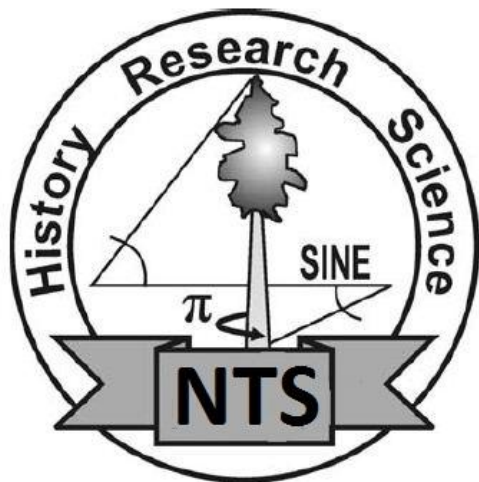




# *e*NTS

The Magazine of the  
Native Tree Society  
Volume 2, Number 7,  
July 2012





## **eNTS: The Magazine of the Native Tree Society**

The Native Tree Society and the  
Eastern Native Tree Society  
<http://www.nativetreesociety.org>  
<http://www.ents-bbs.org>

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### **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](mailto: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: Tall Blue Spruce (153.4 feet), Goulding Creek, CO. Photo by Robert Leverett, 2012.*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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> . The full discussion can be read by clicking on the link embedded in the title of each individual article. - Edward Frank

Guest Editorial - Are We There Yet? by Robert Leverett	6
Re: Parallax method revisited by M.W.Taylor	8
Re: Parallax method revisited by Robert Leverett	8
Re: Goulding Creek, CO by Robert Leverett	9
SINE method training for tree climbers by Eli Dickerson	9
Photos from forest reserve near Taman Negara, Malaysia by Darrin Wu	10
Re: Elwha River Dam Removals begins by Kirk Johnson`	12
Jones Creek, La Platas, CO by Robert Leverett	12
More Goulding Creek, CO by Robert Leverett	13
Re: More Goulding Creek, CO by Robert Leverett	13
Re: More Goulding Creek, CO by Robert Leverett	15
Re: European beech forests by Kirk Johnson	15
Re: European beech forests by Kirk Johnson	16
Re: SINE method training for tree climbers by Edward Frank	18
Re: SINE method training for tree climbers by Patty Jenkins	18
Re: SINE method training for tree climbers by Andrew Joslin	18
Re: SINE method training for tree climbers by Andrew Joslin	18
Re: SINE method training for tree climbers by Robert Leverett	19
Re: SINE method training for tree climbers by Eli Dickerson	19
Re: SINE method training for tree climbers by Patty Jenkins	19
Re: Mystical marks in virgin forest explained, Norway by Kirk Johnson	20
Re: Mystical marks in virgin forest explained, Norway by Don Bertollette	21
The Lost Coast, CA by Mark Collins	22
Re: The Lost Coast by Kirk Johnson	23
Re: The Lost Coast by Don Bertollette	23
Re: Zane Moore Reports Tallest Known Tree South of Golden Gate by M.W.Taylor	24
Re: Zane Moore Reports Tallest Known Tree South of Golden Gate by Robert Leverett	25
Old-growth ponderosa and Jeffrey pines and the Paiute by Don Bertollette	25
June 29,2012 derecho, WV by Turner Sharp	26
Re: June 29,2012 derecho, WV by Rand Brown	26
Food for thought by Robert Leverett	27
Re: Food for thought by Joe Zorzin	28
Re: Food for thought by kirk Johnson	28
Recruiting new citizen tree scientists by PattyJenkins	29
Re: Recruiting new citizen tree scientists by Will Blozan	

Re: Recruiting new citizen tree scientists by Robert Leverett	29
Hawks Nest Rail-trail, Ansted, WV by Turner Sharp	30
Quercus virginiana soundscape by Michael Gatonska	31
Eastern Mountain Maple, Green Frogs, and a Chipmunk by Michael Gatonska	32
Planned series of discussions by Robert Leverett	33
Champion Rocky Mtn Ponderosa Update by Robert Leverett	34
Re: Champion Rocky Mtn Ponderosa Update by Robert Leverett	34
Re: Champion Rocky Mtn Ponderosa Update by Robert Leverett	34
Re: Cold Bank Pass and Engineer Mountain by Robert Leverett	36
When Lost In The Woods (1946) by US Forest Service	37
Re: Biltmore Estate Trees by Brian Beduhn	38
Get a load of these numbers, CO by Robert Leverett	38
Re: Get a load of these numbers, CO by Robert Leverett	39
Are we making progress yet? by Robert Leverett	39
The Beginnings of The Western Native Tree Society by Don Bertollette (August 2011)	40
Anyone been to Zoar (NY) lately? by Elijah Whitcomb	40
Re: The Lost Coast by M. D. Vaden	40
Re: Recruiting new citizen tree scientists by Patty Jenkins	41
Re: Recruiting new citizen tree scientists by Robert Leverett	41
White oak tree near Akeley, PA by Kirk Johnson	42
Re: Cold Bank Pass and Engineer Mountain, CO by Rand Brown	43
Re: Cold Bank Pass and Engineer Mountain, CO by Robert leverett	44
Vallecito Reservoir east of Durango, CO by Robert Leverett	44
Silly question- Do poplar trees attract lightning? by James Robert Smith	45
A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)? by Kirk Johnson	45
Re: A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)? by Edward Frank	46
Re: A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)? by Kirk Johnson	47
Re: A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)? by Edward Frank	47
Re: A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)? By Robert Leverett	47
Re: A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)? by Neil Pederson	47
Re: A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)? by Edward Frank	48
Re: A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)? by Will Blozan	48
Re: A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)? by Rand Brown	49
Re: Front Page of the Durango Herald - We Made It! by Kirk Johnson	49
Thoreau Tree (MA) recording session by Andrew Joslin	50
The Thoreau Tree, MA soundscape by Michael Gatonska	53
What's Our Real Membershp? by Robert Leverett	55
Re: What's Our Real Membershp? by Edward Frank	55
Re: Northern California redwoods visit by larrythelobster	56
Colorado Blue by Robert Leverett	57
Re: Colorado Blue by Robert Leverett	57
Giant Cardon (cactus) by Edward Frank	58
Good News for WNTS by Robert Leverett	59
Re: Good News for WNTS by Robert Leverett	59
Re: Colorado Blue by Robert Leverett	60
Saying Goodbye to Durango, CO by Robert Leverett	60

The Changing Soundscape in New York City by Michael Gatonska	61
Say hello to Santa Fe, NM by Robert Leverett	61
US 84 (CO) to Santa Fe, NM by Robert Leverett	62
Echo Amphitheater, NM by Robert Leverett	62
The World Forum for Acoustic Ecology by Michael Gatonska	63
Villanueva Cottonwood, NM by Robert Leverett	63
More Villanueva Cottonwood images, NM by Robert Leverett	64
Old eastern hemlocks in MI Hiawatha N.F. by RoySpencer	65
Western Expanses, NM by Robert Leverett	65
Crestone Moods, CO by Robert Leverett	66
Desolation Wilderness, CA by Mark Collins	67
Re: old eastern hemlocks in MI Hiawatha N.F. by Neil Pederson	70
Hemlock Legacy Project (HeLP): A Paleoecological Requiem for Eastern Hemlock by Amy Hessel and Neil Pederson	70
7/19/2012 pictures of the Granby oak, CT by Sam Goodwin	71
Re: 7/19/2012 pictures of the Granby oak, CT by Sam Goodwin	72
More Crestone Moods, CO by Robert Leverett	72
Goodbye Crestone, Hello Maybell, CO by Robert Leverett	73
Re: Desolation Wilderness, CA by Kirk Johnson	74
Twelve Years of Fires posted by Edward Frank	75
Green River in Dinosaur National Monument, UT by Robert Leverett	76
Re: Green River in Dinosaur National Monument, UT by Robert Leverett	76
Two more images from DNM by Robert Leverett	78
Re: Green River in Dinosaur National Monument, UT by Kirk Johnson	79
Colorado Potpourri by Robert Leverett	79
Two more images from Dinosaur National Monument, CO & UT by Robert Leverett	81
Teton Pass, WY by Robert Leverett	82
Into Grand Teton National Park, WY by Robert Leverett	84
Re: Into Grand Teton National Park, WY by James Robert Smith	85
Re: Into Grand Teton National Park, WY by Rand Brown	85
Phillips Pass and Ski Lake, WY by Robert Leverett	87
Re: Into Grand Teton National Park, WY by Rand Brown	89
Elder's Grove, in Paul Smith's NY by Adam Rosen	90
More Teton Images by Robert Leverett	92
One Great Book on the Sangres by Robert Leverett	94
Tree -ring photo (Teton Pass, WY) by Robert Leverett	94
External Links	95
About "eNTS: The Magazine of the Native Tree Society"	97

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## Guest Editorial - Are We There Yet?

by **Robert Leverett** » Mon Jul 30, 2012 7:53 pm

NTS, Before Monica and I hit the road on Wednesday morning; I want to share my latest take on NTS-ENTS-WNTS. Are we there yet, i.e. are we accomplishing our missions? What are our missions? In a recent email to Ed Frank, I listed 5 missions that I consider to be the heart and soul of NTS. I'll list them again.

(1) We serve as a Internet interest group for all who like forests and trees and who want to socialize on the topic. There are no expectations in the socializing, just participation. This will be a continuing mission of NTS. People can join our group with no fear of having to meet goals or objectives. So, in this mission, I say we are succeeding thanks in no small part to the herculean efforts of Ed Frank.

(2) We collect forest and tree data for scientific usage with no particular groups, individuals, or specific purposes in mind - just data of a type that nobody else reliably collects - at least that we know of. This mission implies such things as databases, collaboration with others. etc. How are we doing? We've made small inroads, but we're not there yet. But in this mission, it will always be niches that we fill. Success will be hard to define.

(3) We develop site descriptions that provide information (usually tree data) that can be found nowhere else and serves to better inform specific groups and individuals and the general public about the sites. We do a lot in this area, and I suppose we can claim victory, but our efforts come in fits and spurts. I wish we were more systematic. Each site description is important. It usually adds information that is available nowhere else. Maybe we can eventually produce an NTS book of sites.

(4) We explore forests and trees in the context of art, music, photography, etc. This connection exists thanks to the likes of Michael Gatonska, Andrew Joslin, Jennifer Dudley, Monica Jakuc Leverett and others. It is an important part of NTS and one I hope

continues to grow. Thanks to those mentioned and others, this is a growth area. We may not be there completely, but we're making a splash.

(5) We develop and put into practice and educate on methods for measuring tree dimensions to an ever higher level of accuracy. This implies adding truth to the numbers where that truth currently doesn't exist. This mission also implies helping other groups struggling to make individual tree measuring a serious endeavor. With respect to this mission, we are there, but oh, there is so much left to do. We have arrived at the front door and stepped inside, but there is no back door, just endless opportunity. We have arrived, but we haven't made anywhere near a large enough splash.

I suppose we could add to the list, but if we go much beyond the above, we're kidding ourselves on what we can actually accomplish. We don't want to become a mile wide and an inch deep.

Other groups could serve the first mission. So for us, its the freebie we offer. Mission two is always going to be limited because what we can supply is niche data and so far there hasn't been much demand for it. We can strive to make it more accessible, but basically the scientific community has to express the need first. Three is a bread and butter mission. There can't be too much of this mission. We need more - much more. Number four is in the hands of the artistic. It is an exciting area with lots of potential outlets. It is NTS at the highest level. Five is a mission that we truly own. We're better at it than any other group of which I am aware. But we've been very scattered in our execution of this mission. Our numbers are everywhere, and consequently, it is hard to make the most hay with this mission until we develop some tools to keep our accomplishments up in front of everyone. I can't emphasize this enough. Suppose we were to dig through all our postings to identify accomplishments of significance. What could we post? We can certainly claim lots of species height records, but could also show growth patterns that provide better understandings of the maximum growth potential of many species.

Here is a little thought exercise. Imagine that we were to go to an author of a tree book, say a field

guide, and ask him/her where a particular species achieves specified dimensions, what is exceptional, what is average, and where, and if he/she provides that information is it from some level of experience or just quoting other sources. What would the author's response likely be? I doubt that we would find many, if any authors, who could provide that kind of information from personal experience or from group participation unless that author was a member of NTS. If we think about it, that has profound implications with respect to public awareness. It robs the public of understanding what is special versus ordinary, and in the ensuing ignorance, what is worth saving.

We in NTS are in a position to play an almost unique role in the restructuring of species dimensional data. For example, what can we expect out of Rocky Mountain Doug Fir in say Wyoming versus Colorado versus New Mexico. What would a lot of data points show. I have an incomplete picture now, but I'll wager dollars to donuts that none of the so-called tree or forest experts can match what I now know from my just admittedly incomplete picture. How can that be? We could discuss the reasons, but it wouldn't change the reality.

I should point out that with respect to mission #5, it is not about maintaining champion tree lists, state or national. We readily see that their methods and data can't fulfill mission #5. But for us, we can pat ourselves on the back on what we know and what we contribute with a caveat. IMHO we still haven't gotten there yet. We have to find ways of presenting what we individually and collectively know so that others will take notice. That achievement still eludes us. Because of the overwhelming amount of bad numbers floating around with a life of their own, we struggle against long odds. So, in summary, relative to mission #5, are we there yet? No, not yet.

Robert T. Leverett

## Re: Parallax method revisited

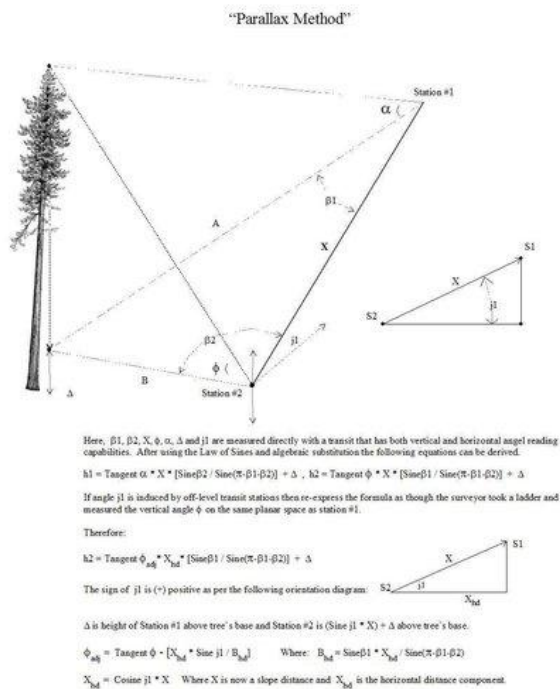
by **M.W.Taylor** » Sun Jul 01, 2012 3:54 am

Bob, That is my older version of the Parallax Formula. It does not work very well for off-level terrain. I have a newer version that works for off-level ground. I did a write-up on this here:

<http://www.landmarktrees.net/parallax%20method.html>

<http://www.landmarktrees.net/newmeasure.html>

New proposed name is Parallax 3D. Ground level changes can throw a wrench into the original formula. I like this method in that both heights must agree. If they do not the surveyor either hit different tops at the two views or took one of the angles or distances incorrectly. The two heights being in agreement is a way of self checking your #'s.



