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TREE URCHIN

Maine Chapter, The American Chestnut Foundation
<http://www.me-acf.org> MaineTACF@gmail.com

President's Message

By Al Faust

Greetings,
As I write this we are all digging out from winter's latest gift! Let's hope our white tail herds are finding plenty to eat in their yards and not venturing into our seed orchards.

This autumn, the work of the American Chestnut Foundation was featured in an article in *Maine Today*, the magazine for University of Maine alumni. You can see the article *The Comeback* by Elyse Kahl at <https://umainetoday.umaine.edu/archives/fall-2014/the-comeback/> The site includes a link to a video by Adam Kuykendall that has been shown on Maine Public Broadcasting Network. We would like to thank Elyse and Adam for all their capable, diligent work. Special thanks to the featured University students who have become invested in our goals.

Maine Chestnut volunteers are busy with planning for this year's activities. Work is progressing on the aerial search for survivor chestnuts, locating test areas for the first plantings of potentially resistant trees, and gene banking by grafting newly identified survivor tree branches to control orchards.

While breeding and seed orchards are our most visible activities, many other projects are moving along. If you are interested in progress reports or helping with Chestnut activities, please complete the membership application in this newsletter.



Fair visitors pass an American chestnut tree at the Common Ground Fair grounds in Unity.

Coming Events

March 6-8 TACF exhibit at Eastern Maine Sportsmen's Show at the University of Maine Fieldhouse in Orono. We will be selling American chestnut seedlings.

April 8 Maine TACF board meeting, 5 pm at Viles Arboretum in Augusta. Open to the public.

April 11-12 TACF exhibit at the Bangor Garden Show.

May 17-24 Arbor Week.

May 23 Planting of Restoration 1.0 trees at Brave Boat Harbor Farm in York.

September 25-27 TACF exhibit at Common Ground Fair, Unity.

Breeding Program

by Eric Evans, Maine Breeding
Coordinator

The current focus of our breeding program is to harvest seeds (B3-F2) from the most blight-resistant trees in our third-backcross (B3) orchards, and plant them in our seed orchards, which constitute the 5th generation of our 6-generation breeding program. After evaluation and selection for blight resistance and American type, the seed orchards will produce seeds (B3F3 – the 6th generation) for chestnut test and restoration plantings in Maine's forests, starting in about 2020.

In spring 2014 we planted 8,850 B3-F2 chestnut seeds from our Merryspring (Camden) and Highmoor (University of Maine Experiment Station, Monmouth) orchards into our seed orchards in Phippsburg, Searsport, and Stetson, bringing our total seed orchard plantings to 22,350. Last October we harvested over 9,600 seeds from our Highmoor and Merryspring orchards. This spring we will draw from these to establish 33 new plots of 150 seeds each in our Stetson, Phippsburg, and Searsport seed orchards. This will bring our total seed orchard plantings to over 27,000 – the midpoint of our goal of 54,000 hybrid chestnut trees in our seed orchards by 2020.

Last June we injected live, lab-grown blight fungus into the bark of more than 200 trees (we call this "inoculation") in our orchards in Veazie, Bradley, and Unity to begin the process of evaluating their blight-resistance. This year we will continue evaluation of blight resistance and American type, and expect to harvest more B3F2 seeds from our Monmouth, Camden, and Hope orchards. This year we plan to inoculate trees in our orchards in Morrill and Lovell.

We will need many volunteers to help plant those 9,600 seeds at Phippsburg, Searsport, and Stetson this April and May. Please contact us at MaineTACF@gmail.com or one of our board members if you are able to help. We will also need help with this June's inoculations in Morrill and Lovell. Donating a day of your time will reward you with new friendships, new skills, and the knowledge that you have helped restore this valuable species.

Has your membership in TACF expired? Remember to renew your membership each year.

At the Eastern Maine Sportsmen's Show and the Bangor Garden Show, we will give three chestnut seedlings to each person who joins TACF. This offer is good only while supplies last.

