-dimensional aspects. Then there is the "idea" of trees which can overlay our visual perception, including all that we know about their growth and how they live in their environment, interact with other trees, etc., etc. We, today, maybe have more opportunities to open up the "valve" to let more in. But not all of us do.

Sometimes when I am in the woods doing some TSI thinning, I am distracted and have to remind myself to get back to work. But, on the other hand, all the complex "perception" of trees I am involved in can, on another level, help with that work, or at least provide more motivation for it. I bet Joe understands what I mean here.

Anyway, maybe at least some people in more primitive times, even when under more survival pressure, or when they had breaks from that pressure, were able to really "see" trees. In some cultures they were objects of reverence and/or worship. I don't suppose we could ever get in touch with what a tree might have meant to primitive people--or some of them.

This topic reminds me of a time when I went back to visit some friends in CA. I had spent an overly long time getting my Ph. D. at UCLA, and had spent some of that time in a common form of "recreation." I told them about the timberland I had recently bought. It had a lot of tall, straight close-growing sugar maples about 100 feet tall. I described how beautiful the woodland was, and told them about how one time on a windy winter day with little clouds blowing fast across the sky, looking up into the trees I could get completely lost in a kind of visual "rolling" sensation caused by the shadows of the clouds, and the returning sun coming through the trees at something like a 45% angle. It was amazing and hard to describe. But my friends understood immediately and said things like, "wow! psychedelic!" The valves were open, and I was understood. But in a way what I saw was something that I think was a bit different from a psychedelic experience--somehow finer, more subtle. Or so I thought at the time.
Anyway, the mind is a fascinating and wonderful thing--and we keep learning more about it. I saw on the NIH health news site this morning an article about self-awareness in the mind. There had been a theory developed, and apparently somewhat widely accepted, about where that self-awareness resides in the mind. Well, recently some neurologists had a chance to study a person who had these parts of the brain either destroyed, or disconnected from the rest of the brain. But, what amazed the researchers was that the man had perfectly normal self-awareness. This follows other studies that have shown that the brain functions more as a whole, and/or is more flexible and resilient that we have thought. It is less like a machine, and more like some more fully "organic" structure than imagined.

I am not sure I can explain exactly how this relates to the perception and enjoyment of trees, except to say that I think the whole brain is involved--that the process of perceiving, understanding, and appreciating--yes, "loving" trees, is fully distributed in our brain. The valves must be fully open, not just to let the full perception of a tree in, in all its visual complexity, but also the valves "in" the mind, opening one part into all the others and vice versa.

I think this is true also in the appreciation of music, dance, literature, etc. also.

Thanks Ryan,

--Gaines McMartin

The Charles Ives Acoustic

by michael gatonska » Fri Aug 31, 2012 4:31 pm

On a muggy and hot day in August, I recorded three soundscapes outside of the studio of Charles Ives (1874-1951). Each soundscape was captured during a different time of the day; Part I: Morning, Part II: Noon, and lastly Part III: Evening.

My goal was to record examples of the biophony and surrounding acoustic that Ives would have heard while composing in his studio on a typical summer’s day or evening. His music was intimately linked to the landscape, history, philosophy and literature of Connecticut and Massachusetts, and he held the conviction that the whole world of sounds was open for experiment and use. Many of his compositions reveal his imitation of nature, his taste for experimentation to represent, his ability to see beyond, and his reverence for God.

The future of the Ives property is currently unknown. Concerned that I may not have an opportunity to visit the homestead in the future, I decided to make my visit, to honor the man and composer with whom music history did not catch up with until the 1960’s.