Screen Capture Of Parallax 3D

Michael Taylor

WNTS VP

<http://www.landmarktrees.net>

## Re: Parallax method revisited

by **dbhguru** » Sun Jul 01, 2012 1:40 pm

Michael,

Yes, this adjustment for a slanting baseline is critical, and the cross-check for the two determinations is key. Given some time, I plan to go through an analysis of error magnitude on the method for errors of up to +/- 0.5 degrees and distances of +/- 0.5 feet. I use differentials so really large errors aren't appropriate to this form of analysis as I realize you know.

Right now, I'm taking a little vacation from the math and absorbing the sights and sounds of the western expanses. Hope you are doing well and I look forward to more big tree confirmations from you and others out there in California and Oregon.

Robert T. Leverett



## Re: Goulding Creek, CO

by dbhguru » Sun Jul 01, 2012 1:49 pm

Robert, Oh, I understand what I should do, but I still imagine myself to be as fully acclimated as I was when I lived in the West and I invariably tackle more than my body is ready for on these limited summer trips. However, Monica and I will be ready for a longer trek next week. Our eventual goal is to climb high on Engineer Mountain - maybe up to a little over 12,000 feet. There are dangerous spots on the last summit pitch that Monica is not up to, but we'll see all we need to see. There are outstanding stands of Englemann spruce up to 11,000 on Engineer, and the views are everywhere magnificent. The San Juans are so vast that once away from the highway corridors, you can be as alone as you want to be.

Yesterday's trip up Goulding Creek reinforced just how many places have significant old growth potential in southwestern Colorado. For all practical purposes, the possibilities are limitless. I'd like to have more time out here to search the more accessible places for exceptional trees and plot their locations on a map. Basically, the Forest Service has little knowledge on where exceptional trees can be found or how exceptional they are based on various criteria that could be proposed, e.g. maximums stratified by elevation, landform, etc. Laura Stransky was their most knowledgeable person on old growth, but Laura has now retired. While she was active, she tried hard to pass her knowledge on to the cadre of management foresters in the San Juan NF and BLM, but sadly, with little luck. On the positive side, WNTS discoveries could eventually open doors if we could keep the information flowing.

Robert T. Leverett

## SINE method training for tree climbers

by eliahd24 » Mon Jul 02, 2012 1:19 pm

Hello NTS, FYI- This weekend I was invited by Patty and Peter Jenkins of Tree Climbers International to lead a short workshop on tree measuring with a class of about a dozen tree climbers. I thought this was BBS worthy since they actually came to me thanks to my own reputation (and the reputation of NTS) in the local "tree community" and the validity of the data I have collected and the work I've done with tall trees and champion trees.

The workshop took place Saturday, June 30th, 2012 at Blackburn Park on the northern edge of Atlanta, GA. Over the course of 2 hours I explained how it got into trees, why I (and we) measure trees, what tools to use, and how/when to measure trees. I got a chance to show off and teach the NTS SINE method. The students provided great feedback and they plan to use the knowledge they gained as a jumping off point for further learning and integrating citizen science (research) into their own tree climbing endeavors. As always, I let them know about NTS and heavily persuaded them to become members and post on the BBS.

Thanks again for accepting me into the NTS community and I hope we can add more to our tribe soon. Let's all keep up the good work. Cheers,

Eli Dickerson

## Photos from forest reserve near Taman Negara, Malaysia

by **Shorea** » Tue Jul 03, 2012 12:40 am

Recently, I was on a 2 day volunteer trip to assist the local wildlife department along with a group of other volunteers in the adjacent forest reserves bordering Taman Negara, Malaysia's premier national park which sprawls 434,000 ha. More photos and details on Taman Negara in my blog

<http://www.junglediary.com/taman-negara-sungai-relau/> and <http://www.junglediary.com/bukit-seraya-lookout-point/>

The adjacent forest reserves are still in ok condition and they are currently a designated wildlife corridor, but apparently logged in the past.

Even so, many of the remaining trees are tall and big with many exceeding 40 m in height, and you can only imagine the forest before any logging took place. Of course, I took the opportunity to take some photos, and here are some of them.

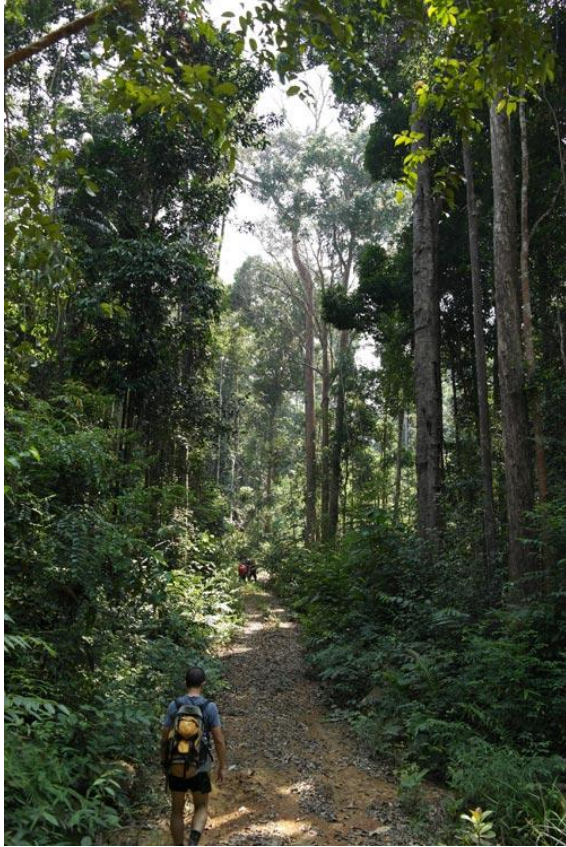


I am certain in its unlogged state, the old growth would have trees with diameters exceeding 2 m and heights exceeding 50 m.

Wildlife is still abundant here, and there are many signs of them on the logging track, like footprints and dung. Elephant dung was very common in places and if you're unlucky or lucky, you might come face to face with a herd. I say "unlucky" because elephants can be very dangerous! :)









## [Re: Elwha River Dam Removals begins](#)

by **PAwildernessadvocate** » Tue Jul 03, 2012 4:54 pm

### [Elwha River Restoration](#)

Here's a look at yesterday's controlled blast at the Glines Canyon Dam. The May-June fish window is over, giving contractors the month of July to lower the dam and reservoir levels before the next fish window begins August 1. Thanks to URS Corps for the video footage.

<http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?v=413425055377021>

## [Jones Creek, La Platas, CO](#)

by **dbhguru** » Tue Jul 03, 2012 3:46 pm

NTS, Yesterday Monica and I braved the heat and went on a hike up Jones Creek in the eastern La Plata Mountains. The trail head is at 7,680 feet and we climbed to only 8,325 before turning around. The threat of a thunder storm and no rain gear with us turned us into chickens. The round trip distance was 3.5 miles, so not a lot, but the trek was worth every step. The trail passes through an old growth ponderosa pine forest with large, very old trees. The pondies don't reach the sizes that they do along Hermosa Creek, but they are large enough to make a visual impact, and oh, so fragrant. Pine heights are commonly 95 to 115 feet along this trail. A few pondies and at least one Doug fir goes over 120. I confirmed two pondies to over 130. I maxed out at 136.5 feet. I didn't really care about tree height or girth though because all the old growth specimens were all drop dead gorgeous. I emailed a few images to Will Blozan, who volunteered to attach them (after reducing their sizes) to this post. So images will follow. Without a full computer to work with, I can't force Monica's iPad via a 3G connection to do what is needed. So, I must improvise. Thanks Will. Just

attach the images and let them speak for themselves.

What has become ever more obvious to me is that the La Platas are real old growth gems and they deserve a lot of attention. Because they don't have in fourteeners, or centennial thirteeners (13,800 or more), the mainstream mountaineering community largely bypasses them. But they do have 6 thirteeners and many peaks over 12,000 feet. If Monica and I lived in Durango, I would concentrate on the La Platas for big trees.

What is so cool about where Monica and I are house sitting is that we're outside Durango on Florida Mesa looking across the Animas River Valley into the La Platas. One peak stands out and I wanted to know its name, but nobody knew. So, I got the topo out and lined it up, and presto, Lewis Mountain popped up. I then identified adjacent summits. Lewis is named for Lt. Col William Lewis who was killed in a battle with the Southern Cheyenne in Kansas. Fort Lewis was established at Pagosa Springs around 1878 to deal with Indian uprisings. The Indians had the audacity to rise up and defend their lands from encroaching white settlements. Imagine? The fort was eventually relocated to the community of Hesperus and eventually deactivated. Fort Lewis College is named in honor of Lt. Col. Lewis.

Monica and I have been thinking about how we can spend more time out here and I can establish more of a WNTS presence to pursue big tree documentation in the San Juans. It is a logistical challenge for us and also a tough tree mission, i.e. a tough sell. I need to do some old fashion marketing type analysis. What groups would be most interested in the kinds of data that WNTS would gather? There are a few in the Forest Service and their support would be highly valuable. There are probably Sierra Club members who would be interested. But one high energy group that I had previously not thought about is the fraternity of authors who write guide books to the natural features of Colorado. They are an energetic and accomplished bunch. It is a safe bet that they aren't going to be out there measuring trees themselves, but would like information on the species to include in their guides. Where are they going to get good data? Well, big tree numbers are what we specialize in, so a natural partnership could develop.



I'd first need to convince them that conventional sources of information just don't hack it - a bit risky, but necessary. Then take some of them out on a demonstration walk. Thereafter, I think the process would speed up. Well, a lot has to happen before that has a chance of being a reality. For now, I plan to just enjoy the western landscape.

Robert T. Leverett

## [More Goulding Creek, CO](#)

by dbhguru » Wed Jul 04, 2012 8:21 pm

NTS,

Today Monica and I tackled in earnest Goulding Creek in the eastern La Platas. We began at an altitude of 7,900 feet and stopped at a meadow at an elevation of 9,433 feet. The climb was fairly steep, but worth the effort. Old growth ponderosas and Doug firs line the path. The ravine formed by Goulding Creek has some tall Doug firs and Colorado blue spruces. I managed to get a Doug fir to 132 feet. I had no chance of getting to the tree to measure its girth, but I expect it is around 9 feet.



On the trail

As we approached the head of the creek, we came to a stand of Colorado blue spruces. One stood out in particular. While Monica sat under another spruce in the center of the meadow, I went to work. When I included the offset at the base, the number came out to be 153.4 feet. It doesn't surpass the 156-footer on Hermosa Creek, but it is close. I wasn't expecting a height like that. However, I've been saying that the La Platas have endless possibilities. So, to date, I have confirmed three Colorado blues in the La Platas to heights of 150 feet or more. Bob Van Pelt measured a Colorado blue elsewhere in the San Juans to 153 feet if I recall correctly. Blues topping 120 feet are fairly common. Maximum girths tend to be between 9 and 12 feet.



Tall blue spruce on Goulding Creek

Robert T. Leverett

## [Re: More Goulding Creek, CO](#)

by dbhguru » Thu Jul 05, 2012 3:54 pm

Monica and I plan one more foray up Goulding Creek, hopefully making it to a 10,000-foot summit and through a summer elk range. I'll also carry bear spray next time. We saw plenty of signs and a young couple who went past us turned back because of a mother and cubs. They got spooked. So did the bears.

A mission for yours truly out here is to document the Colorado blues along the various trails - what is common in terms of ages and dimensions and what is exceptional. That mission logically extends to other species, but as of now, I'm tuned into the blues. They are a popular species for landscaping and virtually everyone is acquainted with them.

Back to the trail. I was alerted to the possibility of big trees by Paul Pixler and John Peel in their "Hiking Trails Of Southwestern Colorado". They spoke of big timber and they were right. Between the extremely old Doug firs and ponderosas and the very tall blues, the Guilding Creek trail is moving up the list of fine big tree-tall-tree-old tree hikes. If I had more time, I'd attempt to establish connections with the authors of the mentioned hiking guide plus authors of other popular hiking books. I'm finding that these authors are extremely knowledgeable and strive to be accurate. I believe they would relish a source of reliable tree statistics that could enhance their guides.

It should come as no surprise that these authors have no authoritative source to turn to now for reliable information on where the biggest, tallest, and oldest trees can be seen via the vast network of hiking trails with accompanying statistics. I expect that they believe the local governmental agencies here would have the logical source. So, we'd have to get over that hurdle first.

Producing trail-based tree data is a natural for WNTS, but it can't happen without lots of boots on the ground. With Don Bertolette located in far off Alaska, Michael Taylor in California, and me in Massachusetts, the job is presently out of our reach. Winning converts and real supporters isn't going to happen from these distant perches. There has to be a steady drumbeat and feeding of interest from a local source. Couple these obstacles with the sheer amount of territory to cover, and we're hamstrung without a local Ent on the scene. But what of the agencies that manage the public forests? You'd think that within the Colorado and federal agencies, we could build support. To that goal, I haven't given up totally on the three governmental agencies that absolutely should have some interest in the kind of information we

could supply them. I have made one new contact in the Forest Service relative to old growth, but she, like retired Laura Stransky, is having an uphill battle just doing her job inventorying the old growth. She has her hands full.

Four summers ago, I started what I thought would be a partnership between then ENTS and the government agencies in the Durango area. The creation of WNTS grew out of that effort, but without a local representative literally driven to document the tree treasures of the area and to gain support for their recognition, the effort was doomed to limp along. However, there may be some daylight head.

Michael Taylor informed me that Zane from San Francisco will be going to Colorado State and that could give us a needed boost. Zane's track record is already stellar, and can only get better. He owns an Impulse Laser 200LR. That is the good news. The bad news is that Colorado State is at Fort Collins, CO, which is on the eastern slopes of the Rockies. Fort Collins is a long way from the San Juans, the big tree region of Colorado. I hope Zane has good transportation and can find the time. The heavy action is in southwestern Colorado.

