

The Tree Urchin

Newsletter of the Maine Chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation™

Volume 15, Issue 2

Autu

Gathering in Freeport

Members and guests of the Maine Chapter gathered on June 15 at the home of Joe and Carol Wishcamper to celebrate the restoration of the American chestnut tree in Maine. It was a perfect day to enjoy the Wishcampers' patio over-looking beautiful gardens, the Little River, and the ocean.

Out-of-state guests included TACF President and CEO Bryan Burhans, Development Director Mark Banker, and Regional Science Coordinator Kendra Gurney. In a drawing, Kent Wommack won a set of chestnut vases and Seth Sprague won an occasional table.

Special thanks to Bucky Owen and Ann Rea for coordinating the Restoration Gathering, and to the Wishcampers for making their home available.



Photo courtesy of Larry Totten.

Coming Events

Sept. 15	Regional meeting, Hollis, NH
Sept. 21-23	Common Ground Fair, Unity
Oct. 13	Maine Chapter annual meeting, Newport Cultural Center
Oct. 18-19	Fall TACF Board & Cabinet Meetings, Asheville, NC
Oct. 20-21	American Chestnut Summit, Asheville, NC

Seed Orchards Planted

Planting of seed orchards began in three Maine locations during May, 2012. These orchards were planted with B3F2 hybrid American chestnut seeds and will, in eight to ten years, produce B3F3 Restoration hybrids to be distributed to the general public.



"Ready for the Hunger Games?"

Photo courtesy of Bill Kuykendall and PCCA.

On April 25, TACF and Nature Conservancy volunteers planted seeds in two orchards in Phippsburg's Basin Preserve. Penobscot County Conservation Association and TACF members planted seeds in three orchards in Stetson May 5. Hartland's five orchards on Huff Hill were planted May 5 and May 19 by volunteers from Cianbro, TACF, and Cub Scout Troop 428 of Pittsfield. Thanks to everyone for a job well done!



Photo courtesy of Bill Kuykendall and PCCA.

By the Numbers

Each seed orchard occupies about $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre and contains 20 separate plots. Each plot has 150 seeds from the same parent trees, so an orchard will eventually contain 3,000 trees.

150	150	150	150	150
150	150	150	150	150
150	150	150	150	150
150	150	150	150	150

This diagram of a seed orchard shows 20 plots, each containing 150 trees.

When we have completed this stage of our program, the Maine chapter will have 18 orchards, for a total of 54,000 trees.

Our “American chestnut dating service” brought pollen descended from two “great-grandfather” trees, Graves and Clapper, and used it to pollinate 20 “mother” trees in various locations in Maine. The seeds we are now planting are the grandchildren of those pollinations. We call each of those 20 groups a “line.”

In 2012, 6,000 seeds were planted in 10 orchards: 2 at Phippsburg, 3 at Stetson, and 5 at Hartland. During the next 4 or 5 years, we will plant more seeds from our breeding orchards to complete those 20 plots.

The Maine Chapter is currently negotiating with landowners for land where we can plant 6 more orchards. These locations will be announced at our annual meeting in October. An additional 2 orchards will be planted at Stetson.

Those 54,000 trees will eventually be reduced to 360 trees. In each plot of 150 trees we will cut down 149 and leave only the best tree standing.

Meet Our Intern!



Summer intern Morgan Burke

University of Maine student Morgan Burke worked as an intern at Stetson and Huff Hill this summer. Most of Morgan’s time was spent weeding, watering, and fertilizing the seedlings that were planted this year. We appreciate her hard work. As a wildlife biology major, Morgan is especially interested in the American chestnut tree’s potential as food for wildlife in Maine.

Chapter Board of Directors

Glen Rea, President
 Nick Rockwell, Vice President,
 Operations
 Eric Evans, Vice President, Science
 Coordinator
 Charles Hudson, Secretary
 Joseph Conwill, Treasurer
 Aaron Grim
 Peter Kliem
 Jay Lindsey
 Alan Markert
 Harold Mosher
 Ray (Bucky) Owen
 Ann Rea
 Larry Totten
 Roger Willby

Regional Chapters Meeting

The New England regional chapters will meet together at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, September 15th at the Beaver Brook Association in Hollis, New Hampshire. All members of regional chapters are invited to attend.