Here is an article from the Wall Street Journal "Seeking to Save Composer's Retreat"
http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10000872396390444327204577618130286523936.html?KEYWORDS=charles+ives+house

Part I: Morning
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NFViBhkRuSI

Part II: Noon
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MS2EecQgRhI
Part II: Evening
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KtaCCL0Xe_0

Set-up for Evening Recording

Michael Gatonska
“What is essential, is invisible to the eye” – Antoine de Saint-Exupery
http://www.youtube.com/user/EcoEarSoundscapes?ob=0&feature=results_main

How high is Mount Mitchell, NC?
by dbhguru » Fri Aug 31, 2012 5:38 pm

NTS, If we think we have a time keeping people honest about tree numbers, well, elevations of mountains are presenting the U.S. Geodetic Survey with the supreme challenges. Throughout the Internet, in books, magazines, articles, on signs, etc. elevations are cited based on the vertical datum NAVD29. But now there is a new one, NAVD88, which is more accurate in terms of the shape of the Earth, local magnetic fields/anomalies, and sea level. The U.S. Geodetic Survey has converted to NAVD88, which changes elevations of most mountains in the U.S.

One commonly sees 14,433 feet listed for Mount Elbert, CO. That is from NAVD29. However, NAVD88 raises Elbert to 14,440. We see some sources showing the updated elevation, but many do not. What about eastern mountains? Say Mount Mitchell, N.C. You’ll find thousands of references to Mitchell as having an elevation of 6,684 feet above mean sea level. That is from NAVD29. But get a load of the Data Sheet for Mount Mitchell.

The NGS Data Sheet

See the Attach file for more information about the data sheet.

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<td>FR2736</td>
<td>ELEVATION = 2042. (meters)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR2736</td>
<td>DEPLSO12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR2736</td>
<td>LAPLACE CORR = -7.00 (seconds)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR2736</td>
<td>FIRST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FR2736</td>
<td>EROS SORDER = F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Notice the elevation 6699 feet. That is 15 feet more than the old elevation. In addition, there is another data sheet that gives the elevation from the top of the viewing structure - on its floor. That elevation is 6,719 feet. According to the explanation in the data sheet, GPS readings were observed for the embedded marker. So, there is plenty of backup for the new elevation of the tower, and projecting vertically down to ground level gives 6,699 feet.

So, please, everyone, send good thoughts to Mount Mitchell. It is 15 feet higher than we thought. Dang, I do wish the elevation had come out to exactly 6,700. That has such a nice sound to it.

It will be a very slow process to get correct elevations on maps, in articles, on signs, for our mountains. So, I guess I shouldn't complain about old tree measurements floating around.

Robert T. Leverett

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Re: Why Aren't Women More Active in ENTS?

by Megan Ulrich » Fri Aug 31, 2012 4:22 pm

Hello; I just joined ENTS today. I stumbled across this site on accident looking up MN Elms on Google. I had no previous knowledge of it.

I'm not really one to share via such a website, but I felt compelled to do so today. I am very passionate about Nature, native plants and ecosystems, having grown up in the Native Elm forest of Kandiyohi. Perhaps if more women knew about your site and had the time to post you would have more female involvement. I look forward to learning more about how to preserve what little native habitat we have left. I am extremely passionate about the environment and it is due to the extreme fortune of growing up where I did.

Many people today are out of touch with nature. I think we can do a great service to our communities by encouraging folks to explore the natural areas where they live in order to understand ecology and just plain appreciate nature. Some folks don't have access to 'wild places' or experience with the outdoor lifestyle. They are afraid of nature and intimidated (speaking from experience in Environmental Education). In today's society we are just spread too thin-so many distractions, mis-placed priorities and commitments, that we are missing out on the enjoyment and purpose of life. Nature can reconnect us to the Earth, each other and our true selves!

Glad I got that out of my system... I look forward to discussions that lead to action in preserving and sharing our knowledge.

Megan Ulrich

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Re: Hurricane Isaac

by Rand » Fri Aug 31, 2012 5:54 pm

Weather Underground has a list of some of the horrifically high rainfall totals:

A few notable rainfall totals from Isaac, through 11 am EDT on Friday:

- 20.08” New Orleans, LA
- 15.02” Marion, MS
- 13.99” Pascagoula, MS
- 13.27” Hattiesburg, MS
- 10.85” Gulfport, MS
- 10.39” Slidell, LA
- 10.17” Biloxi, MS
- 9.85” Mobile, AL
- 7.38” Pine Bluff, AR
- 5.95” Baton Rouge, LA

http://www.wunderground.com/blog/JeffMasters/comment.html?entrynum=2216

Looks like it's going to dump on us in Ohio too. The first batch of storms rolled through Columbus about 5 PM today.
Rand Brown

