UPCOMING EVENTS

South West Chapter Annual Meeting 2020
Saturday February 29th 1-4pm, Upstairs meeting room of the Brooke-Alvinston-Inwood Community Centre Complex.
Speakers: Larry Cornelis on the “History of Local Forests” and David Nisbet from the Invasive Species Centre, Sault Ste Marie. “Invasive Species Risks to Southern Ontario Forests”.
If anyone is planning to donate door prize please advise Tom Park (519) 844-2848, who is coordinating the donations this year.

Elgin Middlesex Chapter Annual Meeting
March 28th, 2020 more details later.

OWA Annual Meeting
April 21and 22nd, 2020
Tours and evening social on day one and full day meeting on day two. More details later.
They are always looking for donations for the silent auction. Half the money goes to the OWA and the other half is returned to the chapter. Dave Braet is planning to go to the meeting so anyone who wants to donate something to the silent auction should contact Dave (519) 882-1829 or email him at swwaowa@gmail.com

Spring Woodlot Tour
May 2nd, 2020, 10:00am until Noon
Jim and Judy Dick Woodlot, 23264 Mull Road Chatham/Kent. (South West of Kent Bridge.)
The 72 acre property has about 15 acres of workable land 50 acres of forest and the rest is meadow. The forest is comprised of sections of original forest, planted coniferous species currently converting to native deciduous species and natural reforestation. 39 species of trees have been identified in the forested areas including butternut, flowering dogwood, pawpaw, sassafras and red elm. Native burning bush is also growing on the property.

2020 Fall Woodlot Tour
October 17th, 10:00am until Noon
Mushroom/ Forest Fungus hike with Dr. Greg Thorn, Associate Professor Department of Biology UWO. The theme of the tour will be the ecological roles of fungi, from tree disease and decay to mycorrhizal symbiosis.
The Tour will be in Donald and Lorraine Craig’s woodlot which is directly across the road from 2354 Knapdale Drive in South West Middlesex.
Attendance will be limited to a maximum of 20 people. Pre-registration will run from mid-August until early September (more on that later)

AREA NEWS
Our last major event in 2019 was at the Tom and Marshall Park woodlot in November at 1835 McCready Rd. Tom explained past and current management practices on the property

150 ac. woodland that is enrolled in the MFTIP program. 67 acres was planted to conifers 1939-42. The rest is native deciduous species. It has been harvested 9 times using sustainable Forestry practices since 1961. It contains 29 deciduous species and 7 planted coniferous species. Tom spends much of his time keeping
trails cleared of dead limbs and trees. He is also removing a lot of (not all) grapevines growing in potential crop trees. His other major management activity is removing dense spice bush patches to try to encourage regeneration of other species. Spice bush is becoming a dominant species in many understories because it produces berries every year which are spread by birds that love the pulp on the outside but discard the seed. It also appears the mice, deer and rabbits eat all the desirable competition but not spice bush.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE WOODLOT

Many of our members receive monthly e-letters from the Ontario Woodlot Association (OWA). Did anyone notice the "new" membership opportunities they have created to further encourage membership in the OWA. A family membership has been created to allow a member for a fee of $10.00 to designate an additional family member as a member of the OWA. A student membership category ($20.00) has also been created. The student membership category allows any full time student to belong to the OWA. Both of these memberships give the members full voting rights in the OWA. These members have access to the OWA website and will receive an electronic version of all quarterly newsletters and the e-letters. If you have family members or know of students who are interested in your family forest stewardship this a great way to further engage them. People who register with OWA in these categories also have voting privileges in their assigned chapters. To obtain further information or a membership call Joanne at the OWA office (613) 713-1525.

Forest Management

Since we first heard about Emerald Ash Borer in 2002 it has been a dismal forecast with predictions of loss of all species of native ash in Ontario. Pumpkin ash, a rare species to begin with in Ontario, and confined to small portions of the South West, is probably gone. Blue ash however is showing some resistance to the EAB. Some fairly large blues ash continues to survive 4-5 years after all the white, red/green and black ash have died. Unfortunately, blue ash is also a rare species found only in the Carolinian Zone in small numbers.

We have also heard that a few green and white ash trees in the US have survived 5 years after their neighbours died. In January 2019 I found two white ash trees (6-10 cm DBH and 5-6 m in height) that were still alive. And they were still alive last summer. A week ago I found two more stems on one stump (10-18 cm DBH and 7-8 m tall) which had obviously been attacked 4-6 years ago by EAB and all the damage has healed over. Last fall I received a call from a landowner in Middlesex County, who had tree about 8-9M tall loaded with seed. There are likely others out there.

Please keep your eyes open and report any live ash trees you find that are over 5m tall and 4 inches (10cm) DBH. It may be possible to produce EAB resistant trees for planting. Both black and blue ash tend to be monoecious with both sexes on the same tree. But the percentage of viable seed may increase significantly when the trees are close enough together to cross pollinate. Green and white ash are dioecious species and if the male and female trees are too far apart there may never be any seed set. But if we can identify them we can take cuttings to produce clones and produce seed in a seed orchard.

It is important to note that trees grown from seed from many degrees north or south (especially north) of the proposed planting site are not likely to do very well so we will need to find resistant trees from different climatic zones.

SEEKING INPUT!!

If you are interested in contributing to the newsletter please send your articles to,
Donald Craig- dcraigtreeman@sympatico.ca or Tim Payne
St. Clair Region Conservation Authority
tpayne@scrca.on.ca