



TREE URCHIN

Maine Chapter, The American Chestnut
Foundation
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President's Message

By Al Faust

Chestnut fans,

Last year was an exciting one! Our chapter hosted the national annual meeting in South Portland and we have moved into the next phase of developing a potentially blight resistant chestnut in Maine.

This summer we inoculated more trees at our seed orchards to determine their blight resistance. The inoculation process requires many helpers: thanks to all who participated, and thanks to Regional Science Coordinator Kendra Collins for organizing and leading this project.

In November we removed trees from several blocks in the seed orchards that had been challenged with the blight two years ago. This is the beginning of the selection process that will finish with only three or four trees of the original planting of one hundred and fifty seeds in each block. We still have several years of planting to fill-out the orchards to their original design.

The help of our many volunteers has been essential to our progress thus far and your continued support will get us through to producing B3F3 seeds in Maine.

New Threat to American Chestnuts

In 2017, Maine experienced a serious invasion of ambrosia beetles. They were first found in southern Maine but are expected to migrate north. In one seed orchard they killed half the trees, and the damage can be done even before their presence is known.

There are several varieties of ambrosia beetles. Some are native to the U.S., but the most aggressive varieties may be imported from Asia.

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"Frass" on a tree trunk is evidence of ambrosia beetle damage. Photo by Barry Burgason.

Meet Your Board of Directors



Ron Lemin, newest member of the Maine Chapter Board of Directors

Ron Lemin became a member of the Maine Chapter board of directors on March 14, 2018. He is currently a sales consultant for Crop Production Services, responsible for sales and consulting on herbicides and technical services for vegetation management in forestry, aquatic, invasive, and right-of-way markets.

Ron has a B.S. in Forest Science from Pennsylvania State University and an M.S. in Forest Biometrics from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Before working for CPS, Ron worked for the Cooperative Forestry Research Unit in Orono. He is affiliated with the Society of American Foresters, the Northeast Aquatic Plant Management Society, the Maine Governor's Council on Integrated Pest Management, and Maine's Terrestrial Invasive Plant Scientific Advisory Council (TIPSAC).

In Memoriam

The Maine chapter has lost two long-time board members and supporters.

Henry Leigh was on the Board of Directors and served as Treasurer of the Maine Chapter from 2001 to 2006. He was a fine woodworker and enjoyed planting and scouting.

Joseph Conwill was active in TACF since 2000, and served as Treasurer for the Maine Chapter from 2009 until 2017. Joseph maintained an apple orchard in Rangeley, and served on various town boards and committees in his community. Joseph has also written and illustrated a series of books about covered bridges in New England.

Want to volunteer? Go to Mail Chimp at <http://eepurl.com/bfD-s1> to sign up.

Mail Chimp is a free, easy way for us to notify volunteers when help is needed for planting seed orchards, inoculating trees, staffing exhibits, or other projects that require many helping hands.

Signing up for Mail Chimp does not make you a TACF member, but it will give you a reminder by e-mail when we have an event scheduled.

They can seriously damage apple orchards as well. We urge you to inspect for any sign of ambrosia beetles on your property.

The first sign of ambrosia beetles for our orchard managers was the sudden death of young trees. Then we noticed frass, the beetle droppings, found at the base of damaged trees or extruding from the trunk, looking like wooden match-sticks turned to sawdust.

Dr. Martin Cipollini, Dana Professor of Biology at Berry College in Georgia, gave a presentation about ambrosia beetles at the national meeting in South Portland. He said trees are most vulnerable when they are ¼ to 3 inches DBH, and that initial attacks can be expected when nighttime low temperatures average nearly 50° F and daytime highs average about 70°. That's approximately late April to late June in Maine.

Dr. Cipollini recommends spraying all stems in this size range the week prior to expected attacks, and bi-weekly until full leaf-out. He uses bifenthrin (8% active ingredient), using 1 ounce per gallon of water, and a bark penetrant such as Pentrabark. It is best to have this done by a licensed applicator. Dead sprouts should be removed after leaf-out and attacked trees should be removed by cutting at the base within 50 days after the first attacks. Burn or chip culled trees to help prevent further infestation.

A report on Dr. Cipollini's research has been published in *The American Chestnut Journal*. See Coughlin, E., M. Cipollini, and S. Watkins. 2013. Chestnut's newest enemy: Ambrosia beetles. *The Journal of The American Chestnut Foundation* 27(3):28-31.

If you suspect ambrosia beetle damage to your American chestnut trees, please contact our breeding coordinator, Eric Evans, at ericevans45@gmail.com Eric is keeping track of the presence of ambrosia beetles in Maine.

Board member Ron Lemin and his assistant Hunter Manley have sprayed our most vulnerable orchards and are monitoring future developments.

On a related note, emerald ash borers have been detected in Madawaska, and can be expected to spread from there. It is not known whether they are a threat to chestnut trees, but our orchards will be monitored for this pest.

Special Thanks to Beth and Rick Warren

Beth Warren, one of our ardent supporters of Maine's American Chestnut restoration program, passed away in mid-September.

Beth and her husband, Rick, hosted and fully covered the costs of our first Restoration Gathering. It was a fantastic success and gave us the encouragement to initiate and successfully complete a \$150,000 campaign to establish seven seed orchards in Maine. Beth was the perfect hostess: vivacious, fun-loving, generous, and well-organized.

Whenever I met Beth over the past few years, she always asked how we were doing and offered the kind of enthusiasm that was contagious. Thanks to Beth, and folks like her, we will be successful in restoring this iconic species!

Bucky Owen



Members of the Rotary Clubs in the Bangor, Brewer, and Orono areas helped plant trees at our Stetson seed orchards this spring.

During 2017-2018, Rotary Clubs were challenged to plant a tree. This group went above and beyond! TACF is grateful for their help.

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Return service requested

