

NOVEMBER 2019

GROWTH RINGS

Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area News



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Appalachian Forest National Heritage Area is dedicated to the promotion of Forest Heritage within out 18 counties. To learn more, be sure to visit our website by clicking the logo below.



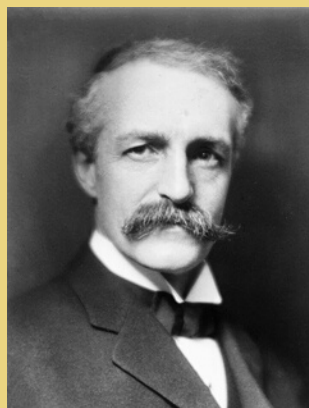
Appalachian Forest Discovery Center News

The Appalachian Forest Discovery Center 2020 exhibit is going to be about **Public Lands!** 2nd year AFNHA AmeriCorps member Sarah Rosenkrans is in the process of researching the various types of public lands, including how they are managed, funded and used by the public.

This topic was chosen with the centennial of the Monongahela National Forest in mind. Sarah will be researching with assistance from our conservation agency partners, including the USDA Forest Service, USFWS, WV DOF, WV DNR and local nature lovers!

If you would like to be a resource to Sarah while she is researching, email discovery@appalachianforest.us.

Currently, the Appalachian Forest Discovery Center is closed to the public; but our permanent exhibit about AFNHA and the Darden Mill is open by appointment.



"THE GREATEST GOOD FOR THE GREATEST NUMBER

FOR THE LONGEST TIME"

- Gifford Pinchot,
US forester

We are still looking for AmeriCorps members for the 2019-2020 year! Click here for more details.

Take our input survey and be part of our management planning process!

Civil War Coffee Tastes Terrible!

By Moira Gasior & Chris Mielke

On Sunday, November 10th, the Beverly Heritage Center hosted an event, "Civil War Coffee Tastes Terrible!" where guests were able to sample coffee alternatives common during the Civil War.

Dr. Chris Mielke, AmeriCorps member serving at Beverly Heritage Center, was inspired to create a series of events while daydreaming during a board meeting. "They were talking about how Mount Vernon has its signature 18th century peanut soup and Williamsburg has the American Heritage chocolate. The question was raised whether or not Beverly could have a signature dish."

Beverly was the forefront of the Civil War, located near multiple transportation routes. Dr. Mielke started to look into Civil War coffee recipes, understanding that there was a shortage of coffee in the south during war time. "I decided to look up Civil War era recipes, and coffee struck me as something that younger people might have an interest in. The problem was every authentic recipe for Civil War coffee I encountered seemed absolutely vile - okra seeds, beets, tubers, the list went on and on and just got more and more unpalatable." He was then faced with deciding how much to charge for the event, "I thought that if we were going to pitch the event, we might as well be honest about the fact that the coffee you were paying \$1 didn't actually taste good - go in with low expectations."

Why did Civil War coffee taste terrible? Blockades. "Most of these recipes come from the Deep South which was cut off by the Blockade in the Civil War; two of the four recipes come from Georgia newspapers, for instance." The coffee that did make it through blockades was sold by shopkeepers at exorbitant rates.

Dr. Mielke decided on 4 recipes: pea, chicory, sweet potato and dandelion root. "In the case of the dandelion and pea "coffee", both were absolute poverty recipes by people who were cut off from access to coffee." There was no actual coffee in the pea and dandelion recipes; but were used as hot drinks to replace tea and coffee drinks. "The chicory and sweet potato blends were for people who wanted to get as much out of a limited coffee supply as possible." Folks added chicory and sweet potato to extend their coffee supplies, cutting a normal coffee recipe with 2 parts sweet potato to 1 part coffee, for instance.



From left to right: roasted pea, roasted dandelion root, roasted sweet potato & chicory root and coffee bean blend

The Beverly Heritage Center has been making efforts to strengthen their relationships with local store owners and community centers. Dr. Mielke reached out to TipTop coffee to get their sponsorship of the event via donating some coffee that, unlike the other, historical 'coffees', was delicious. They graciously accepted and donated their house blend coffee to the event.