My time here in southwestern Colorado is refocusing me on what ENTS and WNTS must be, beyond an Internet interest group bound loosely by a common interest in trees. In my humble opinion, our highest forest-tree mission is to discover and document special forest sites and individual trees, and to celebrate trees by all appropriate methods, which includes projects such as the one by Michael Gatonska. I think Michael's calling is of the highest order. It is not just about tree measuring or niche science.

When Monica and I leave Durango, we'll wind our way northward to Idaho, and then over into Wyoming. I'll reconnect with the Bighorn Mountains and the Black Hills. Hopefully wildfires won't prevent the reunions. One of my original WNTS objectives was to cover the Black Hills of South Dakota and Wyoming.

Robert T. Leverett

## Re: More Goulding Creek, CO

by **dbhguru** » Thu Jul 05, 2012 7:41 pm

Monica and I went through Aguiar last year. So many small places with old structures chronicling earlier times. The sagebrush, juniper, and pinyons surrounding the places fit so well. I love'um. Ghost towns of the West are sometimes lonesome places to visit, but always intriguing.

Monica and I just returned from the Ute Indian Museum at Ignacio. Wow! It is tops. They have a modest casino there and more power to them. They have a strong program of teaching their children the Ute language and Ute culture. I'm always thrilled to support them in whatever ways I can. I highly recommend the museum to anyone passing through southwestern Colorado.

Of the three house-sitting assignments Monica and I have had out here, this is the best. There's a cattle ranch across the road and a short distance father, there is a small prairie dog town. Here, we get up every morning and feed the chickens, fish, cats, and birds. There is always fresh eggs for breakfast. Mule deer wander into the back lot every day. For both of us, this is a dream assignment. And I particularly like the general area around us. The neighbors are spread thinly, and are largely self-sufficient people. There are none of the energy-gulping, heavily landscaped homes around. Kip and Laura really are in the country.

Our first assignment was in a housing development - fairly upscale. The second was in town within walking distance of mainstreet. Both were enjoyable assignments, but this is where we belong. We are in agreement on that point. We live with the sounds of birds and the wind. The view across the Animas River valley is inspiring, and there's always a great sunset.

Our friends in town that we house sat are important on the local scene. Dick White is presently on the City Council and will be mayor in two years. It is a rotating position. So, we have good connections. I expect that we'll return next year to house sit

somewhere. If someone offered us the opportunity to up and move from Massachusetts to Durango, it would be a hard decision for Monica because of her musical career. I'd miss friends back East, and there is the work at MTSF and other important forest properties, but there would be no decision to make. I'm a westerner at heart.

Robert T. Leverett

## Re: European beech forests

by **PAwildernessadvocate** » Thu Jul 05, 2012 9:44 am

Ten or 20 years ago I could have gone out and taken some photos of a fantastic example of a hemlock-beech old-growth forest at the Tionesta Scenic and Research Natural Areas in the Allegheny National Forest to contribute to this thread, but recently most of the beech trees in that tract have been killed by the beech bark disease:

<http://www.invasive.org/symposium/houston.html>

From the 2007 Allegheny National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan):

### **Beech Bark Disease Complex**

*The introduced BBD complex results in significant beech mortality, with an understory response of increased beech root sprouting, and an increase in the amount of susceptible beech stems in affected areas, potentially leading to a second BBD complex outbreak of more serious impact than the first (Otrofsky and McCormack 1986). In order to retain a component of American beech that is resistant to the BBD complex, efforts will be made to identify and retain beech trees that are immune or resistant to the disease complex as suggested by Burns and Houston (1987) and Mielke et al. (1986). At the same time, beech that are susceptible to the complex will be removed to provide growing space for either resistant beech or other tree species. Following a period of time for beech root sprouts to develop, foliar glyphosate treatments are applied to reduce the abundance of beech sprouts. This creates growing space for diverse tree seedling regeneration, including resistant beech sprouts and seedlings that*



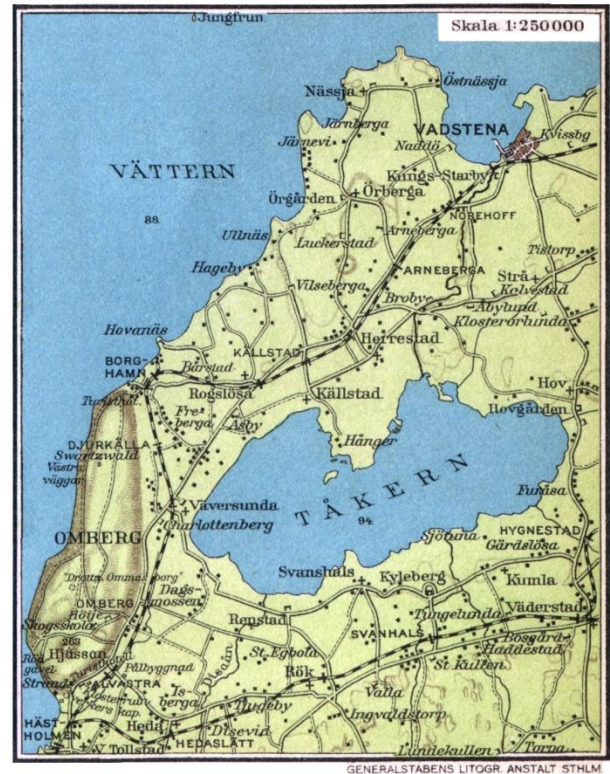
will develop around resistant beech trees retained in harvest treatment areas. These resistant beech seedlings and sprouts can then develop with little competition from stems of susceptible beech trees. Long term studies in New Hampshire have found that management directed toward removing poor beech trees over a period of decades can produce areas where stand level health is significantly improved, the effects of the BBD complex are reduced, and the basal area of beech trees resistant to the disease complex is increased (Leak 2006). ANF foresters will continue to cooperate with researchers from the Northern Research Station to study methods of regenerating a beech component that is resistant to the BBD complex.

Kirk Johnson

## Re: European beech forests

by PAwildernessadvocate » Thu Jul 05, 2012 12:32 pm

I don't think this European site has been mentioned yet: the Omberg forest reserve along the east shore of Lake Vättern in Sweden. It is on my short list of places to see in my lifetime (it's the oblong-shaped tract on the left side of this map):



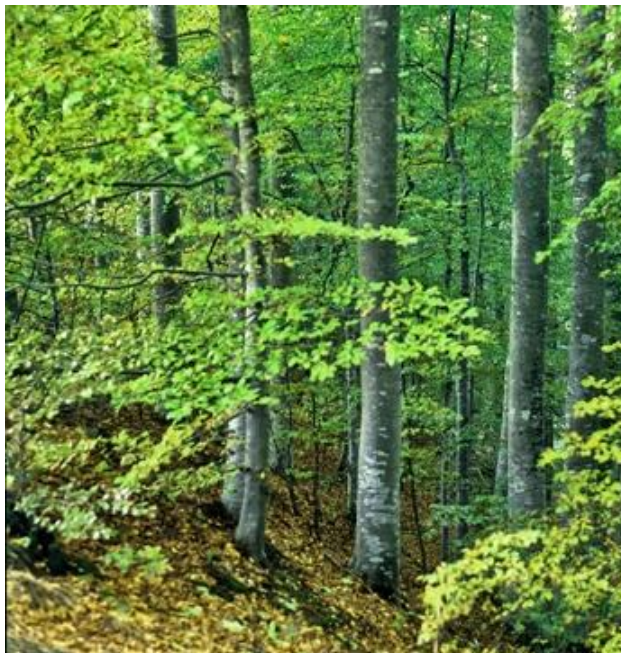
[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/af/Cohrs\\_Takern\\_1928.jpg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/a/af/Cohrs_Takern_1928.jpg)

My understanding is that the Omberg forest is mostly pine and spruce, but that pockets of beech are also present.



<http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/ostergotland/index.aspx>





[http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/ostergotlan ...  
mberg.aspx](http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/ostergotlan...mberg.aspx)



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jgtGDh6al-k>



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vJgXDObsFA>

Omberg forest understory scenes begin at about the 1:00 mark in this video:

### [Re: SINE method training for tree climbers](#)

by **edfrank** » Mon Jul 02, 2012 10:27 pm

Eli, This is an excellent project on the part of you and Patty. I would really like to see this put up as an example of working together between NTS and tree climbers when get the various Group Pages created for the website - Do you or Patty have photos you could add or additional materials to expand upon the post? Even if you do not, I am pleased to see this happen.

Edward Frank

### [Re: SINE method training for tree climbers](#)

by **pattyjenkins1** » Tue Jul 03, 2012 8:24 am

Over dinner that night, four of the attendees commented that Eli did a great job, and that though they were challenged by the calculations, they were inspired to study and learn more. THANKS Eli! Now all we have to do is find a time when he can learn to climb!

And yes, Will, it was up to 106 on Saturday. Let's all hope that's not how the summer goes...

Patty Jenkins  
Executive Director  
Tree Climbers International, Inc.

### [Re: SINE method training for tree climbers](#)

by **AndrewJoslin** » Tue Jul 03, 2012 11:36 am

Great stuff! Interesting to note that for tree climbers, knowing how to do a sine/angle measurement can be very helpful even when doing a tape drop. Will reported on this technique in one of his measuring climb reports. For example when the very top limb/branch is too angled and too precarious to climb out on, the climber can do a "sine/top" measurement with the assistance of an extension pole and a clinometer. Once climbers understand the basic measuring technique they'll have that in their mental toolkit to deal with unexpected manual measuring problems when they're up in trees.

Andrew Joslin

### [Re: SINE method training for tree climbers](#)

by **AndrewJoslin** » Tue Jul 03, 2012 5:06 pm

The tree climber bias is to think we have to climb to measure and the only way we can achieve an accurate height measurement is by climbing the tree and doing a tape drop. The beauty of NTS vetted accurate ground-based measuring techniques is that a climber can collect meaningful data on any tree they climb (or don't climb) within minutes of arriving at a tree without including the fairly involved task of doing a tape drop. This means a large increase in data collection vs. how the task is currently perceived by many climbers.

Andrew Joslin

## [Re: SINE method training for tree climbers](#)

by **dbhguru** » Tue Jul 03, 2012 9:03 pm

Andrew, Yes, I can see where you are coming from. It is exciting to think about a strong contingent of recreational climbers coming from many backgrounds, some highly technical. This bodes well for us. Thanks mainly to you, a new powerful arm of NTS membership may be growing.

There's another point to explore here. Recreational climbers may be predisposed to establish records, and authentic ones at that. Main line sports do very precise timings and measurement. The idea of just being in the ball park is anathema to real athletes.

Robert T. Leverett

## [Re: SINE method training for tree climbers](#)

by **eliahd24** » Tue Jul 03, 2012 9:51 pm

Thanks for the kudos guys. It was a lot of fun to nerd out on trees for a couple of hours. This was a diverse audience, yet they all seemed very receptive and genuinely interested. I hope they can take inspiration from my enthusiasm. Even if they don't become active (data-collecting) NTS members right away, rest assured that we are on their radar and they know that we can be a ready and waiting resource for them.

Eli Dickerson

## [Re: SINE method training for tree climbers](#)

by **pattyjenkins1** » Wed Jul 04, 2012 8:52 am

What a shame that we didn't think to film Eli's presentation. Does anybody have -- or could someone create -- a "How to Measure Trees from the Ground" video or article that I could put up on the TCI website? I can add a brief description of the NTS with a call to contribute to NTS work. This would be a great way to open up TCI's turn to "Citizen Science" on our site. Other ideas?

Certainly when we begin to publicize the 2013 Annual Tree Climbers Gathering, we will excite many climbers with the possibility of listening to and learning from the likes of Bob, Will, and other NTSers.

Patty Jenkins





## Mystical marks in virgin forest explained

June 27, 2012 by: Nina Kristiansen

<http://sciencenordic.com/mystical-marks-virgin-forest-explained> NTS topic: <http://www.ents-bbs.org/viewtopic.php?f=144&t=4258>

### Re: Mystical marks in virgin forest explained, Norway

by PAwildernessadvocate » Thu Jul 05, 2012

Chris wrote: Cool. I assume there is nothing special about that particular species (Scots Pine?). I wonder if any other people did anything similar? Does any brave member want to try to make some :D

In my opinion that Science Nordic article sort of leaves the reader with the impression that it was the Sami people who pioneered the idea of bark bread, which I don't think is necessarily true. It probably also should not characterize these old tree wounds as "mystical" or mysterious. Making bark bread appears to have been a ubiquitous practice throughout Scandinavia during hard times. Below is a pertinent passage from chapter two of famed Swedish writer/journalist Vilhelm Moberg's *A History of the Swedish People* (Volume Two).

*It is my belief that it was originally the animals who showed humans which food in the forest is edible, and who taught them to flay the trunks of young trees.*

*For bark bread, only the membrane immediately under the rough bark -- the layer which nourishes a tree's growth and forms the annual ring -- was used. This inside layer would be scaled off with an iron scraper and collected, after which, before it could be baked, there came a long process of preparing the bark. First it was hung up to dry in the open air until friable; then beaten with a flail or crushed in some other way; then ground into a flour. The bark membrane is very thin, and many trees had to give up their skins before the kneading-trough was filled with dough. Time and patience were needed to collect and produce all this wood-flour; but these people who were seeking nourishment in the forest had time on their hands. Probably whole families, adults and*

*children, went out with their scraping irons and flayed the trees.*

*Leksand Museum, in Dalarna, contains a remarkable flail, with sharp iron tags to it, once used for preparing bark flour. It is a monument to ancient Dalarna, a part of the country where bark bread was common fare. [Dalarna is south of Sami territory.]*

*The bark was collected in summer, before the end of July and the August mists. Thereafter the trees would be damaged by the scraping irons, and might dry up and wither away. Certain types of tree were chosen for bread, notably the pine which, found in every forest, was also the most plentifully available. Long before the spruce, which was another though lesser source of bread, the pine had spread over Sweden. Among deciduous trees, too, there were three species which yielded bark flour: elm, asp and silver birch. The elm was the greatest favourite of all. Besides being regarded as the most nutritious, its bark was also the easiest to prepare.*

Moberg, Vilhelm. 1971. *A History of the Swedish People, Volume Two: From Renaissance to Revolution*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Here's a recipe!