Tree Location Call for Help

By Roger Willby

The Gene Preservation Committee of our Chapter will attempt this year to put together the most complete list of American Chestnuts in Maine. We need your help in locating those trees. Although we know of roughly 300 trees in Maine, we believe there are at least that many more trees that we have no record of. If you know about a tree that you think is not in our records, then call Roger Willby at 678-491-4515 or e-mail me at rwiredraw@aol.com. We'll check it out.

More Chestnut News

You can learn more about TACF and American chestnuts in several ways.

1. "Like" TACF on Facebook to get updates from the national office.
2. If you are not already a TACF member, fill out and send in our membership form to receive the national TACF journal.
3. Browse the national website at <http://www.acf.org>
4. Subscribe to the eSprout newsletter to get updates by e-mail. Contact ruth@acf.org to sign up.



UMO Students plant chestnut seeds.

Look For Us!

This, year, the Maine Chapter will have displays at the Eastern Maine Sportsmen's Show, the Bangor Garden Show, the New England Society of American Foresters, the Common Ground Fair, and the Fryeburg Fair. We would like more of the general public to know the story of the American chestnut tree and our organization's efforts to restore it.

A group of forestry students from the University of Maine G.I.S. and Mapping Club are growing about 500 native American chestnut seedlings for sale at the Sportsmen's Show and the Garden Show. The seeds were collected last fall by the students who were on a tree discovery campaign to southern Maine, led by Roger Willby. The seed was sown in the Roger Clapp Greenhouses at the University of Maine on January 23rd they will be around 12 inches tall by March 6th. Proceeds from the sale will go towards funding student internships and activities with the breeding and restoration effort in Maine.

Meet Your Directors

Andy Reed



*Andy Reed with Gayle,
his wife of 42 years.*

ANDY IN HIS OWN WORDS:

I was born in Maine and have lived here my whole life. After graduating from college with a degree in business, I spent 2 1/2 years in the Army with a one year tour in Viet Nam. When I returned home I began my 38 year career as a banker in central Maine.

When I retired, I looked forward to spending as much time as possible in the outdoors. I have always been interested in forestry, having owned woodlots since I was in college.

In 2003, Maine State Forester Morten Moesswilde presented the idea of planting some American Chestnut trees on our Certified Tree Farm, located in Unity, Maine. He connected me with the Maine Chapter of the American Chestnut Foundation. This led to the planting of our breeding orchard in the spring of 2004.

My other interests include Supervisor with the Waldo County Soil and Water Conservation District, a board member of Skills, Inc., chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Knox Ridge Baptist Church, Unity representative on the Friends of Lake Winnecook board, and serving on several other committees dedicated to bettering the town of Unity.

Mark McCollough

Elected to our Board of Directors in November, Dr. Mark McCollough works for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. He is a graduate of Pennsylvania State University, where his advisor was Kim Steiner, now the national TACF Chairman.

Mark came to the University of Maine in 1979 to pursue a master's degree in wildlife ecology and went on to get a PhD in wildlife management. He was a key member of Maine's eagle restoration project under the guidance of Maine TACF board member Bucky Owen. One of his current projects is preservation and restoration of Canada lynx in Maine.

Mark's interest in wildlife restoration is an easy fit with restoration of the American chestnut tree. He is also a gifted artist who specializes in paintings of Maine wildlife.



Charlie Chestnut Needs You!

This spring and summer, we will need many volunteers to help with tree planting and orchard care. Please fill out and send in the volunteer form on page 7, or call 207.945.6945.

The Bookshelf

By Ann Rea

One of the ways we've kept sane during this endless winter has been reading about the environment. Here are some of the books we've enjoyed and recommend to others.

Hennessey, Tom. *Leave Some for Seed*. Yarmouth: Islandport Press, 2014.

Essays and artwork about Maine's hunting and fishing traditions, by a former columnist for the *Bangor Daily News*.

Off the Beaten Path: Stories of Place. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1998.