TipTop coffee, snickerdoodles & hard tack

Those who attended the event paid \$1 for entry and got to sample the 4 civil war coffees (it seems that sweet potato was the crowd favorite) as well as some hard tack, gingersnaps and TipTop coffee. The pea 'coffee' had a distinct, gym sneaker after taste. The chicory was very thick and dark. The sweet potato was a lighter coffee and very fragrant. The dandelion root 'coffee' was also well by some (dandelion root was and still is considered a 'health tonic', commonly consumed by Native Americans throughout history and today by health gurus).

Dr. Chris Mielke plans to do more food-based programming over the winter at the Beverly Heritage Center. Considering how wonderful this first event went, it is an indication of future successes at the BHC. Keep an eye out for more great programming from the Beverly Heritage Center!

Visiting the Fernow: Experimental Forestry for the Better Forest Management Practices

By Moira Gasior

November 6th, 2019, AmeriCorps members Sarah Rosenkrans (Appalachian Forest Discovery Center), Moira Gasior (AFNHA Planning Associate) and Chris Mielke (Beverly Heritage Center) traveled from Elkins to Parsons to visit the Fernow Experimental Forest.

The Fernow, if you aren't familiar, was established in 1934 and is part of the Monongahela National Forest. Following WWII in 1948, a new research program was created to study the silviculture (i.e., timber management techniques and principles) of mixed hardwood forests and watersheds of the central Appalachians. It is a 2nd growth forest, containing northern hardwoods and mixed-oak species. The forest is open to the public.

Today, teams of foresters, graduate students and interns gather data from the forest to study forestry techniques, threatened or endangered native species, prescribed burning, forest hydrology and wildlife ecology. With an emphasis on interdisciplinary research, there are efforts to understand long term changes to the forest through various management practices. Humans do not typically live as long as trees, so research being done on the forest often spans beyond the lives of those conducting research (if you're talking watershed science, that spans beyond the lives of trees and people).

Dr. Melissa Thomas-Van Gundy, research forester, gave the tour. She took our AmeriCorps members to different sites on the forest. The first stop was to view the tools used to study forest watersheds. The pool at the watershed site is used to determine how fast water moves through the forest. Inside of the small 1-room building next to the pool are tools to measure any changes in the height of water in the pool. Dr. Melissa Thomas-Van Gundy said that there have been times when an immediate change in water level was recorded, which is usually an indication that a bear has fallen into the pool. Nearby, there is a second pool, which is studied as a "before & after logging" area.



First pool, building with other tools on the right.



Second pool, studied to measure effects of logging on the watershed.



Tools used for measuring height of water in the pool; the recorded information is checked once a week.



The AmeriCorps went to an area of the forest that demonstrates the effects of various cutting techniques. On the part of the forest that touches upon Otter Creek, they walked down a short trail with signs that clearly indicate each type of cutting or harvest technique; clear cutting, diameter limit cutting, and individual tree selection. There was also a control area where no cutting took place.

Dr. Thomas Van-Gundy explained that some forest cutting techniques benefited certain animals, such as, the diameter limit cutting was great for birds; but not so great for bats. Bats prefer to have few branches in the space below the canopy of the trees to make flying and detecting movement easier. She also gave some examples of the pros and cons of each cutting technique and how each one affected wildlife. Clear cutting produced even aged trees. Diameter limit cutting allowed for cutting and provided income every 20 years, but typically removed the genetics of more quickly growing trees (as you only select the ones of the allotted tree diameter you are cutting). Individual tree selection allows a forester to choose specific trees to remove for timber value but also retain continuous tree cover. With this method, trees that tolerate shade will be favored over the long run.



Red oak leaf.