[http://www.nordicwellbeing.com/Julies\\_K...\\_ad-is-back](http://www.nordicwellbeing.com/Julies_K..._ad-is-back)

#### Ingrid's Bark Bread

100 g or 3.5 oz yeast  
1 liter or 1 quart lukewarm water  
1 liter or 1 quart rye flour  
1.5 liters or 1.5 quarts white flour  
2 dl or 1/2 cup bark flour (Ingrid uses bark from her own pine forest)

Blend the ingredients and knead the dough. Allow to rise for one hour. Roll out into smaller rounds. Baking time varies according to the size of the bread. (I suggest for medium rounds which are the size of pita breads 10 minutes at 225 C or 437 F – sprinkle water over before baking)

Kirk Johnson



## Re: Mystical marks in virgin forest explained, Norway

by Don » Fri Jul 06, 2012 4:18 am

While I was living in Flagstaff, working for Grand Canyon National Park, and attending Northern Arizona University, one of the author's that I discovered and came to like enough to follow through subsequent books by him, was William DuBuys. He writes of the land and the customs of the peoples of New Mexico, with a bent towards natural history and how humans fit in.

The first book of his I read was *River of Traps*, a very biographical but perceptive book of his relationship with friends, fauna, the land, the people and his efforts to fit in to a natural lifestyle, taking place in the mid-seventies.

Some 30 years later he wrote another book, called *The Walk*. He writes of the same land, and expresses a much deeper sense of the Land.

How does this tie into Bark Bread you might ask?

DuBuys records a journal of *The Walk* taken, sometimes daily, over those thirty years but it took another set of eyes to notice a systematic scarring on large old ponderoas pines. DuBuys had befriended this old retired forester named Fred Swetnam, doing research for an earlier book, and had kept in contact.

While riding around parts of New Mexico with him, DuBuys was asked by Fred if he was familiar with peeled trees. He wasn't, and Fred mentioned that his son Tom was an up and coming dendrochronologist and had studied the 'peeled ponderosa pines'. Over an area known to be occupied by the Jicarilla Apaches, Tom determined that the peeled trees were all on large old ponderosas (some as old to have been around in the 1500's when the earliest Spanish explorers were about), and that those trees were peeled between 1776 and 1877.

Piecing together various accounts in what would be today called determining reference conditions, the Swetnams and DuBuys recorded accounts of the dried sap being scraped from a 'peel' with the pointed edge of an oak or mountain mahogany branch and

consumed directly (apparently after being leached and dried, as well as in other accounts where the scraped dry resins were ground by a metate into flour that could be amended with other flour sources to make a palatable meal.

Casting an eye to the historical times, the arrival of settlers, miners, the military and such would have made for conflict between the Apaches and other tribes, with less and less resources. It's not hard to imagine the dire straits of the indigenous peoples, and the desperation they experienced.

Today, we have dendrochronologists among the NTS who I suspect are quite familiar with Tom Swetnam, or at the very least, his name and reputation in the field. Small world, huh?!

Don Bertollette

## [The Lost Coast, CA](#)

by **Mark Collins** » Wed Jul 04, 2012 7:47 pm

I hiked the Lost Coast Trail over the weekend with a couple of friends, and was really excited to see what the status of the forest was in this mysterious region. I was saddened to discover and hear from one of the locals that much of the area had already been logged long ago. While driving in, I saw a few gigantic redwoods here and there, and some enormous Douglas Fir, like this beauty along Usal Road (below).



Otherwise, an excellent and stunningly beautiful trail. Does anyone know more about the logging history here? I noticed a lot of grass covered hills where I expected to see trees especially with the amount of

Debris from the Fukushima tsunami is also beginning to appear on the beaches, much of it covered with an assortment of marine life.

rainfall this region receives.



Mark Collins

## [Re: The Lost Coast](#)

by **PAwildernessadvocate** » Thu Jul 05, 2012 10:19 am

Mark,

The King Range Wilderness was designated in 2006 and protects in perpetuity more than 42,000 acres of the Lost Coast from logging and other human activities inconsistent with the preservation of wilderness values.

<http://www.wilderness.net/index.cfm?fuse=NWPS&sec=wildView&WID=687&tab=General>

If you get a chance to see the one-hour documentary *Forever Wild*, you will probably want to make sure to watch it. It includes a nice profile, maybe 10 or 15

minutes long, about the long-term efforts of the California Wilderness Coalition to protect portions of the Lost Coast by designating the King Range Wilderness and other wilderness areas in the vicinity. It also talks about some of the logging, grazing, and motorized rec that took place in the vicinity over the years.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TvNzStpPsjA>

The DVDs of *Forever Wild* are out there, and sometimes shown by conservation groups at various events. Here's an example:

<http://www.pawild.org/pdfs/ForeverWildFlyer61612.pdf>

Also, I've seen this program broadcast on PBS stations from time to time, so you can keep your eyes peeled for those broadcasts.

## [Re: The Lost Coast](#)

by **Don** » Fri Jul 06, 2012 4:34 am

I had occasion in the mid-seventies to be working with the BLM in Ukiah, and spent perhaps a week in the King's Range...a gorgeous tract of land well worth protecting, rising directly up from the sea to over 5000' as I recall. As a graduate of Humboldt State University, I "wasted" many hours learning the countryside, exploring the redwoods, the series of lagoons running north from Arcata, Fern Canyon,



Prairie Creek eld herds, all the Wildernesses then designated. As a Humboldt-er, we always thought of ourselves as behind the redwood curtain...interesting that two of the breweries in Humboldt County are called the Lost Coast Brewery and the Redwood Curtain Brewery. While the county is host to 6 breweries at last count (March 2012), there were none back in the 60's and 70's.

Putting my focus on grasslands, a couple in the Humboldt area came to mind...going east out of Orick you'll enter some pretty rugged terrain that eventually takes you up along a ridge that runs by Bald Prairie...you're right on the edge of of the Hoopa Reservation, where one should remain circumspect about one's behavior, unless times have changed. Another grassland coming to mind I associate with Dry Lagoon, one of a series of wonderful lagoon ecosystems (Fresh, Stone, Dry, and more I think). Wonderful beaches along Stagecoach Road out of Trinidad running towards Patrick's Point State Park, and so many fine places that boggle my mind when I reflect back on them...

Enjoy yourself, you're in god's country!  
Attaching an image captured in Prairie Creek Redwood State Park, north of Orick on an old section of 101...don't have any grasslands handy



Image captured March, 2012

Don Bertolette

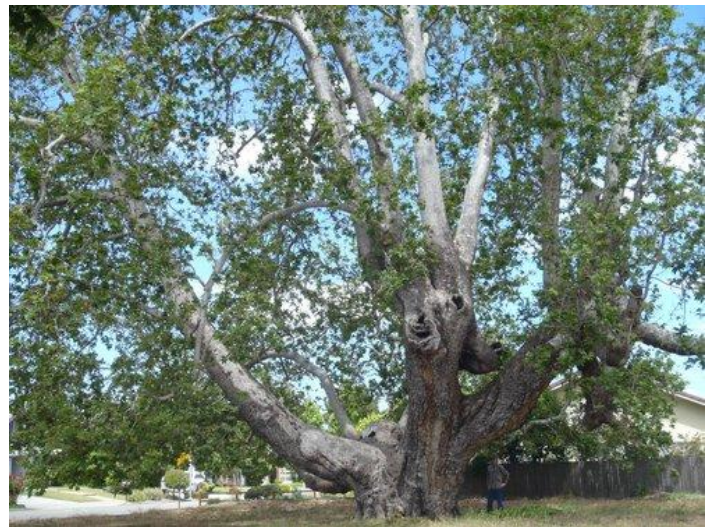
## [Re: Zane Moore Reports Tallest Known Tree South of Golden Gate](#)

by **M.W.Taylor** » Sat Jul 07, 2012 6:43 pm

The attached pictures is from another giant california Sycamore in the foothills of Fremont California. This specimen is almost 9' dbh with HUGE branches. The base is more or less a single bole but may have originally been multiple branches that fused a long time ago. You would need to cut the tree down to prove it.



giant fremenot sycamore on Higuera Street



giant Fremont sycamore

Michael Taylor



## **Re: Zane Moore Reports Tallest Known Tree South of Golden Gate**

by **dbhguru** » Sat Jul 07, 2012 7:05 pm

Michael, The shape of this huge sycamore speaks volumes to me. I'm reminded of the great Pinchot sycamore in Simsbury, CT. The size and shape of the California tree conveys the challenges we face in taking measurements that can be meaningfully compared to measurements taken for other trees. The kinds of measurements that capture the essence of this tree are what I'm looking for to tell its story.

Beyond what we presently do, a measurement that makes sense to me is the projected area of the crown taken around the drip line. What are your thoughts? Another measurement might be the area of the basal footprint. Volume measurements make lots of sense, but are labor and technology intensive. Here I'm thinking of measurements that less-driven folks might be willing to do if given the tools and a clear set of instructions.

Robert T. Leverett

## **Old-growth ponderosa and Jeffrey pines and the Paiute**

by **Don** » Sat Jul 07, 2012 7:29 pm

In responding to a recent post in General Discussions about Mystical Marks on trees, I was reminded of an account by an archeologist friend of mine. Working on the Inyo National Forest out of Bishop, California ponderosa and jeffrey pines were commonly seen forest ecosystems, overlapping and hybridizing across elevational gradients. Down around Bishop, ponderosa pines were prevalent, and higher up, jeffrey pines dominated, with hybrids in between.

My archeologist friend, Tony, said that both were important to native american indians of the area, known as Paiutes. Old ponderosa and Jeffrey pines

served as hosts to the Pandora moths metamorphosing caterpillars and pupae. From a Crater Lake Nature Notes article found at:

<http://www.craterlakeinstitute.com/natural-history/nature-notes-frank-lang/pandora-moths.htm>

it seems that the pupae metamorphose and eventually fall out of the bark crevices and land at the base of the tree. Paiutes, certain to be aware of the cyclical nature of life, found the pupae to be a source of nutrition, waiting to be harvested. Their solution was to dig out an inverted cone in the sandy soils often found with ponderosa and Jeffrey pines, at such an angle that the sand kept them down at where the sand met the tree base where they could be harvested.

In areas where no logging has occurred these inverted cones can still be found...I have personally seen them, as well as makeshift shelters (or perhaps storage sites for the pupae?) near such areas, made from branches and limbs laid over a depression they might have scraped away or found.

Another nutritional source for the Paiutes was found a little north along the shores of Mono Lake. Brine shrimp were seasonally abundant, and highly sought after.

Don Bertoletto

## [June 29,2012 derecho, WV](#)

by **tsharp** » Fri Jul 06, 2012 6:16 am

NTS:

I finally got back on the grid after the last Friday's (6/29) derecho. I was studying the sky looking at the mamalus clouds developing and thinking this might be a serious thunderstorm. Within minutes a wall of dust, leaves, trash cans, lawn chairs and misc debris were flying through the air. This cloud of debris lasted for about 3 minutes before a heavy rain hit clearing the air but leaving a mess in the neighborhood. The city of Parkersburg, WV and surrounding area had an almost complete loss of power, cable service and limited phone service. I later learned the extent of the damage after the governor declared 53 of 55 counties disaster areas and found out the same line of storms hit central Maryland about 3 hours later. On Thursday I had the opportunity to make a trip to Bluefield, WV on I-77 and returned via Rainelle and Gauley Bridge on US 60. I made a couple of tree observations after this 300 mile trip. About ninety percent of the tree damage was to older trees snapping the main bole or a major limb. The low percent of trees uprooting can probably be attributed to the dry ground conditions the area has experienced over the last 60 days. Most of the tree damage occurred to "edge" trees along right of ways, urban areas, cemeteries, etc. I saw no large scale tree blow down in an intact forest area. I ran across several out of state power line crews and had to laugh at an Alabama crew complaining about the heat and humidity. The two local power providers both said it was the largest outage they have ever experienced in this service area including snow storms and tropical storms. The latest estimate is to have service restored by Sunday (7/8).

Turner Sharp

## [Re: June 29,2012 derecho, WV](#)

by **Rand** » Fri Jul 06, 2012 9:56 am

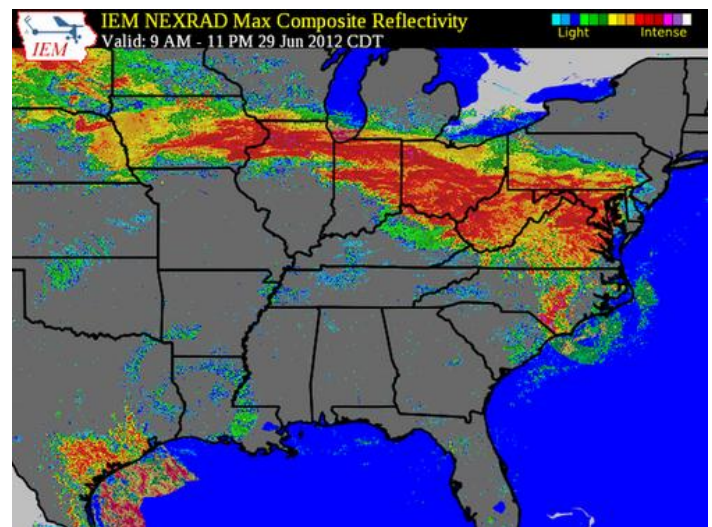
My condolences. My neighborhood in Columbus must have been in a 'thin' spot or something. Or at

any rate, not many mature trees as my power didn't even flinch. I watched the shelf cloud come through and though 'Jeez, I've never seen one move that fast' shortly there-after the dust started to fly, and the trees across the parking lot started to bend alarmingly...then a minute or so later it diminished to an above average thunderstorm. Got some decent rain and a scattering of pea sized hail with a few marbles thrown in.

Here's a picture of a shelf cloud of a storm the next day, but the derecho looked similar:



Found a radar loop of the nasty thing for everyone's viewing pleasure.



<http://vielmetti.typepad.com/vacuum/2012/06/derecho-of-june-29-2012.html>

Rand Brown

## Food for thought

by **dbhguru** » Fri Jul 06, 2012 5:55 pm

NTS, The tall Colorado blue spruce I measured 2 days ago on Guilding Creek has set me to thinking again about what we do best in NTS. The 153-foot Colorado blue is the third 150-footer I've measured for the species in southwestern Colorado. I've hit 140 feet or more in two other locations and lots of places have confirmed 130s. I think it is fair to conclude that countless places have 120s. As a maximum, one hundred feet is greatly understated. So, that being the case, what do other sources say about the maximum height achievement for the species? I went to the Internet to take a current sample from the many sources dealing the the blue spruce.

