WINTER 2025 ~ ISSUE 1 VOL. 39

Chestnut

THE JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN CHESTNUT FOUNDATION

A BENEFIT TO MEMBERS
THE American Chestnut FOUNDATION

Coeur d'Alene Chestnuts ~ Symposium Summary ~ Incremental Restoration ~ Slash Walls for Deer Exclusion

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Will Pitt
President & CEO

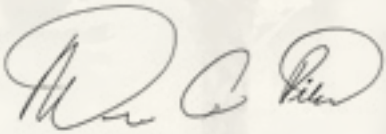
HELLO CHESTNUT ENTHUSIAST,

As we begin a new year at The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF), I want to take a moment to reflect on our progress in 2024 and express my gratitude for the unwavering dedication of our members, volunteers, and supporters. This past year has been a period of growth and transformation, marked by scientific advancements and organizational evolution.

TACF made substantial progress in advancing our mission in 2024, with notable developments in both our research initiatives and organizational structure. The continued refinement of our 2025-2027 strategic plan stands as a testament to our forward-thinking approach. This roadmap to the future will serve as a guiding framework for critical decisions, helping us move ever closer to the ultimate goal: American chestnut restoration.

Our recent fall meeting and 2024 American Chestnut Symposium in Cromwell, Connecticut, was another milestone. It was an energizing and productive gathering where we achieved significant progress in our business sessions and drew inspiration from distinguished speakers and informative tours, such as walking among large surviving American chestnut trees at the Connecticut Experimental Agriculture Station. Comprehensive coverage of these highlights can be found in the center spread section of this issue. For me, the greatest reward was meeting many of you and hearing your stories. Your commitment fuels our mission, and through your efforts in local chapters and community events, you are laying the groundwork for a vibrant future.

As this final winter issue of our magazine goes to print, we look ahead to an exciting new format: beginning later this year, we will transition to a biannual schedule, publishing spring/summer and fall/winter editions. Thank you for being part of this journey – your support makes restoration possible. Together, we are growing a legacy.



Will Pitt, President & CEO
The American Chestnut Foundation

"Hoarfrost on Hybrid American Chestnut"

Dan Mckinnon, director of land management at Meadowview Research Farms, took this photo of a hybrid American chestnut several winters ago. He shared that hoarfrost settled onto many trees in the orchards after a day of rain, which was accompanied by snow and freezing temperatures the following day, creating these intricate and unique patterns.

THE American Chestnut FOUNDATION

WHAT WE DO

The mission of The American Chestnut Foundation is to return the iconic American chestnut to its native range.

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The Coeur d'Alene American Chestnuts

HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT, YET SO VERY FAR FROM HOME

By Geoff Harvey, Retired Botanist and Ohio Chapter Member

In the western center of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho's City Beach Park stand three American chestnuts, now more than a hundred years in age. Each summer, under these spreading chestnut trees, families sit on blankets and children play in a nearby playground. Parkgoers walk back and forth on the cool grass making their way to City Beach, the band stage, or a pickup basketball game, oblivious to the fact they pass by and under an arboreal treasure hiding in plain sight. Yet the gray squirrels and a murder of crows are not so oblivious. Each fall, one can find the spiked burs underneath the trees, but the crows and squirrels quickly claim the prized chestnuts inside.

Chestnuts with large native ponderosa pine in background. Photo by Geoff Harvey.

A brochure entitled "Historic, Unusual and Big Trees of Coeur d'Alene, Idaho," first alerted us that three large American chestnuts could be found in City Beach Park. City Beach Park is located on Lake Coeur d'Alene's north shore. During my first visit, the air was chilly and crisp, and the dark green grass was covered with leaves that had fallen from deciduous trees planted in the park. The native yellowback ponderosa pines, many with 3′ or greater diameter and limbless over sixty feet above the ground, are the park's oldest trees. Some likely stood to witness the indigenous Coeur d'Alene people who gathered annually on the lake's north shore in late spring and early summer reaching back millennia before European settlement. While others were likely saplings when the park was part of Fort Sherman during the latter nineteenth century.

Following the closing of Fort Sherman, Fredrick Blackwell, a lumber tycoon from the east, bought and converted roughly fifteen acres into Blackwell Park. When the city assumed the park, it was renamed City Beach Park. The large open grown pines were interplanted with primarily deciduous shade trees, all of which are far outside of their native range, which is primarily east of the Mississippi.

The three chestnut trees are large. The last measurements were taken in 2015 (see table below), when all three exceeded a breast height diameter of 4′ and measured well over 100′ tall. The three trees are grouped quite close together at 20′ between each trunk; this spacing suggests that whoever planted them did not expect all three to survive. Since they did grow to maturity, pollen is exchanged, producing chestnuts each year, with a large yield every other year.