An anthology of short stories by some of America's best writers, featuring preserves supported by The Nature Conservancy. The introduction by Barbara Kingsolver is itself worth reading, as are the stories by Rick Bass, Richard Bausch, Howard Norman, Annie Proulx, and Lee Smith. (One of Maine's seed orchards is on land belonging to The Nature Conservancy in Phippsburg.)

Primack, Richard B. *Walden Warming: Climate Change Comes to Thoreau's Woods*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014.

In the 1850's a gifted amateur naturalist roamed the fields and forests of Concord, Massachusetts to study the natural world. From 2003 through 2013, a team of scientists revisited Concord and the extensive field notes of Henry David Thoreau to measure the effects of global climate change in a specific location.



Chestnut seedlings wait for spring.

Simberloff, Daniel. *Invasive Species: What Everyone Needs to Know*. NY: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Although its effects have been spectacular, chestnut blight is just one of many introduced species that have caused environmental havoc. In addition to describing these invasive species, Simberloff addresses many questions about their impact, control, and prevention.

Wessels, Tom. *Reading the Forested Landscape: A Natural History of New England*. Woodstock: The Countryman Press, 1998.

An original portrait of New England's forests, tracing them through a study of the patterns we see today. Landscape is much more than scenery to be observed or even terrain to be traveled, as this fascinating and many-layered book vividly shows us. Etched into the land is the history of how we have inhabited it, the storms and fires that have shaped it and its response to these and other changes. Illustrations by Brian D. Cohen add substantially to this very readable book.

Membership Form Maine Chapter of The American Chestnut Foundation

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 Restoration chestnut trees most adaptable to Maine's forests by selecting a Maine Chapter Sponsorship Level in the right-hand column below. Thank you.

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 501©3 non-profit organizations. Except for the member services (valued at \$15) of your membership dues), your gifts are tax deductible.

Please send this form and your check(s) to:

Joseph Conwill, Treasurer, PO Box 829, Rangeley, ME 04970.

For additional information, you may contact TACF at Mainetacf@gmail.com or 207.945.6945.

Your Name _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/State/ZIP _____

Telephone _____

E-Mail _____

JOIN The American Chestnut Foundation TACF Membership Support Levels

*Enclosed is my membership
support of:*

- _____ Silver Leaf, \$1,000
 _____ Bronze Leaf, \$500
 _____ Chestnut Leaf, \$300
 _____ Regular, \$40
 _____ Student, \$15
 _____ Other, \$ _____

Make membership check to:
TACF

Maine Chapter Sponsorship Levels

*Enclosed is my contribution to the
Maine Chapter of TACF:*

- _____ Chestnut Sapling, \$5,000+
 _____ Chestnut Burr, \$1,000-4,999
 _____ Chestnut Blossom, \$100-999
 _____ Chestnut Leaf, \$1-100
 _____ Other \$ _____

Make Maine sponsorship check to:
Maine Chapter -- TACF

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. Whether or not you have a particular talent or skill, we would like to hear from you. We will provide training!

Name _____

Address _____
 Street or PO Box 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

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

- Basin Preserve seed orchard,
 Phippsburg
 Korth breeding orchard, Lovell
 Highmoor breeding orchard, Monmouth
 Huff Hill seed orchard, Hartland
 Mosher breeding orchard, Hope
 Rowe breeding orchard, Hope
 Dutton breeding orchard, Morrill
 Reed breeding orchard, Unity
 PCCA seed orchard, Stetson
 Bradley breeding orchard
 Veazie breeding orchard
 Searsport seed orchard
 Winthrop seed orchard
 where I'm needed!

I would like to help by:

- working at events such as fairs and
 garden shows
 giving presentations to groups
 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 (autumn)

Please return this form to:
 Glen Rea, 231 Buck St.
 Bangor, ME 04401

Please send a membership application



Dr. Brian Roth with 4-week old American chestnut seedlings at The Roger Clapp Greenhouse. Brian recently spoke at a MOFGA meeting in East Sangerville about restoring the American chestnut. Contact us if you would like a presentation at a meeting of your organization.

Maine Chapter, TACF
231 Buck Street
Bangor, ME 04401

Return service requested