Greatly understated height range of 50 - 75 feet is listed by a few sources. More commonly we see 70 to 100. The USDA Plant Profile gives 100. The popular Virginia Tech source gives "up to 80". Wikipedia lists 151 as exceptional. USDA Silvics lists an AF national champion at 126. I could go on, but you get the predictable picture - junk. Basically, none of these presumably authoritative sources have a freakin clue. Point me out one organization/agency other than NTS that is doing a good job of straightening out the mess. There is a tiny, tiny cadre of non-NTS people out there probably doing a good job of tree measuring, but who knows of their work?

So, from my perch on the stump, er, uh, soapbox, I calmly and deliberately point out that from an organizational perspective, getting the numbers right is uniquely the job of NTS. But we haven't reached anywhere near our potential. To do a truly good job, we need a highly visible list. It needs to be front and center, and we need to advertise and spotlight it. It should not be comingled with other lists or lost in a sea of posts. It needs a unique residence visible to all.

And we have to agree to place value on the list and keep it up. Our efforts won't correct the sloppy work of other organizations and individuals, but it will be a significant step forward, and in time may make a difference. The perpetually scattered nature of our efforts (I certainly include myself) greatly diminishes

their effectiveness. Measuring tree dimensions to a high level of accuracy is what we do best. The numbers we generate will serve the cause best by presenting them in list form for comparison purposes. Isolated numbers floating around cyberspace are soon forgotten.

The guidebook authors keep quoting each other and thereby perpetuate mis-information and trivializing the subject. There's no statistics, science, rhyme nor reason to the numbers you see for tree dimensions in these sources. I suppose there is some experienced-based information from some of the sources. For example, nursery guides probably use some of their experience for cultivars growing in yards. On occasion, you see a reference to a champion tree in the National Register. The authors seldom reveal an understanding of what championship status means.

Basically, tree dimensions are considered as either curiosities or trivia or dealt with perfunctorily without thought. And I suppose that will always be the case to a considerable degree. The topic is not likely to become widely popular and only becomes peripherally important when some group or individuals succeed in making it so. Of course, the primary group pushing this class of information is NTS. We'll be swimming upstream for several years to come because the Internet allows misinformation to be spread with near-light speed. However, I am seeing some evidence that our message is getting circulated.


On a more generally theme, each of us pushing the subject of tree statistics has his/her own reasons. I've explained on a number of occasions that what drove me to take measuring seriously was the need (as I perceived it) to document surviving old growth forests in the East. That had been poorly done and I felt the public needed to know what the physical characteristics of the old growth sites were, especially where superlatives were involved. I started by using equipment and techniques of the forestry profession, and when they clearly did not work, co-engineered my own methods, Will Blozan being my partner. That story has been often told. Others have done the same, e.g. Bob Van Pelt and Michael Taylor. We're all pushing the envelope.



Tree superlatives are what often capture the imagination and spur the tree equivalent of treasure hunts. When I started documenting MTSF's white pines, there wasn't a single document in government, academia, or the environmental organizations that pointed to the extraordinary nature of the resource. That situation has changed. More and more Massachusetts residents take pride in what Mohawk represents. We do make a difference.

Robert T. Leverett

### [Re: Food for thought](#)


 by **Joe** » Sat Jul 07, 2012 4:14 pm

*dbhguru wrote: NTS, Basically, tree dimensions are considered as either curiosities or trivia or dealt with perfunctorily without thought.*

If the science community trivializes potential tree size- then they are doing an immense injustice to all of us. We need to know how forests and trees can develop to better understand what a healthy forest is, to better understand the full potential for carbon sequestration, to better understand how wildlife populations will change as the forest develops, to better understand the changes the Earth is going through with global warming- if tree sizes can't be measured accurately, what hope do we have of anything else told to us by ecologists/biologists and natural resource professionals? Trivializing such information perhaps is just an example of the trivialization of other sciences and even our politics. This perhaps is perhaps part of the dumbing down of America.

Joe Zorzin

### [Re: Food for thought](#)

 by **PAwildernessadvocate** » Sat Jul 07, 2012 4:54 pm

Salmon ecologists have been paying closer and closer attention to site potential tree height.

Years ago, when doing a logging project near salmon streams, part of the contracts sometimes included "cleaning out" the streams by pulling all of the coarse woody debris out and keeping the channel clear. Well, around the late 1980s people studying salmon began to document the importance of coarse woody debris in retaining spawned-out salmon carcasses within a stream's ecosystem (as opposed to being washed out to sea) where they are scavenged by a wide variety of animals, which in turn deposit the nutrients far and wide throughout the surrounding forest ecosystem in their leavings. The salmon spawning and being scavenged process has the ability to transport and distribute *massive* amounts of nutrients from the ocean deep into the continent's interior forest.

Now it is common knowledge that always retaining coarse woody debris in salmon stream is the way to go. One way to help do that is to remove no trees from the edge of the stream out to the site potential tree height during a logging project, to maximize the potential of coarse woody debris contribution to the stream over time. Sometimes logging contracts even include adding coarse woody debris to a stream if it is deficient in that area because of past management practices or something. Sometimes dead hatchery salmon are even deliberately dumped by the truckload high in a stream's drainage.

So that's just one practical example that goes to show it's important to have a handle on how tall trees can really grow.

Kirk Johnson

## Recruiting new citizen tree scientists

by **pattyjenkins1** » Sun Jul 08, 2012 12:57 pm

As many of you know, I've been trying to figure out how to move the TCI "Citizen Science" initiative forward. Here's where things stand:

I just had a VERY helpful conversation with Steve Galehouse. He helped me decide that:

1) The centralized database that TCier Paul Giers has created of all the state and national champ trees is not a duplication of effort in terms of having a site to collect tree information. We will now work with Mitch to see what kind of possibilities there are for using Paul's database as a feed to the NTS database, of course respecting its requirements for measuring methodology, etc.

2) Rather than hosting the TCI citizen science initiative on the TCI website, it will be better to create a new website, which can appeal to a broader base of tree enthusiasts than just recreational (and occasional professional) tree climbers. With that in mind, I just secured the domain **TreeRangers.org**. Cool name, eh? Steve's suggestion. It's staggering how many other possibilities there are for what can be done with such a website. Steve had some great ideas, including reaching out to the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to create a "Tree Badge" for measuring trees, Virtual Geo (Tree-o)-Caching, and Tree Trails.

Bob: Thanks for your suggestion of paring down Will's "Tree Measuring Guidelines." Ed, I hope Bob's nomination of you for the job is okay with you. I have the March 2008 revision of the Guidelines. It's 30 pages and daunting for me, a college-educated non-scientist. I can only imagine the thoughts that might go through someone's head who has never dealt with this kind of document. It will be great to have a brochure at whatever point it's ready. Unfortunately, there are only two photos of the workshop Eli did, and neither shows Eli teaching or using a measuring tool. Bummer.

3) The new website can also house the "Learning About Trees Directory" that I've created. This will

enable anyone who's studying any aspect of trees to tell about their research and get help (observational, samples, data, locational) from anywhere in the world.

Now on to web design, implementation of ideas, publicizing, etc. Anybody who wants to help is invited.

Patty Jenkins

## Re: Recruiting new citizen tree scientists

by **Will Blozan** » Sun Jul 08, 2012 3:27 pm

Patty, Here is a YouTube link about the SINE method done by the late Colby Rucker. I think we could redo it with more quality and simplicity but it works.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0WFUpbv8Mhg>

Will Blozan

## Re: Recruiting new citizen tree scientists

by **dbhguru** » Sun Jul 08, 2012 6:49 pm

Patti, We're at your service. From what you and Steve have discussed already I'm sure we can help bring some of the ideas to fruition. The actual steps needed to measure the height, girth, or crown spread of a tree from the ground are simple, and can be learned by anyone with the interest. We just have to work on the steps and reduce them to the absolute basics. I'm confident that we can find ways to make measuring challenging, competitive, or just plain fun and are happy to do it.

The reasons why the measuring process appears so complicated in the very many communications a newcomer might encounter on the BBS falls largely into five categories:

1. More involved measurements such as projected crown area, trunk volume, and trunk and limb volume, basal footprint
2. Reducing measurement error to below some threshold value such as +/- a foot
3. Comparing different measurement methods in terms of the accuracy that can be expected from each
4. Identifying situations that present special challenges and engineering methods to handle them
5. Determining the location of points on a tree in 3-dimensional space such as the location of the absolute top relative to the base.

These five areas need not be the concern of the beginner. Best that they aren't. Sticking to the three common measurements is plenty for most tree measurers. However, from the above, anyone looking to push the envelope has a fertile field to deal with.

A question arises as to why anyone, wanting to keep it simple, would want to go beyond the straightforward measuring guidelines that we will produce for you. The answer can be supplied in a single word - credibility. There are so many mismeasured trees out there and some many people who have done the mismeasuring that debates, arguments, competitions are bound to occur. In a very real sense, it is about excellence and whether or not that is important. If ball park approximations are okay, then traditional tree-measuring methods may suffice. But that isn't what NTS is about, and when someone is claiming a new champion through the use of a problematic technique, whose measurement is to be judged right?

What makes this field especially challenging for NTS these days is that, as you know, NTS is not the first group to be in the tree-measuring activity (business, avocation, hobby, obsession, etc.). Groups

and individuals who have been about tree measuring for years or decades have as much right to have their say as we do. But as you have no doubt gathered, the record they have left is not exactly sterling. On challenging trees, errors committed by timber professionals and amateur big tree hunters can easily be in the tens of feet with one tree height having been mismeasured an eye-popping 67 feet. And the tree was listed in the National Register for a time. We seek to distance ourselves from such silliness. That is why we in NTS will not except measurements from other sources until they have been qualified.

By now, you may have gathered that trying to improve the quality of tree measuring requires conflict resolution. Prides get in the way.

Robert T. Leverett

## [Hawks Nest Rail-trail, Ansted, WV](#)

by tsharp » Sun Jul 08, 2012 9:29 pm

NTS, On March 25 I had a chance to hike this trail and measure some trees along the former railroad right of way. I wanted to get an idea of Hemlock tree heights while they are still with us. This is a fairly recent addition to the Rail-trail system in West Virginia. The rail line was abandoned in 1972 and the Town of Ansted, with the help of the National Park Service, acquired funding and a plan to turn it into a rail trail by 2007. Ansted is a small town about 60 miles east of Charleston, WV on US 60 now called the Midland Trail and formerly called the James River and Kanawha Turnpike. After I-64 was completed 99 percent of the through traffic bypassed the town so the town is trying to capitalize on its scenery. The trail is short at only 1.8 miles but drops about 500 of elevation along Mill Creek to its confluence with the New River below Hawks Nest State Park. Mill Creek is picturesque stream with a good variety of tree and wildflower species among the many large boulders along its stream bed and banks. There are patches of Rhododendron and Hemlocks scattered in the gorge. The Hemlocks are



starting to show HWA damage at the lowest elevation as one nears the New River but look healthy higher up. It has a series of small waterfalls with the largest being about 20'. The Rail -trail runs along river left (descending) of Mill Creek with Hawks Nest road on river right. I started out on the rail trail but soon decided I was on the wildflower side with a southwest exposure and switched over to tree side with a northeast exposure and only got one foot wet in the process. Most of the time in the winter or spring a foot crossing would not be possible. Most of the trees were young. I measured heights of 23 trees of 12 species including 7 Hemlocks. The tallest two were Sycamore (*P. occidentalis*) at 134.7' and Yellow-poplar (*L. tulipifera*) at 125.5'. The tallest hemlock was 109.8'. No CBH was taken because the person that dropped me off for some tree measuring time drove off before I had taken my D-tape out of the car. My aching knees had no regrets. The Rucker 10 species Height Index (RHI-10) is 107.3'. A complete listing of trees can be found on the Trees Database at:

<http://alpha.treesdb.org/Browse/Sites/1252/Details>

There is a tramway at the bottom that goes up to the lodge at Hawks Nest State Park and when it is operating one might consider riding back up especially if it is hot and humid. I understand the state Park has developed a trail from the lodge that connects to the rail trail. Jet Boat rides upriver to view the New River Gorge Bridge also depart from here. Recently the New River Gorge National River had their purchase area boundary extended along the New River down to Mill Creek and intend to make a trail connection depending of certain land acquisitions. Additional information about the rail trail can be found here:

<http://www.trailsrus.com/railcoalwv/fayette-ansted.html>

Turner Sharp

## [Quercus virginiana soundscape](#)

by **michael gatonska** » Sat Jul 07, 2012 6:34 pm

A spreading southern tree of the white oak group, I captured this soundscape underneath a sprawling live oak in the Ocala National Forest. At the 35" mark of the recording, after the insect sounds begin to fade out of the sonic texture, the live oak and the ever-present tentacles of Spanish moss contribute to a dark ultrasonic swish – to my ears, almost having an ocean or wave-like quality.



Live oak, Spanish moss, cactus

The beauty in sensation levels that emerge and recede in this live oak song reminded me (for some reason) of the importance of the *medium*. In other words, to transmit vibrations from one place to another requires that there be some material in the intervening space - this material is called the medium, and in this soundscape the live oak is just that. The medium may be matter in any form- solid, liquid, or gas. It may be essentially one-dimensional, as for example a stretched string. It may be two-dimensional, as a stretched membrane on the head of a snare drum, the leaf of the live oak, or the surface of a body of water. It may be three-dimensional, as the interior of a body of water, or, even the atmosphere around us. The string, the membrane, the leaf, the lakes, and the atmosphere are all distinct, relevant, and equally important in the acoustic(s) of this world. For some reason, recording this soundscape brought this to

mind.

I must admit that this was a very relaxing soundscape to capture, despite the hard to ignore ‘thug-level’ of mosquitoes.



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sm3PGzpMyfY>

Michael Gatonska

## **Eastern Mountain Maple, Green Frogs, and a Chipmunk**

by **michael gatonska** » Mon Jul 09, 2012 6:06 am

I captured this soundscape while standing underneath an Eastern Mountain Maple during the green frog breeding season in Litchfield, CT. Setting up my equipment underneath the tree, and next to a pond where the frogs had congregated to compete for call time and recognition, I was able to listen to and record some very vigorous frog calls along with the gentle, nonharmonic flapping of the maple leaves (at about the 1'10" mark this activity enters the recorded sonic texture). Also recorded, was a curious chipmunk who kept approaching me and the microphone, muttering something or another - before darting off again. Hence, the periodic surprises of accented rustlings from the forest ground.