Re: Hurricane Isaac

□ by edfrank » Fri Aug 31, 2012 8:16 pm

Hurricane Isaac Pictures: Photos Document The 2012 Storms That Hit Louisiana And Mississippi
Posted: 08/30/2012 3:36 pm Updated: 08/31/2012 1:31 am

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/30/hurricane-isaac-pictures-photos_n_1844124.html

As Gulf Coast states began to assess the damage from Hurricane Isaac, photos and video started to trickle in of the devastation.

Although the death toll has been minimal compared to Hurricane Katrina, fatalities have occurred, and damage was extensive in some regions.

What Species ID?

□ by TN_Tree_Man » Fri Aug 31, 2012 2:07 pm

NTS, I recently found 2 of these trees and am trying to pin point the species identification. I am suspecting a cultivar of Mulberry (Morus) but am not sure. Both trees have been planted within a mountain chalet property. What do you think?
Alternate leaf arrangement; notice that juvenile and mature leaves are shaped the same

Re: What Species ID?

by Will Blozan » Fri Aug 31, 2012 2:20 pm

Looks like some freak-show Morus alba to me...

Will Blozan

Re: What Species ID?

by lucager1483 » Fri Aug 31, 2012 2:32 pm

Steve, I'm guessing you're right about mulberry. I think it's white mulberry; it's a pretty common species in upstate NY, normally growing among "waste" or "hedgerow" species like boxelder, black willow, and cottonwood. I've seen a lot of variation in leaf shape (lobed & non-lobed; toothed and non-toothed) even on the same tree. The bark seems to stay pretty consistent, though, and seems to be dead-on from what's in your photo. I sometimes confuse mulberry with osage orange, which has similar bark but more consistently formed non-lobed leaves (and thorns, of course). If your tree is mulberry, hopefully it gets some kind of care or at least avoids the saw, because they make a good shade tree and the berries are edible. There's my two cents-hope it helps.

Will seems to have beaten me to the punch. Oh well, at least we're in agreement.

Elijah Whitcomb

Re: What Species ID?

by Chris » Fri Aug 31, 2012 10:58 pm

IIRC, the various mulberries hybridize a lot [both in wild and through humans].

Chris Morris
Re: Hurricane Isaac

by Rand » Fri Aug 31, 2012 9:19 pm

Found some satellite animations of the storm on YouTube:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ix3O1xCHDK8

Really detailed (1080P is worth loading)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O7oJvwY4Rik

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N4SCc_YCw_s

PAwildernessadvocate wrote: Rats it looks like NW PA is probably not going to get all that much rain out of this. I know hurricanes are dangerous down south, but I was hoping the remnants of Isaac would have passed directly over us here. Sometimes those hurricane remnants can really drop a lot of rain! Boy do we ever need it.

I think you got out-voted by the people who really suffered this summer:

Rand Brown

Re: Hurricane Isaac

by Rand » Fri Aug 31, 2012 9:22 pm

Rand Brown
Re: Hurricane Isaac

by Larry Tucei  » Fri Aug 31, 2012 9:34 pm

NTS,  Glad it’s over. The storm made landfall at 600 pm on Tuesday just west of the Ms River. Movement slowed down to 6-8 mph for the next 24 hours. We had peak winds of 70 MPH and 6 hours of 45 mph with gusts to 59. The other 24 hours were steady winds of 35-45 with gust to 60. Although the storm was nothing like the major Hurricanes that I have remained in the past such as Hurricanes Frederick 130 mph, Elena 120 mph and Georges 115 it was still an experience. The flooding in Louisiana has been really bad and we in Ms had our share also. The Cat 1 storm was so large and very slow moving that it had a massive effect. I lost no trees on my property but they sure were rocking. The funny thing was that I never lost power during the whole storm which is a first for me. Even in much smaller Tropical systems you usually lose power. I was able to watch the storm on my computer and cable for the duration.