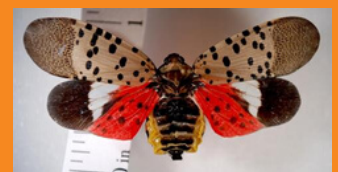
The tour ended with exploring where prescribed burns were done on the forest to help produce oak trees. Oak trees, along with beech trees, were seemingly some of the last species to drop their leaves this season.

Dr. Thomas Van-Gundy pointed out that Oak trees have thick bark to protect their living tissue of the inner bark, so prescribed burns can be useful to encourage their growth over thinner-barked trees. Their leaves have more tannins and waxes in them than other species which slows decomposition and creates a fuel layer, which also indicates fire adaptation.



Those who study and manage forests are looking to the future of how to deal with climate change. They have to keep in mind 'what new invasive insect is just around the corner?' or 'what southern tree species is going to creep up to our forests?'. Climate change is not just the warming of the earth. It engages many aspects of our environment along varying time lines, including temperature change, desertification of ecosystems or over saturation of ecosystems, species threatening changes and resource competition between species.

The spotted lantern fly was spotted in West Virginia for the first time this year.



Research foresters, ecologists and biologists are working tirelessly to understand how to fight invasives in a changing climate. It is critical for us to support researchers and agencies pushing forward the study of ecology, forestry, watershed science, etc. to protect our natural resources.

Volunteer Opportunities & Upcoming Events!

West Virginia Watercolor Society All-Member Exhibition Awards Reception & Artist Demonstration, Thomas WV

Watercolor demonstration by Kristen Colebank of Wardensville, WV. Experience painting with watercolor at our interactive table! Celebrate local artists and see this years winners. **At Cottrill's Opera House.**

4-H History Roundup Beverly WV

Join Camp Pioneer, located in Beverly WV, in their mission to collect all of the information they can about 4-H camps and their histories. Open to the public. If you have any stories, photos, merchandise, etc., please come and share!

College Application & Financial Aid Workshop, Beverly WV

Are you or someone you know having issues with choosing a college or navigating financial aid resources? This event is free and open to the public. Bring your personal statement for review! This event is at the Beverly Fire Station on Main Street.

Elkins Christmas Parade "Jingle All the Way!", Elkins WV

The Elkins-Randolph County Chamber is proud to host the Annual Elkins Christmas parade. Starting at Elkins City Hall!

ArtSpring Local Music Showcase, Thomas, WV

Taking place at The Purple Fiddle. Come see local musicians and celebrate local art! Admission is \$10. Drink specials, raffles, great music. This is a benefit concert for ArtSpring.

Holiday Artist Market, Elkins, WV

Support The Arts Center during the holiday season at their annual Holiday Artist Market with handcrafted wares from local artists. Holiday Market features a selection of jewelry, ceramics, glass, fiber arts, two-dimensional art and more!

Old Fashioned Christmas, Beverly WV

Come to Downtown Beverly for an exciting day of Christmas celebrations! From the Fire Hall to the Presbyterian Church to the Shops to the Museums, the town of Beverly will bring Christmas alive the way that only a small town full of heart can!

Greenbrier Historical Society's 'Stellar Evening', Lewisburg WV

The Greenbrier Historical Society invites you to their Stellar Evening -- a lovely night of historic holiday fare and festivities to be held at the Cecil H. Underwood Youth Center on the WV State Fairgrounds.

Tickets are \$100; proceeds go to the Greenbrier Historical Society. Ticket price includes food, wine and beer,

Christmas at Cass: Holiday Square Dance, Cass WV

Come celebrate the season with a Holiday Square Dance featuring Juanita Fireball and the Continental Drifters! \$5 at the door for adults, students are free



Beverly Heritage Center has an ongoing food drive until December 11th. Be sure to swing by with some non-perishables to help others during this holiday season! They are open Thursday - Monday.



Be sure to check out the Greenbrier Historical Society's Escape Room! Click here for more information and to make reservations!

Are you a partner? Do you have an event you would like AFNHA to promote? Contact info@appalachianforest.us.