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

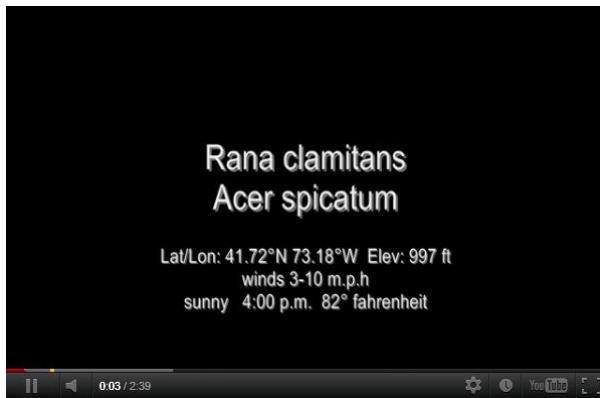
on). The green frog males song an accented ‘twang’ sound, similar to the banjo, or in my opinion, more akin to the sanxian, which is a Chinese lute — a three-stringed fretless and plucked instrument.



Maple & Green Frog recording site

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 a decline in the population of these frogs.

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=IMZ9iewNEF0>

[http://www.youtube.com/user/EcoEarSoundscapes?o=b=0&feature=results\\_main](http://www.youtube.com/user/EcoEarSoundscapes?o=b=0&feature=results_main)

Michael Gatonska

## **Planned series of discussions**

by **dbhguru** » Mon Jul 09, 2012 9:55 pm

NTS, Michael Taylor and I have been talking about launching a series of discussions on various measurement topics in hopes of stimulating interest and participation from a larger segment of the NTS membership. Measuring trees encompasses a good deal more than using the sine method to determine tree height. There are the other dimensions and how to do them better, and more to the point, there is a host of ancillary measurements needed to document the structure of the tree as it relates to the measurements being taken. There is also measurements to analyze crown structures of different species, and then there is the determination of the best position to be in to minimize the impact of distance and angle errors on height, diameter, etc.

I realize that the subject matter I'm alluding to can be overwhelming to anyone just wanting to take simple measurements without fuss or bother. While I am sympathetic to their hopes, such a mindset is responsible for what we see today. Doing it quick and simple has reduced tree measuring to a rather banal

activity. An expanding of consciousness is called for. Michael and I hope to increase the awareness of tree measurers to what is really involved, but do it gradually. There won't be any taking two steps and falling off the dock.

Will we be presenting material of little practical value? Not at all. Practicality will be the name of this game, because there are lots of hidden aspects to tree measuring that if brought into the light of day could improve accuracy regardless of the measurement method used. Now to an important point. The discussions are not going to be a witch hunt for users of particular techniques and admonishing them from the pulpit. This is about improving one's skills regardless of method used.

BTW, a lot of the material planned for the series has been presented in the past, but for the most part, it has gained little traction. I must take responsibility for that. I'm sure that I packed too much into the postings and associated spreadsheets. I can't say I wasn't warned, but my desire all along has been to put tree measuring in the field on an ever sounder footing, and that means absorbing a good deal more than simple application of sine top-sine bottom. Despite my past over-the-top dendromorphometry postings, I believe we can move things forward, albeit through a different approach. Smaller, bite-sized presentations are the prescription. One dose at a time. Let me give two examples. If a tangent measurer suspects a clinometer error of say 0.5 degrees, will the impact of that error be greater at higher or lower angles? The answer to that question is simple. The higher the angle, the greater the error. Now take the same situation applied to the sine method. Will the impact of an angle error of 0.5 degrees be greater at higher or lower angles? Again, the answer to the question is simple. The lower the angle, the greater the error. Now, how many tree measurers know the answer to both those questions off the tops of their heads? But once the answers are given, the measurer is immediately armed with two very important rules of the road.

The above are examples. Michael and I plan to address many such questions and give simple rules of the road - where that is possible. We will work our way through simple situations with simple answers,



but we will not shy away from the more complicated and often unavoidable situations. Still, I promise that we will always look for the simplest explanation possible, and to that end, we welcome participation. However, whether others choose to directly participate or not, the material will be there for the reading. Big Ed will know what to do with it to make it conveniently available. And for those who would like to participate, but are reluctant to do so, please keep in mind that no question is too basic or simple. The odds are that any question asked is a question that plenty of measurers would like to have asked. Silence is not a virtue.

I will begin closing my sales pitch with an admission. I admit to holding the opinion that we in NTS are the best field-based tree measurers going. I have lots of reasons for saying this, and stand ready for anyone to prove me wrong. This is not arrogance. I'm certainly willing to be proven wrong. Anyone who has a better method or can show me that a method I've advocated as the best isn't, I'll willingly and publicly knowledge my error. It isn't about ego or professional pride or turf, it is about tree measuring and who has something to contribute.

I've been measuring trees by all popular methods and ones of my own engineering since the late 1980s. Throughout this time, I have witnessed stubbornness on the part of old timers to update their methods. We'll I'm an old timer. I'll be 71 in a few days. So, I'm not particularly sympathetic to institutionalized stubbornness. I'm not, nor are my partners (Michael, Will, Don, Don, etc.), the new kids on the block. But we don't know everything either. We'll continue to grow through our interactions with others, and that's the way it should be. I'll now turn the podium over to Michael Taylor. After Michael, please other such as brother Will, do join in. But for now, Michael?

Robert T. Leverett

## [Champion Rocky Mtn Ponderosa Update](#)

by dbhguru » Mon Jul 09, 2012 3:04 pm

NTS, Yesterday Monica and I went up Hermosa Creek to check on the champion Rocky Mountain champion ponderosa pine. It is in fine shape. I remeasured it using the TruPulse 200 and got 160 feet on the button. This is a little less than what I get when I use the Nikon Prostaff 440 for distance.

On July 12th, Steve Colburn, North American Sales Manager will come over to Durango and we'll remeasure the champion ponderosa, the Doug fir, and the Colorado blue. We'll use both TruPulses and the Impulse 200LR. It will require 3 or 4 hours to do all three trees to the level of accuracy that we want to achieve. I'm arranging newspaper coverage for the event. We'll also measure a champion cottonwood on Friday.

I'll keep everyone posted. This may be a big step for WNTS in Colorado. If you make a big enough noise, people will hear you. Right now, I'm being pretty loud.

Robert T. Leverett

## [Re: Champion Rocky Mtn Ponderosa Update](#)

by dbhguru » Mon Jul 09, 2012 10:05 pm

*James Robert Smith wrote: I look forward to seeing photographs.*

I promise there will be plenty, and the project has taken an interesting turn. The Durango Herald may cover the measuring, and if not that paper, another. Also, and here is one I'd bet nobody would have expected. There will be witnesses to the measurings, and one group is probably going to be "Great Old Broads For Wilderness". Yep, I picked up the phone and called them today, and they are very interested in the tree measuring and in WNTS. Senior Power!

Steve Colburn, North American Sales Manager for LTI will come in on Wednesday afternoon. We'll do all the measuring on Thursday, then socialize Thursday evening. Friday morning will be another measuring episode. Who knows where this will go. Dang, I wish Michael, Will, and Don were here. I need somebody to keep me out of trouble.

Robert T. Leverett

## [Cold Bank Pass and Engineer Mountain, CO](#)

by dbhguru » Tue Jul 10, 2012 9:28 pm

NTS, Today Monica and I revisited an old haunt. We first went to 10,640-foot Coal bank Pass in the San Juans. I wanted to check on the very tall Englemann spruce just below the pass at an altitude of approximately two miles. I used my TruPulse 200, which is often slightly conservative. I got 142.0 feet on the button. To my knowledge, this is the tallest accurately measured tree of any species at an altitude of 10,560 feet within the Rocky Mountain biome. You may recall that Don Bertollette, Rand Brown, and I measured it a couple of summers ago. It is doing fine.



Monica and I then headed up Engineer Mountain until the weather threatened. This time we made it to

11,850 feet. Ed is going to post images below the text. While I'm house sitting, I send images via Monica's iPad to Ed and he graciously inserts them into the post. The images were all taken above timberline on Engineer.



The big news is that I broke my previous record for a tall tree above 11,000 feet. My previous record was 126 feet at 11,040 feet. Well, how about 135.0 feet at 11,050 feet. Yep, the new tree is number one above 11,000 for the Rockies. It has a modest girth of 8 feet. It is also an Englemann.





Engineer Mountain is a treasure trove of tall Englemanns. I measured lots of other Englemanns, but nothing that pushed any limits.

Robert T. Leverett

### [Re: Cold Bank Pass and Engineer Mountain](#)

by **dbhguru** » Wed Jul 11, 2012 10:27 am

It is fabulous country. The vistas are endless. I'll be sending more. And the hiking and climbing opportunities are endless. The San Juans have 13 fourteeners and many thirteeners. Some are absolutely spectacular such as 13,972-foot Pigeon Peak - a Matterhorn like mountain that you get glimpses of from U.S. 550 and see up close and personal from the Durango to Silvertown scenic train. The big challenge for Monica and me is getting acclimated. I start to feel the altitude when I first get out here and climb above 8,000 feet. I need some time before going above 10,000. It is a whole different experience from climbing at 0 to 4,000 feet, which encompasses most of my climbing in the East.



One More Image from Engineer Mountain

The San Juans have the largest area of land above 10,000 feet in the lower 48. And the San Juans have the best forests in Colorado. They get more precipitation than the other ranges. Wolf Creek Pass is the snowiest of the major Colorado passes. I set a new tall tree record everytime I come here. The 135-footer at 11,050 feet was especially sweet. It is an accessible tree that I'll put on my list to revisit.

James Robert...I'm sure you'll have a grand time out here. Of course, the Weminuche Wilderness is the crown jewel of the region, but La Platas and San Miguels are splendid ranges (actually sub-ranges of teh San Juans). Places like Hesperus Mountain in the La Platas (13,232 ft) are not visited that much, but tremendously rewarding. Hesperus was one of the four sacred peaks of the Navajos. Many of the Colorado mountains are named after miners who exploited them. I'd prefer that the Navajo name be used for Hesperus, but I haven't found out what it is.

Another sacred Navajo peaks is Blanca in the Sangre de Cristo Range. A third is Humprey's Peak in Arizona. The fourth is in New Mexico. Its name escapes me right now. Heck, you can't go wrong anywhere in the area.

Durango is a neat town if you like to visit towns, which I generally don't. What is refreshing about Durango is that you see many bronze-skin, very fit people on the streets. Durango calls itself the mountain biking capital of the world, and I see no



reason to dispute its claim. Back packing, river rafting, and mountain climbing are all very popular in the area. Naturally, there are the sedentary tourists who swell the population in the summer that don't look exactly physically fit, but they don't swamp the population like the lard-asses you see porking around in Gatlinburg, TN, or as Will calls that abomination, Fatlinburg. Yeah, I know, I shouldn't be making such comments. My bad. But dang, it is just so refreshing to see athletic, health conscious people in abundance, who don't eat three meals a day at McDonalds, pass their bad habits down to their children, and complain bitterly if they can't drive to the top of every mountain. From comments you've made in the past, I have a feeling you agree.

...Out here the landscape just about photographs itself. The colors are varied and vivid. Nature paints in bold strokes. The land forms are spectacular and it is spacious - oh so spacious. I suppose I do pay a little more attention to composition these days, but the West does spoil.

In the East, as you know, the colors are often green on green. There is less relief to the landscape and the humidity dulls skyscapes and distant horizons. There is plenty to photograph, but it takes more talent to make eastern landscapes appear alive, vibrant, and youthful because for the most part they aren't. I struggle to capture the features in MTSF and MSF. I usually have to limit the physical area I'm focusing on to micro-scenes. It does work, but I'm left with little room for expansion, i.e. presenting my lady and fellow Ents with another big tree trunk isn't exactly innovative.

By contrast, the western scenes are expansive and very, very colorful. You have the micro expanding to the macro in an infinite variety of shapes, textures, and colors. In contrast, expansiveness in the East usually runs you into an obscure horizon or a neighbors backyard. Yes, there is a lot to deal with in places like New York's Adirondacks, or on the Maine coast, but it the breadth of photographic material plays out much sooner. I'm not complaining about eastern landscape possibilities, just being frank.

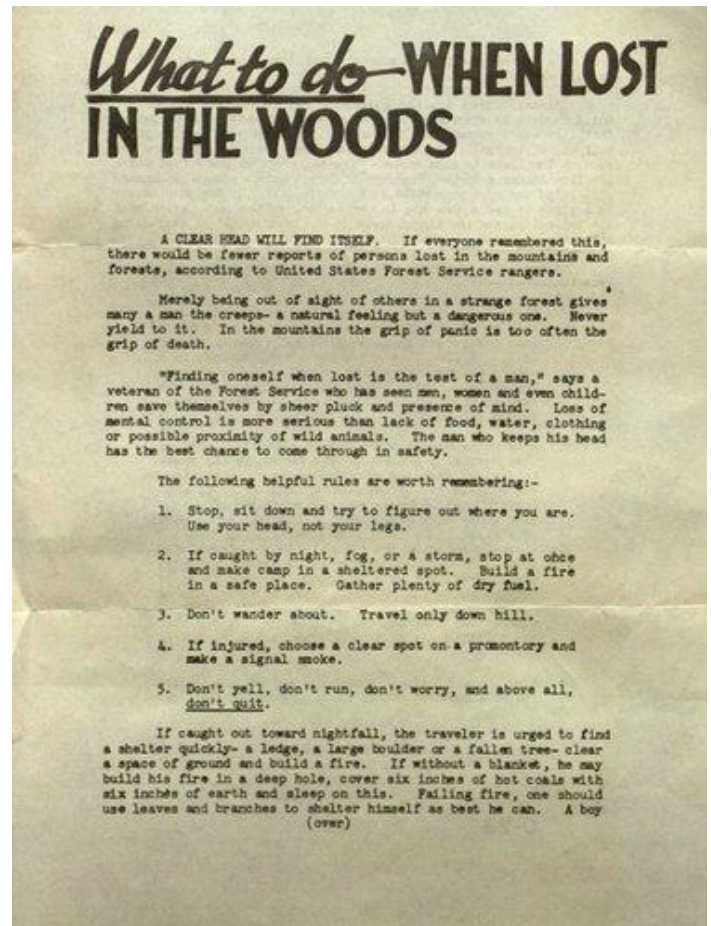
When Monica and I return to Florence, MA, I'll get back into the routine. There's lots of work to be done,

but when my thought turn inward and images begin popping into my head, they will most likely be of western expanses.

Robert T. Leverett

## When Lost In The Woods (1946)

by edfrank » Fri Jul 06, 2012 12:28 pm



Timeless advice from US Forest Service, circa 1946:

"It is better to carry a clear head on your shoulders than a big pack on your back." More advice here:

<http://bit.ly/KYcjCR>.