(see this image as animated gif on BBS website)

Larry Tucei
External Links:

Visit Your Pacific Northwest National Forest
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w2DIzelnqX-A
Watch the Behind the Scenes "Making-of" video here:
http://www.uncagethesoul.com/uncategorized/visit-your-pacific-northwest-national-forest/

Talk by Meg Lowman at Marine Lab Seminar Series [VIDEO] Meg Lowman - 7-30-2012
http://nsoe.capture.duke.edu/Panopto/Pages/Viewer/Default.aspx?id=751711ff-c8d2-417b-b063-e4940375e746

Antarctica's tropical past is revealed
From: Marion O'Sullivan, Planet Earth Online
Published August 2, 2012 08:17 AM

Antarctica Was Once Home To Rainforest, Say Scientists
Posted: 08/02/2012 2:52 pm Updated: 08/02/2012 2:52 pm
http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/02/antarctica-was-once-a-rai_n_1733597.html?ncid=txtlnkushpmg00000040

Naturarvet (Sweden) Come into the woods!
http://naturarvet.se/

Diseased Trees New Source of Climate Gas
http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/08/120807151309.htm

What is Missing? The mission of the What is Missing? Foundation is to create, through science-based artworks, an awareness about the current crisis surrounding the mass extinction of species that is now underway. http://whatismissing.net/

Diseased Trees New Source of Climate Gas
http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2012/08/120807151309.htm

Blog- Birch seeds (Finland)
http://borealexpat.blogspot.com/2012/08/tiny-seeds-of-
summer.html?showComment=1344465159008#c3550391100349007922

Biodiversity hotspots – a world at risk
published June 25, 2012
http://www.viewsoftheworld.net/?p=2330

State's grandest white oak felled by arsonist
New Braintree's Gentle Giamt (MA) by Kim Ring
TELEGRAM & GAZETTE STAFF
Wednesday, August 8, 2012
http://www.telegram.com/article/20120808/NEWS/108089940/0/FRONTPAGE

E.O. Wilson at TEDMED 2012

First evidence for photosynthesis in insects
Aphids may have a rudimentary sunlight-harvesting system, Kathryn Lougheed, 17 August 2012

How the first plant came to be
A genetic analysis reveals the ancient, complex — and symbiotic — roots of photosynthesis in plants. by David Biello, 16 February 2012
http://www.nature.com/news/how-the-first-plant-came-to-be-1.10048

Bridging the Gap Between Math and Art [Slide Show] Annual conference shines a spotlight on mathematical art and artistic mathematics
http://www.scientificamerican.com/slideshow.cfm

Critical Thinking Series You can download the entire series free from iTunes:
http://itunes.apple.com/au/podcast/technyou/id516187436
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSZ3BUru59A
Wiltshire oak tree declared UK’s tallest
29 August 2012  http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-wiltshire-19402113 The 132.5ft (40.4m) English oak is on the grounds of the National Trust Stourhead estate.

ECCB2012 PRESS RELEASE: Where the rain never ends – rainforests in Europe

Landmark ancient oak comes down, Warren, Pa,
August 31, 2012 by Jacob Perryman
http://www.timesobserver.com/page/content.detail/id/559331/It-Was-Time.html

About:  eNTS:  The Magazine of the Native Tree Society

This magazine is published monthly and contain materials that are compiled from posts made to the NTS BBS http://www.ents-bbs.org  It features notable trip reports, site descriptions and essays posted to the BBS by NTS members.  The purpose of the magazine to have an easily readable and distributable magazine of posts available for download for those interested in the Native Tree Society and in the work that is being conducted by its members.

This magazine serves as a companion to the more formal science-oriented Bulletin of the Eastern Native Tree Society and will help the group reach potential new members.  To submit materials for inclusion in the next issue, post to the BBS.  Members are welcome to suggest specific articles that you might want to see included in future issues of the magazine, or point out materials that were left from a particular month’s compilation that should have been included.  Older articles can always be added as necessary to the magazine.  The magazine will focus on the first post on a subject and provide a link to the discussion on the website.  Where warranted later posts in a thread may also be selected for inclusion.

Edward Frank – Editor-in-Chief