The meeting will include a tour of the Beaver Brook Association's progeny test site. The site, planted this spring, contains approximately 375 B3F3 Restoration chestnuts from Meadowview, and is the first planting of its kind in New England. The site is across the street from the Maple Hill Farm and the yurt facilities where we will meet.

Other items on the agenda are discussion of the seed orchard progress in Maine and Massachusetts/Rhode Island and volunteer recruitment. There will also be an update from the 5th International Chestnut Symposium.

If you plan to attend, please RSVP Kendra Gurney at Kendra@acf.org or 802-999-8706 by Friday, September 7.

Hollis, New Hampshire is near Nashua. Directions can be found at: <http://www.beaverbrook.org/welcome/visit-us/directions-to-beaver-brook>



Photo courtesy of Kendra Gurney.

What Should We Do With Mutt Nuts?

And What IS a Mutt Nut?

Most of our breeding orchards are now producing seeds, but we are not yet ready to use all of these seeds in our breeding program. The trees producing these seeds have not yet been inoculated to determine that they are blight-resistant, and they have not been culled so that only the blight-resistant trees with fully American characteristics will cross-pollinate each other. An average of one out of eight trees in our breeding orchards is blight-resistant, and many of those do not have the genetic characteristics we need. In other words, their seeds are mutts. Like poorly bred dogs, they may have undesirable traits.

These seeds should not be planted or given away to friends. Every owner of land where a breeding orchard has been planted has entered into a germplasm agreement which states that the offspring of these trees belongs to TACF and can be distributed only by the Chapter as an organization; no individual has a right to these seeds for planting purposes.

What can you do with these nuts? Here are some suggestions:

- Compost the nuts for your garden.
- Leave them in the orchard for wildlife to enjoy.
- Feed them to your chickens.
- Eat them! Chestnuts make delicious stuffing, soups, breads, and side dishes. Roasted chestnuts are an easy snack for a chilly autumn evening. Each issue of the national TACF magazine offers a chestnut recipe, and the national website also has a cookbook for sale at: <http://shop.acf.org/theamericanchestnutfoundationmerchandise.aspx>. Or, try one of the recipes on the following page.

How to Roast Chestnuts

Remove the nuts from the prickly burr. To do this, you may need heavy gloves. Only the fully developed nuts are desirable.

These are the half-round nuts, flat on one side.

Score an X into the flat side of each nut with the tip of a sharp knife, deep enough to cut through the brown skin. **This is an important step -- it keeps the nuts from exploding in your oven.**

Put the nuts in a single layer in a shallow pan, scored side up. Bake them in an oven preheated to 375° to 425° F until the skin pops open, about 7 to 12 minutes.

When they're ready you'll notice a distinct smell that can only be described as, well, roasted chestnuts. Peel and eat the chestnuts while they're still warm. Good with apple cider!

Alternative cooking methods are:

- Microwave the scored chestnuts by putting them on a paper towel in a single layer and cooking on HIGH for about 3 minutes.
- Put the scored chestnuts in boiling water and cook over medium-high heat for about 20 minutes. This is the best method if you plan to use the nuts in stuffing or another recipe.
- Put the scored chestnuts in a shallow fireproof pan and cook them on a barbecue grill or over an open fire until the skin starts to curl back from the X.



More Chestnut Recipes

Amish Chestnut Stuffing

(from *Classic Chestnut Cuisine* by the Citizen Forester Institute)

Shell ½ pound of chestnuts and boil in water to cover for 20 minutes, drain. Chop fine. Mix with ¼ cup melted butter, 2 cups soft bread crumbs, 1 teaspoon salt, 2 teaspoons poultry seasoning, 1 well beaten egg, and ½ cup chopped celery. Toss well. Makes enough to stuff a 7 to 8 pound bird.



Fanny Farmer's Chestnut Stuffing

(from *The Boston Cooking School Cook Book*)

3 cups boiled chestnuts
½ cup butter
¼ cup cream
Salt and pepper
1 cup cracker crumbs

Force chestnuts through a ricer (or chop in a food processor until they look like grains of rice). Add half the butter and cream. Season to taste. Melt remaining butter, mix with crumbs. Combine mixtures. Makes 4 cups.