The chestnuts have produced a few other trees in the area; one in a back yard just across the street from the park. This 6″ diameter tree is likely an inadvertent planting made by a forgetful squirrel. Another tree was raised from seed in the yard of a now retired forest pathologist. Two additional trees known to be closely related to the Coeur d'Alene trees are in Kingston, Idaho, 26 miles southeast of Coeur d'Alene. None of these approach the size of their suspected parents.

The chestnuts at City Beach Park are estimated to be more than 100 years old, likely planted around 1915 after the park transitioned from a cavalry horse pasture to a public space. This timeline aligns with tree-ring data from other park trees, including a native ponderosa pine and a non-native spruce. Although historical records of the chestnuts' planting are unavailable, evidence strongly suggests they were part of a shade tree program following the park's establishment by timber baron Fredrick Blackwell.

Diameter, height, and crown spread of City Beach Park chestnuts, 2015

American chestnut location	Southwest	Eastern	Northwest
Diameter (inches)	51.6	50	54.1
Circumference (inches)	162	157	170
Height (feet)	126	109	123
Crown Spread (0.1 feet)			
N to S	72	70.5	75
E to W	79	73.33	57
Average	75.5	71.92	66

Closely grouped chestnut trees. Photo by John Schwandt.

The park and the town in general are fertile ground for chestnuts. Coeur d'Alene is located in the southeast corner of a broad mountain valley that experienced many megafloods during the late Pleistocene. The megafloods resulted from the collapse of an ice dam containing glacial Lake Missoula. Coeur d'Alene's location was in a large eddy zone of the massive northeast to southwest trending current. The result was sand deposition over the area destined to host the town. The non-calcareous sandy well-drained soils of the area coupled with the park's location next to the thermal buffer of Lake Coeur d'Alene made an ideal spot for chestnuts to prosper.

The origin of the Coeur d'Alene chestnuts has been the subject of study by faculty and students at the College of Idaho. Chloroplast DNA analysis indicates the smaller American chestnuts found at Kingston

Castanea castaneaafolia **(Ungar) Knowlton fossil from University of Idaho collection. Courtesy of Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture/Eastern Washington State Historical Society, Spokane, Washington, identification number 42.148. Gift of Professor Thomas A. Bonser.**

and the known progeny from a chestnut borne by the large trees, demonstrates a close genetic relationship. Their origin in the eastern U.S. appears most closely related to the chestnuts of Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and New York. It may be coincidence, but Fredrick Blackwell hailed from Pennsylvania. The best evidence of the age and origin of the Coeur d'Alene chestnuts would indicate these trees were planted soon after chestnut blight had taken hold in Pennsylvania.

One final irony can be attached to these trees. Whoever planted them some 110 years ago was repatriating the genera to North Idaho. A mere three-quarter mile to the northeast, the fossilized leaves of *Castanea castaneaafolia* (Ungar) Knowlton can be found in the Latah formation strata. This sedimentary rock was laid down between 16 and 17 million years ago when flood basalts dammed the waterways creating deep, narrow lakes anaerobic at depth. Sediments and plant material, including leaves from a then diverse deciduous forest, were well preserved in the Latah rock. An ice age swept away most deciduous species of that forest, and among them, chestnut. The effort to plant shade trees in Blackwell Park some 110 years ago brought them back and created a refuge from the blight that decimated the species in the east.

AUTHOR BIO: Geoff Harvey is a retired botanist and plant physiologist. He is a longtime resident of the Inland Northwest, living in North Idaho. His mother was a native of Ohio, witnessing in her youth the decline of the American chestnut in the 1920s and early 1930s.

Chestnuts in full bloom, July 2022. Photo by Geoff Harvey.

2024

NE-2333 Conference

AT SUNY COLLEGE OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE AND FORESTRY

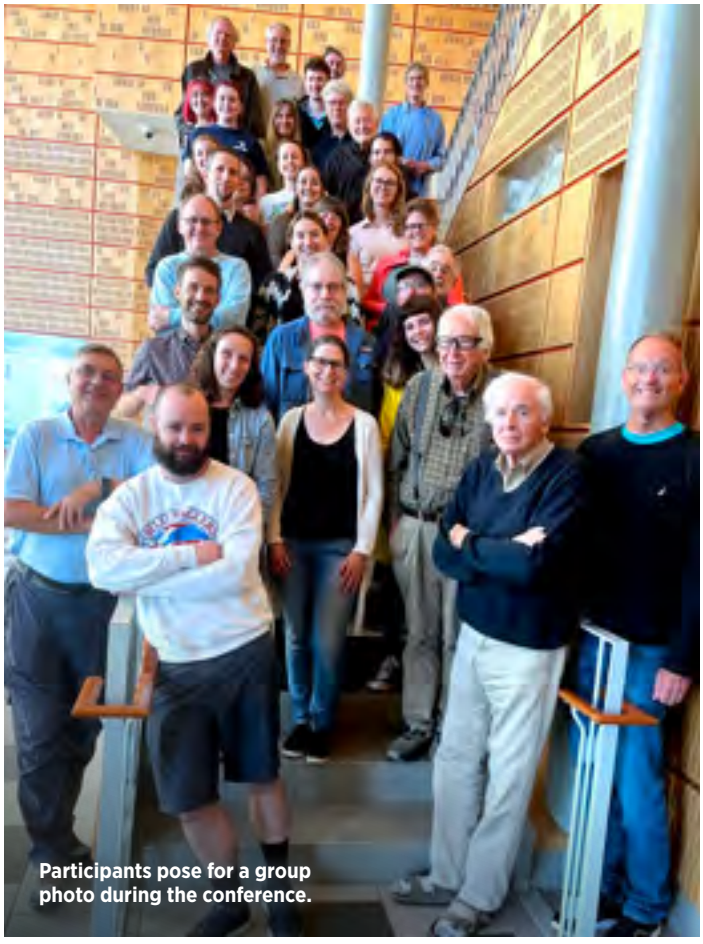
By Cassie Stark,
Mid-Atlantic Regional Science Coordinator