## Re: Biltmore Estate Trees

by **bbeduhn** » Mon Jul 09, 2012 4:52 pm

Just a few updates and remeasures:

The Dawn Redwoods are growing. In another month, there should be 2 over 130'

4273      129.8'  
546      130.1'      I missed the number on the tree last time.

Tuliptree next to the 129.8' DR, likely a little older 114.1'

Sycamore  
129.8'  
121.8'

European Larch  
116.3'  
132.9'      I didn't have a good angle on this one. There are fenced off areas with young shrubs adjacent to the tree. I'll get a better shot soon.

Conifer RI  
RI 10      129.79  
RI 5      140.34

Brian Beduhn

## Get a load of these numbers, CO

by **dbhguru** » Thu Jul 12, 2012 5:35 pm

NTS, Well Monica and I just returned from Hermosa Creek and the measuring confirmation. The Durango Herald was there. Four representative from "Great Old Broads for Wilderness", Steve Colburn and wife and Darin ? and wife from LTI. And Laurie Swisher of the San Juan NF. The group headed up the trail pausing at various trees. Laurie Swisher is great. She is the old-growth forest inventory specialist for the San Juan NF, and she knows her stuff.

When we got to the area of champs, Steve Colburn and I set about our work. Between us we had three TruPulses and one Impulse. To cut to the chance, here are the numbers.

Species	height	girth	Name
Ponderosa Pine	160.7'	9.5'	
Schrater Pine			
Doug Fir	160.1'	10.8'	Dick
White Fir			
Colorado Blue S.	159.0	6.3'	Will
Blozan Spruce			

In addition, Laurie convinced me that the tree I measured up on Goulding Creek was an Englemann instead of a Colorado Blue, which at 151.5 feet (I originally reported 153, but that was from too great of a distance), is the height record for the Rockies, so far as we know. That's four species height records for the Rockies. How sweet it is! WNTS rules.

I was too preoccupied with measuring to take images, but we'll have plenty courtesy of the Durango Herald. I can now relax a bit. We have the altitude champs from Coal Bank Pass and Engineer Mtn and the above four champs from the La Platas.

Robert T. Leverett

## Re: Get a load of these numbers, CO

by dbhguru » Fri Jul 13, 2012 10:56 pm

NTS, After assisting us measured the ponderosa pine, the Doug fir, and the Colorado blue yesterday, Laurie Swisher returned and cored three trees. She cored a large ponderosa, not the one we measured, but one we discussed growing on the trail. It is 390 years old. The champion pondy is 270 years old, and the slender Colorado blue is a surprising 227. Laurie will return to date the Doug fir.

In addition, we are laying plans for a joint FS-WNTS group of field trips next summer. WNTS will identify big tree-tall tree-old tree sites and then a joint team from the FS and WNTS will visit, measure, and document. Pretty neat. Just what I'd been wanting to happen for a long time.

Robert T. Leverett



## Are we making progress yet?

by dbhguru » Fri Jul 13, 2012 2:24 pm

NTS, Yesterday was a shot in the arm for me. I'd begun to think that WNTS was going to silently die with nobody happening to take notice. I am given to such pessimism from time to time, but usually snap out of it. As for a little history, WNTS was born as an idea in the head of yours truly as RMNTS (Rocky Mountain Native Tree Society). Don Bertolette joined me in the concept. RMNTS was too restrictive

and RMNTS was expanded to WNTS. I think that idea was originally Don's. Ed Frank took the bull by the horns and created the Internet infrastructure. Don Bertolette agreed to be the President - a daunting assignment from far off Alaska. But Don came to Durango, as did Lee Frelich, and Rand Brown a couple of summers ago. From a practical standpoint WNTS became a physical entity at the gathering. Since then Michael Taylor has joined us from the West Coast as the VP.

It's tacitly assumed that I'll function as the mouth piece for these movements until people get sick of hearing from me and send me silent signals to get lost. I've been calling the role Executive Director. I suppose that is the closet title to how I typically function.

Until yesterday, I was beginning to think that those get lost signals were being sent. Nothing was happening. But then suddenly, it came together. Thanks to Laurie Swisher of the Forest Service, Great Old Broads for Wilderness, the Durango Herald, and Laser Technology Inc., we had ourselves a real event. It has given me a spark of life and reason to don my evangelical cloak and try, try again.

The story of yesterday's event in the Durango Herald will come out tomorrow. The reporter is a seasoned veteran. I think he'll do a good job. I established a good ole boy to good ole boy report with him right away, and he has perused our website and BBS. I think his story will raise awareness of not only some special trees, but of WNTS and the WNTS connection to Durango. I think others may come forward and offer us support.

As to the event, if I had to choose one individual to cite as worthy of special praise, it would be Laurie Swisher of the Forest Service. I had begun to give up on the Forest Service, but Don Bertolette encouraged me not to be hasty. He was right. It is a question of finding the right people, making the right connections. In this area, we are definitely making progress.

Robert T. Leverett



## [The Beginnings of The Western Native Tree Society](#)

by **Don** » Sat Aug 06, 2011 3:38 pm

Guest Editorial: The Beginnings of the Western Native Tree Society by Don Bertollette

\*\*\* This is a reprint of the Guest Editorial published in the July 2011 issue of eNTS The Magazine of the Native Tree Society

<http://www.ents-bbs.org/viewtopic.php?f=159&t=2818>

## [Anyone been to Zoar \(NY\) lately?](#)

by **lucager1483** » Fri Jul 13, 2012 11:40 pm

NTS, All the attention brought to the great state of Ohio, especially the northeast portion, and more particularly the Lake Erie watershed, a few months ago, brought to mind nearby Zoar Valley. Most, if not all, ents, I presume, are familiar with this special place even if they haven't seen it in person. A search on the BBS or Google or whatever should turn up descriptions aplenty.

I spent about two hours there this afternoon, mostly on the big flat along the main branch of Cattaraugus Creek with the greatest concentration of tall trees. I hadn't been to Zoar in at least two years, and it was very refreshing. My main objective was to measure some trees, of course. This was a bad idea, because the density of the stand made the job pretty much impossible. Very few trees (pretty much just those along the creek banks) had both base and top visible, and those had to be viewed from across the water.

The upshot of it is I only made two measurements of any repeatable quality, a sycamore at 144.5' and a tulip tree at 130.5'. The taller trees stand closer to the center of the flat, and I did get some straight-up shots with my Nikon 440. The highest returns topped out at 48 yards for tulips, with high 30s to low 40s for the

other species (sycamore, walnut, bitternut hickory, etc.). These numbers seem consistent with past reports. I would really like to know if any trees (likely sycamore or tulip) have broken the 160' barrier yet. I wasn't able to confirm any, but I don't think it's out of the question.

The main reason I'm posting this meager report is to find out if anyone has been to Zoar lately or has plans to visit in the near future. I'm just putting a feeler out, I guess. Bob Leverett mentioned a short while ago that he would like to see people "adopt" certain superlative forests or groves, and this one would be a gem for someone. I'd do it, but it's about 150 miles west of me, and it's hard to get out there on a regular basis. Zoar needs an ent friend, I think.

Elijah Whitcomb

P.S. If you'd like to visit Zoar, now is a great time. The water level of Cattaraugus Creek is very low and all of the public land should be easily accessible. It's a cool place, for sure.

## [Re: The Lost Coast](#)

by **mdvaden** » Sat Jul 14, 2012 1:28 am

Don ... When in Prairie Creek, or Redwood National next to it, did you happen to come across this trillium?



## [Re: Recruiting new citizen tree scientists](#)

by **pattyjenkins1** » Sat Jul 14, 2012 8:20 am

Good news! This is exactly what we hoped would happen. Yesterday I got an email from a friend who went to Eli's "Tree Measuring Workshop" for the Atlanta Tree Climbing Club. Alan is an experienced climber who lives in Nashville. He went on Ebay (for the first time) and bought himself a clinometer and nikon laser rangefinder. He says he should soon be "an ace tree measurer."

Anybody else who wants to do a SINE measuring workshop? Send me a date, time, and location, and I'll publicize it.

Patty Jenkins

## [Re: Recruiting new citizen tree scientists](#)

by **dbhguru** » Sat Jul 14, 2012 10:01 am

Patti, That is very good news. When I return from the West, Michael and I will begin that series of promised discussions on tree measuring. But just a small preliminary. The key for a person using the sine method to grasp right off is that four measurements are taken: the distance and angle to the crown and the distance and angle to the base. The sine of the top angle is multiplied by the distance to the top for height above eye level and the sine of the angle to the base is multiplied by the distance to the base to get height below eye level. The two components of height are added together to get the total. That is it. That's the sine method. If the base is above eye level, the the height to base is subtracted from height to crown to get full tree height.

Most of the other information we present about the sine method is to help the measurer quickly identify which of competing tops is the highest and to provide

information on where best to position oneself to minimize angle and distance errors resulting from instrument error. We talk a lot about the size of the error one can make from different combinations of factors. But that is all icing on the cake. With respect to measuirng height, still at the introductory level and beyond the above, we discuss how to measure trees using the tangent method, the method of similar triangles, and a combination of the sine and tangent methods. But the beginner need not concern himself/herself with all the extra stuff. In fact, best not to. It can make the subject appear to be way too much.

Admittedly, it starts to get interesting, or dicey, if the new measurer is challenged by someone of the old guard on methodology. That is when one may want to delve deeper. The stronger one's math background is, the quicker one comes to understand the strengths and weaknesses of each method. Tape and clinometer users may still make arguments for the adequacy and sufficiency of their method, but as Steve Colburn of LTI said a couple of days ago, it is all about understanding and using the right method, and method translates to mathematical model. So to be able to defend one's position, one eventually has to delve deeper into the math, and that is where NTS comes in.

I'm really excited about appealing to the recreational tree climbers as a group. The desire to find and document champions seems to be a natural companion interest. I think NTS has struck it rich in our developing association. Andrew, we're in your debt, buddy.

Robert T. Leverett

## White oak tree near Akeley, PA

by PAwildernessadvocate » Sat Jul 14, 2012

I was reminded of the old white oak tree in Hale Cemetery at the corner of Gouldtown Road and Akeley Road near Akeley, PA (Warren County) during Ed Frank's recent presentation at Allegheny Outfitters in Warren. Dave from Allegheny Outfitters brought up the tree, and it jogged my memory. The last time I had been out to that cemetery a year or more ago I had noticed the tree, but was actually researching stuff *under* the ground at the time instead of stuff *above* the ground. So to speak.

Went back out to see it again and take a few pictures this past week. I also measured the dbh at approximately 78.5", more than six and a half feet.

Hale Cemetery from the south.



Oak from the south side of the cemetery.



Oak from the north side of the cemetery.



The tree is too big for my d-tape (which only goes up to 76.5")!





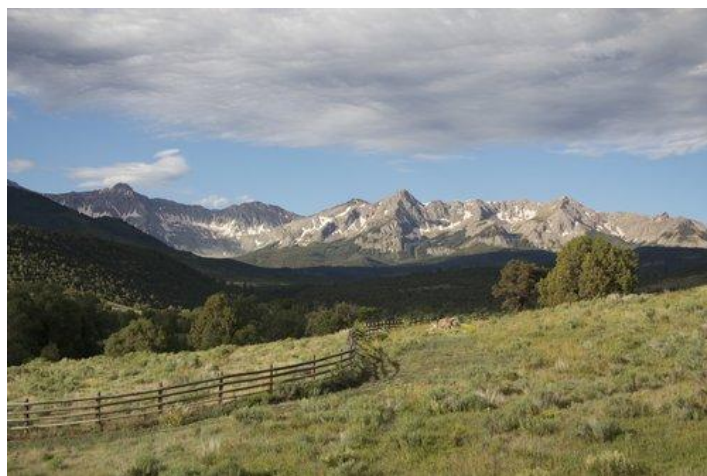
Kirk Johnson

## [Re: Cold Bank Pass and Engineer Mountain, CO](#)

by **Rand** » Sat Jul 14, 2012 4:50 pm

*dbhguru wrote: Robert, Mt Sneffels is one of the most picturesque of the fourteeners. Seen from the Dallas Divide, the Sneffels Range, as it is called, is very striking and resembles the Swiss Alps in the minds of some authors and photographers. I have lots of photos of Sneffels, but all in the summer. Autumn is the time to see the Sneffels Range.*

Hey. I think I have some pictures of that:



Here are two of what I'm pretty sure are Mt Sneffels:



Rand Brown

## [Re: Cold Bank Pass and Engineer Mountain, CO](#)

by dbhguru » Sat Jul 14, 2012 5:20 pm

Rand, Yep, that's the Dallas Divide. Great place. That's Sneffels in the first image.

Robert T. Leverett

## [Vallecito Reservoir east of Durango, CO](#)

by dbhguru » Sat Jul 14, 2012 6:13 pm

NTS, About 20 miles east of Durango, the Vallecito Reservoir offers numerous camping opportunities for the public and swaths of big ponderosa pines for me. The general area suffered an enormous forest fire in 2004, the Missionary Ridge Fire that burned over 70,000 acres, but luckily the large Ponderosas near the reservoir didn't go up in smoke. Their bases were burned, but their thick bark enabled them to survive.

The area does not grow the extremely tall pines, but I did measure two to a height of 135 feet and a third to 131. The largest I measured was 11.4 feet around. Many are between 100 and 125 feet. It is another dart on the board.



The image below is in a campground on shores of the Vallecito Reservoir east of Durango. On the trunk of this pondy you can see the scars of the 2004 Missionary Ridge fire. The survivors have pretty thick bark. I measured a couple of pondies to 135 feet in this area, and a third to 131 feet. I don't think I can break 140 in this area. Many pondies in and around the campground are between 170 and 300 years old. A few may approach 400. There are lots of young pines too. In some of these areas you can find lots of pondies between 110 and 125 feet, but after that they shut down. I think the acquisition of significant



height takes a lot longer for the ponderosa than for the eastern white pine. Just my two-bit observation at this point.



Robert Leverett

### [Silly question- Do poplar trees attract lightning?](#)

by [jamesrobertsmith](#) » Sun Jul 15, 2012 8:47 pm

If my mother-in-law sees even the smallest poplar sapling showing up on her acreage, she will chop it down. I asked her why she did this and her answer was:

**"Poplar trees attract lightning!"**

On the surface of it, that seems like a totally ridiculous statement. But I have heard lots of rural people make the same claim over the years. For what reason do many people think that Tulip trees attract lightning? In my experience, I don't see poplars struck any more often than any other type of tree.