Membership Form

Maine Chapter of The American Chestnut Foundation

WHERE DOES YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT GO?

Your membership in TACF supports all the Foundation's breeding, research, education, and publicity projects. For TACF membership support levels of \$40 or more \$15 is forwarded to the Maine Chapter. Please consider making an additional contribution to the Maine Chapter to support our mission to produce blight-resistant American chestnut trees most adaptable to Maine's forests, by selecting a Maine Chapter Sponsorship Level in the right-hand column below. Thank you.

Send these forms and check(s) to: ME-TACF, 231 Buck Street, Bangor, ME 04401

JOIN The American Chestnut Foundation

TACF Membership Support Levels

Enclosed is my membership support of:

_____ Gold Leaf, \$1,000
 _____ Silver Leaf, \$500
 _____ Bronze Leaf, \$100
 _____ Regular, \$40
 _____ Other, \$ _____

Make membership check to:
TACF

Membership in TACF includes a subscription to The Journal of The American Chestnut Foundation, and enrollment in the Maine chapter.

TACF and ME-TACF are 501c(3) non-profit organizations. Except for the member services portion (valued at \$15) of your membership dues, your gifts are tax deductible to the full extent

Maine Chapter Sponsorship Levels

Enclosed is my contribution to the Maine Chapter of TACF:

_____ Seed Orchard, \$5,000
 _____ Breeding Orchard, \$2,000
 _____ Woodlot, \$1,000
 _____ Mother Tree, \$500
 _____ Sapling, \$250
 _____ Seedling, \$100
 _____ Seed (other), _____

Make Maine sponsorship check to:
Maine Chapter – TACF

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Maine Chapter, The American Chestnut Foundation

Volunteer Form

We need your help! As our program grows and our activities expand, we very much need the assistance of our members and friends. Whether or not you have a particular talent or skill, we would like to hear from you. We will provide training!

Name _____

Address _____
Street City State Zip Code

Telephone number _____
Home Work or Cell

E-mail address _____

I am available (check all that apply):

Weekdays

Weekday evenings

Weekends

On short notice (For some tasks, such as pollination and harvesting, we are at the mercy of Mother Nature and therefore cannot plan very far ahead.)

I would like to help at the following orchard(s):

Basin Preserve seed orchard, Phippsburg

Highmoor breeding orchard, Monmouth

Huff Hill seed orchard, Hartland

Merryspring breeding orchard, Camden

Mosher breeding orchard, Hope

Rowe breeding orchard, Hope

Dutton breeding orchard, Morrill

Granger breeding orchard, South China

Reed breeding orchard, Unity

PCCA seed orchard, Stetson

Bradley breeding orchard

Veazie breeding orchard

I would like to help by:

Working at events such as fairs and Garden shows

Giving formal presentations

Writing for the *Tree Urchin*

Fundraising

Maintaining the Chapter website

Providing secure storage for equipment/supplies near an orchard

I would especially like to do:

planting seeds/seedlings (spring)

testing for blight in orchards (summer)

collecting seeds (October)

Please return this form to Glen Rea, 231 Buck Street, Bangor, ME 04401

NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING

The Maine Chapter of The American Chestnut Foundation
Will have its Annual Meeting

At the Newport Cultural Center*
154 Main Street
Newport, Maine

9 a.m. October 13, 2012.

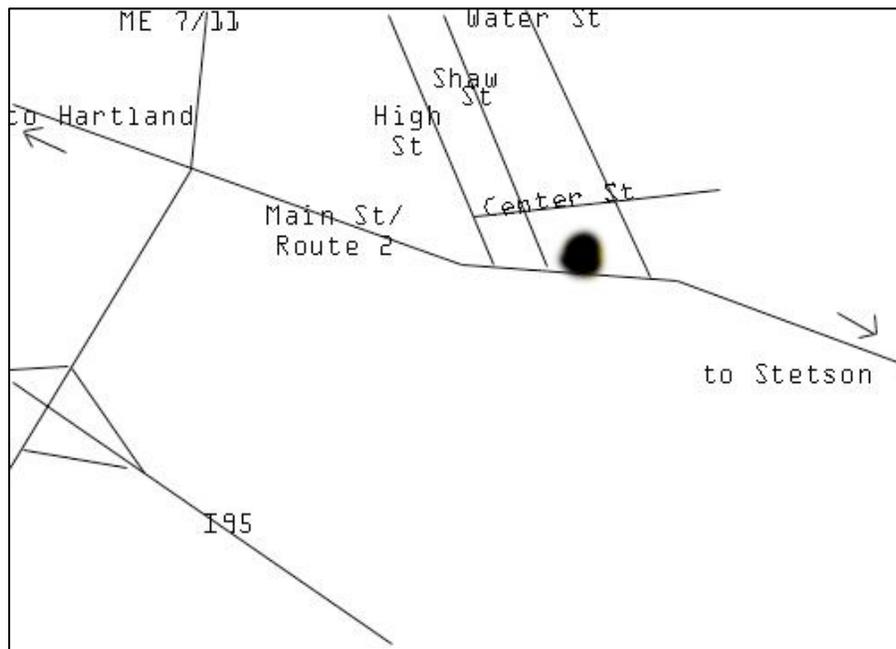
Agenda

Call to order
Minutes of the Last Meeting
Treasurer's Report
President's Report
Vice President/Breeding Coordinator's Report
Election of Officers and Board of Directors
Other Business
Adjournment

After the Business Meeting, there will be a tour of the Huff Hill orchard in Hartland, where the Austin Jones, Joe Floyd, and Thurber Family memorial orchards will be dedicated, and a tour of the PCCA orchard in Stetson.

Directions are on Page 6.

*The Newport Cultural Center combines Newport's Public Library and Historical Society and Museum. It provides community meeting space and sponsors a variety of activities, including a ukulele club, clogging lessons, and a 5K race, as well as local history displays, story hours, art classes, and concerts.



From I-95, take Exit 157, and turn towards downtown (a left turn if coming from the south, a right turn if coming from the north). Pass the fast food restaurants, and bear right at the intersection. Proceed towards downtown, passing West Street, High Street, and Shaw Street on the left. The Cultural Center is on the left just before the bridge downtown, less than a mile from I-95.

There is a parking lot behind the Center. On nights and weekends, the district court parking lot and Public Works lots are also available. Use the entrance at the back of the building; the meeting room is on the second floor.

For lunch, there are a number of chain restaurants in the Newport area. If you'd like to try something different, there are:

- Angler's Restaurant, 542 Elm Street
- Cervezas Southwest Grill, 221 Elm Street
- Chinaway Restaurant, Main Street

Directions from Newport to Huff Hill:

Start out going west on Main St/US-2. Continue to follow Main St/US-2 (7.3 miles). Turn right onto Route ME-152. Continue to follow ME-152 (4.2 miles). At the blinking red light, turn left onto Main St/ME-23/ME-43/ME-151 toward Canaan. Continue to follow ME-23 (1.2 miles). Turn right onto Huff Hill Rd. Drive to the top of the hill, where you will see the orchard (2.1 miles).

Directions from Huff Hill to PCCA: Return to Newport. Stay on Route 2 to Route 143 in Etna, 5.8 miles from the Newport Cultural Center. Bunker Road is on your left. It is a rough logging road. You may want to park on Route 2 and ride in with someone who has a 4-wheel vehicle or truck. The orchards are located just beyond the Central Maine Railroad tracks, on the left.

Time-line for production of blight-resistant, American-type Restoration Chestnuts ®