Is it because they rupture more violently when struck? Is it because they tend to be among the tallest trees around and subsequently get struck more often?

Why the hell do so many country folk think that poplar trees attract lightning?

James Robert Smith

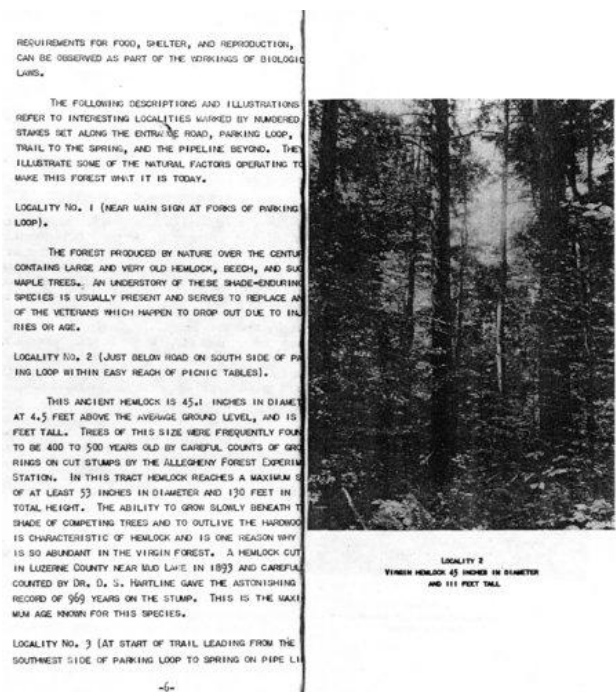
### [A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock \(\*Tsuga canadensis\*\)?](#)

by [PAwildernessadvocate](#) » Sun Jul 15, 2012

Several years ago I posted this information to the old eNTS email list, so I thought I would repost it in the BBS forum too for people to see.

I have a copy of a USDA Forest Service publication titled "The Tionesta Natural and Scenic Area, Allegheny National Forest" and dated March 1943. The document focuses on the 4,100-acre Tionesta old-growth forest straddling the county line in southern Warren and McKean Counties. However, when describing the age and size that Eastern hemlocks (*Tsuga canadensis*) can achieve on page six it also mentions the following about a **969-year-old** hemlock in Luzerne County:

The ability to grow slowly beneath the shade of competing trees and to outlive the hardwoods is characteristic of hemlock and is one reason why it is so abundant in the virgin forest. A hemlock cut in Luzerne County near Mud Lake in 1893 and carefully counted by Dr. D.S. Hartline gave the astonishing record of 969 years on the stump. This is the maximum age known for this species.





Has anyone ever seen any other documentation of *Tsuga canadensis* living more than 500 or 600 years or so? 969 years is amazing!

Kirk Johnson

## **Re: A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)**

by edfrank » Sun Jul 15, 2012 11:51 pm

Kirk, The document "Hough, A. F. and Forbes, R. D. 1943. The Ecology and Silvics of Forest in the High Plateaus of Pennsylvania, Ecological Monographs, Vol. 13, No. 3, July 1943" describes a 536 year old hemlock apparently located near the creek bottom of East Tionesta Creek. It does not mention any older hemlocks being located. I can email you a copy of the report if you are interested. (2.16 MB).

I have the 1977 report: "Bjorkbom, John C., and Larson, Rodney G. 1977. The Tionesta Scenic and Research Natural Areas, Forest Service General technical Report NE-031, Upper Darby, PA: U. S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northeastern Forest Experimental Station. 24 p." <http://www.treesearch.fs.fed.us/pubs/4015> It likewise does not mention the older tree from the report you mention.

Charlie Cogsbill mentions a number of older hemlock trees in this discussion from our website: [http://www.nativetreesociety.org/specie ... ck\\_age.htm](http://www.nativetreesociety.org/specie ... ck_age.htm)

The Hough reference is this article: "Hough, A. F. 1960. Silvical characteristics of eastern hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*). Res. Pap. NE-132. U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Northeastern Forest Experiment Station. 23 p. <http://www.treesearch.fs.fed.us/pubs/13718>

At maturity, hemlock may reach large size and great age. The record for age is 988 years; for d.b.h., 84

inches; and for total height, 160 feet ( 23 , 53 ).<sup>3,7</sup>  
These trees were in original old-growth stands.

The first reference cited by Hough 1960 is Frothingham, E. H. 1915. The eastern hemlock. U.S. Dept. Agr. Bul. 152. 43 pp., illus [http://www.archive.org/stream/bulletino ... t\\_djvu.txt](http://www.archive.org/stream/bulletino ... t_djvu.txt) but it does not give really old tree ages in the text. The second reference is Morey, H. F. 1936. Age-size relationship of Hearts Content, a virgin forest in northwestern Pennsylvania. Ecology 17: 251-257. I don't have a copy of that article.

Kirk's original post can be found here:

[http://www.nativetreesociety.org/fieldt ... in\\_pa.htm](http://www.nativetreesociety.org/fieldt ... in_pa.htm)

The Confirmed Ages for Eastern trees Thread can be found here:

<http://www.nativetreesociety.org/dendro ... speci.htm>

Neil Pederson's Eastern old-List is found here:

<http://www.ldeo.columbia.edu/~adk/oldlisteast/>

There also is this report from Schalls Gap:

[http://www.nativetreesociety.org/bullet ... v06\\_04.pdf](http://www.nativetreesociety.org/bullet ... v06_04.pdf)



*Schall's Gap Natural Area Hemlock—this eastern hemlock (Tsuga canadensis) was reportedly cored by graduate student from the Pennsylvania State University Forestry School in the winter of 2000-2001 and was determined to be 550 years old. Similarly, Dr. Ed Cook has cross-dated cores taken from a 535-year-old and 511-year-old hemlocks from the Tionesta Research Area in 1999. Photograph courtesy of Ernie Ostuno.*

Edward Frank

### [Re: A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock \(Tsuga canadensis\)](#)

by **PAwildernessadvocate** » Mon Jul 16, 2012

Here's a link to the 1915 Frothingham publication on Google Books:

<http://books.google.com/books?id=NheCnV...ck&f=false>

I don't see a way to convert this to a PDF though. You can read it online, but I'd like to download it and print it out to read. I don't really like reading documents that large online.

You can purchase a PDF of the 1936 Morey article here for \$14:

<http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/1...6309675853>


I don't feel like spending \$14 on it though, so I'm going to try a source where I think I can probably get a copy for free.

Kirk Johnson


### [Re: A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock \(Tsuga canadensis\)](#)

by **edfrank** » Mon Jul 16, 2012 8:43 am

Here is a version of Frothingham (1915) in Word - I saved the image file from each page and compiled them:

 [Frothingham 1915 The eastern hemlock Tsuga canadensis \(Linn.\) Carr.docx](#) (2.34 MB)

and as a pdf:

 [Frothingham 1915 The eastern hemlock Tsuga canadensis \(Linn.\) Carr.pdf](#) (2.55 MB)

Edward Frank

### [Re: A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock \(Tsuga canadensis\)](#)

by **dbhguru** » Mon Jul 16, 2012 10:18 am

Ed, et. al., In conversations with Charlie Cogbill, he rejects, or at least suspects, the validity of the 988 figure. He came to believe that it was an extrapolation. We'll never know for sure.

Robert T. Leverett

## **Re: A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)**

by Neil » Tue Jul 17, 2012 8:37 am

hi All,

969 years is just so hard to believe when hundreds, if not at least 1000, hemlock have been cored across much of its range by several talented dendrochronologists prior to HWA outbreak and no one yet has broken 600 years. While this is a rather incomplete list -

<http://www.ldeo.columbia.edu/~adk/oldlisteast/Spp/TSCA.html> - it indicates how rare a 900 year old hemlock would be. It also indicates that Tionesta is still home to the old-documented hemlock.

Short heads up: a large-scale effort to retrieve hemlock core samples before they are lost from the landscape will begin sometime in early fall. I will give NTS a heads up before the launch in case folks want to participate. Who knows, maybe out of this loss an 800 year old hemlock will be documented?

Neil Pederson

## **Re: A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)**

by edfrank » Tue Jul 17, 2012 8:36 pm

Neil, Will, Kirk,

In some ways the ages for these extremely old hemlocks is akin to looking at the older accounts of 250 foot tall white pine trees. Part of the effort is to try to track down the original source for the numbers and see if there is any additional information to be had about the tree, the location, or if it is an extrapolation what part was an actual count and how much was an extrapolation.

It is reasonable to guess it is an extrapolation, but I don't know that it is not simply an outlier on the old age spread. There could be one out there and by its

nature a unique or extremely rare example. The further up the age goes the fewer trees. At some point there is only going to be one oldest tree left, and the maximum age it reaches is not constrained by the shape of the curve or the ages at which the other trees died. It is unlikely, but not impossible, that the number is an actual ring count age.

Look at the list of ages from Thuja occidentalis:

Thuja occidentalis	1653	XD
Thuja occidentalis	1567	XD
Thuja occidentalis	1141	XD

All three are from the Niagara Escarpment on Flowerpot Island in Lake Huron, but there is a 426 year gap between the third oldest and second oldest specimen. So a gap between the 988 year old (or 969 year old) specimen and the 555 year old one by Cook from Tionesta is not unprecedented. I am doubtful of the age being from an actual ring count, but I can't exclude the possibility without further data, and I can't really accept it either without more data.

Edward Frank

## **Re: A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock (Tsuga canadensis)**

by Will Blozan » Tue Jul 17, 2012 9:07 pm

Ed,

Good argument. I would guess however, that there are far more samples of ancient hemlocks collected than those of white cedar. Neil's count of hemlock samples does not include the hundreds collected during the Old-growth Mapping Project I worked on 1993-1997. Our outlier was 510 years old; 400 being obtainable but not common. We did select for the oldest "looking" tree; a search image honed by referencing the outcomes of the hundreds of cores. Neil can attest to this ability.

I sampled some yellow birch "dated" to 1,200 years back in 1997. When I saw the trees they looked no different than the hundreds of others I had seen.



Turns out this guy extrapolated from a ring sample of not the trunk, but fallen *branches*. OMG, a wasted trip... I did ask him what the trees would look like if the branches grew as fast as the trunk... he didn't get it.

I also seriously doubt that hemlock wood would survive nearly a millenium without rotting. Also, an immense 84" diameter hemlock would not be an ancient specimen but one growing under ideal conditions.

Will Blozan

## [Re: A 969-year-old Eastern hemlock \(Tsuga canadensis\)](#)

by **Rand** » Thu Jul 19, 2012 1:19 pm

Wouldn't the age gaps be better expressed as percentages rather than years. ie the percentage gap between the oldest/youngest thuja is

$$(1653-1141)/1141 = 45\%$$

vs

$$(988-555)/555 = 78\%$$

for hemlock. Expressed this way the disparity is a lot more eyebrow raising, then comparing numeric age differences between two species, where one lives 2-3x longer than the other.

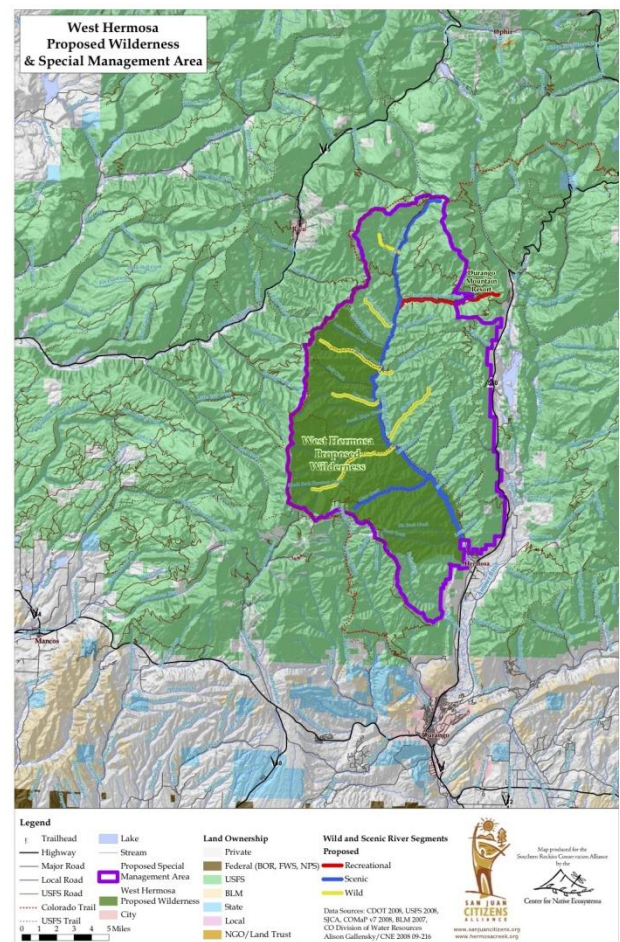
## [Re: Front Page of the Durango Herald - We Made It!](#)

by **PAwildernessadvocate** » Thu Jul 19, 2012 11:56 am

Thought this article from today's Summit County Citizens Voice may be of interest to this thread:

<http://summitcountyvoice.com/2012/07/19...ar-durango>

Colorado: New wilderness proposed near Durango



Kirk Johnson

## Thoreau Tree (MA) recording session

by **Andrew Joslin** » Sat Jul 14, 2012 2:33 pm

On July 14, 2012 composer and NTS member Michael Gatsonka joined me to hike to the Thoreau Tree with the goal of making arboreal recordings in the area of Dunbar Brook/northern Berkshires. With high humidity and temperatures predicted to be in the low 90's f. we had our work cut out for us. As many NTS know Michael has been recording wind sounds associated with various tree species. Our hope was to ascend the emergent Thoreau Tree and pick up some wind above the deciduous forest canopy. As it turned out what little wind there was died by the time we were in position to record. I think the trip was not wasted, Michael continues to improve his climbing skills and showed great determination in hot conditions to make a 100' ascent to reach the lower crown of the tree. Those who've visited the tree know it is no slouch, Thoreau has the magnitude of a PNW conifer. I'm surprised again each time I have the privilege to visit this very impressive white pine.

Instead of wind we enjoyed a chorus of bird calls emanating from the Dunbar Brook valley. Perhaps hundreds of vireos of several species calling at once, black-throated blue and black-throated green warbler were calling from near the tree, hermit thrush, wood thrush and scarlet tanager were also playing their parts. Beneath the avian chorus the soft rumbling purr of Dunbar Brook far below us provided a soothing rhythm section. Words can't do it justice, I'm looking forward to hearing what Michael captured.

A glimpse of Thoreau's 153'+ top, Michael spotted it first