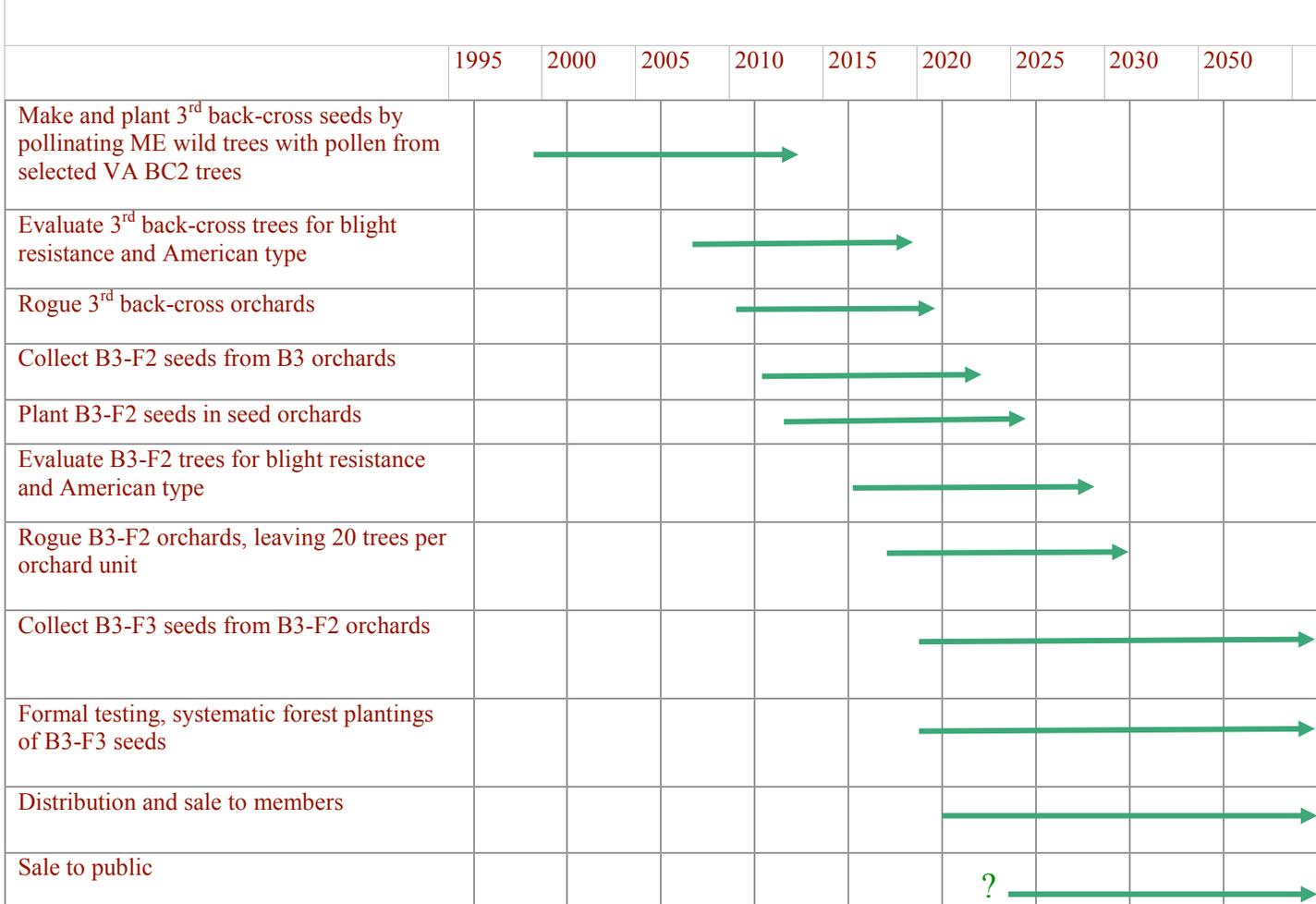


Image courtesy of Eric Evans, Vice President and Breeding Coordinator

President's Report

A lot of exciting things have happened since our spring URCHIN was published. The Restoration Gathering at the Wishcampers' home was a great event. We wish to thank them for their hospitality, and to thank Bucky Owen and Ann Rea for organizing the event... Of course, the planting of our first B3F2 orchards signals that we are getting close to our goal of producing B3F3 highly-resistant Maine chestnuts. We now have orchards planted at Phippsburg, Huff Hill, and Stetson with others to follow over the next few years.

It is an exciting time to be involved with chestnuts, and I want to thank all of you for your hard work and dedication.

On the national level, my three-year term as Chairman of the Board will end in October. I have asked that I not be nominated for another term so I can devote more time to the Maine chapter and orchards. It has been a pleasure to be the Chairman, and a lot of wonderful things have happened to TACF during this time. Again, thank you very much. I hope to see you at the annual meeting in Newport October 13.

Glen Rea
 Chairman, Board of Directors
 President, Maine Chapter, TACF



TACF™ Maine Chapter
231 Buck Street
Bangor, ME 04401

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