The Northeast Regional Project (NE) has been leading American chestnut research since it was founded in 1982 by the USDA. The NE Conference is held annually and serves as a forum for researchers with varying expertise in pathology, genetics, biotechnology, and restoration to meet and present their recent work on chestnut species. The NE-2333 project and its predecessors have three primary objectives: developing disease-resistant chestnuts through breeding and biotechnology, controlling chestnut blight and understanding its mechanisms, and implementing chestnut plantings for restoration.

This year, the NE-2333 Conference was hosted by SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF) September 12-14. Nearly forty people attended this meeting, which consisted of two days of presentations, followed by a tour of SUNY-ESF's Lafayette Road Experiment Station. Summaries of topics and presentations are included below.

Biotechnology

- Dr. Andy Newhouse and student Jacob Olichney, SUNY-ESF, shared updates on the Darling 54 transgenic chestnut, focusing on regulation, growth, survival, and inoculation treatments.
- Erik Carlson, SUNY-ESF Ph.D. student, presented on new transgenes for chestnut blight tolerance such as oxalate decarboxylase (ODC) and oxaloacetate acetyl hydrolase (OAH).
- Dr. Tom Klak and student Virginia May, University of New England (UNE), discussed their research, including but not limited to accelerated breeding on transgenic chestnuts, and showcasing successful pollen and nut collection using high light grow chambers.
- Dr. Patrícia Fernandes, SUNY-ESF, presented her work on breeding transgenic American chestnuts with Ozark chinquapin for enhanced blight resistance. Fernandes is also investigating the use of different promoters outside of the cauliflower mosaic 35S promoter used in Darling 54.



Participants pose for a group photo during the conference.

- Bruce Levine, University of Maryland and Board member at The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF), presented on CRISPR gene editing of *Cryphonectria parasitica* (chestnut blight) to reduce its virulence by knocking out certain genes from the fungus.
- Dr. Dana Nelson, U.S. Forest Service, shared updates from the Southern Research Station on grafting chestnuts,

including 35% of American and 66% of Chinese chestnuts grafted successfully in 2024. He also discussed his work identifying QTLs associated with blight resistance and Dr. Nurul Islam-Faridi's work on the Cytogenetic comparison of rDNA of American and Chinese chestnuts.

Phytophthora cinnamomi Root Rot (PRR)

- Dr. Steve Jeffers, Clemson University, discussed the use of fungicides (Ridomil and Reliant) to treat PRR at three field sites. Of the soil samples he has tested over the past 21 years, he reported that 40% out of 774 samples tested positive for a *Phytophthora* species.
- Dr. Albert Abbott, University of Kentucky, presented on timecourse, sequencing the effect of *Phytophthora* in Chinese and American chestnuts. He is working to verify candidate genes associated with PRR resistance using RNA-seq.

Breeding and Restoration

- Dr. Jared Westbrook, TACF, presented on optimized breeding using hybrid chestnut trees and genomic predictions.
- Dr. Fred Hebard, VA-TACF Chapter, presented results from a 12-year-old B_3-F_3 chestnut progeny test, focusing on growth and nut production.
- Dr. Susanna Keriö, Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES), discussed the history of breeding efforts at CAES, and shared results from a public survey that highlighted the importance of American chestnut heritage, rather than edible nuts, as the primary reason people were interested in planting chestnuts.
- Maya Niesz Kutsch, student at SUNY-ESF, presented preliminary methods to study chestnut sprouting after a controlled burn, and the required distance between chestnut trees for effective pollination.

TACF staff (left to right) Sara Fitzsimmons, Kendra Collins, Jared Westbrook, and Cassie Stark in common garden plot during the field tour.

Field tour at SUNY-ESF's Lafayette Road Experiment Station.

THE American Chestnut FOUNDATION

2025 WILD-TYPE AMERICAN CHESTNUT SEED SALE

SAVE THE DATE!
Tuesday, March 18 at 9:00 AM

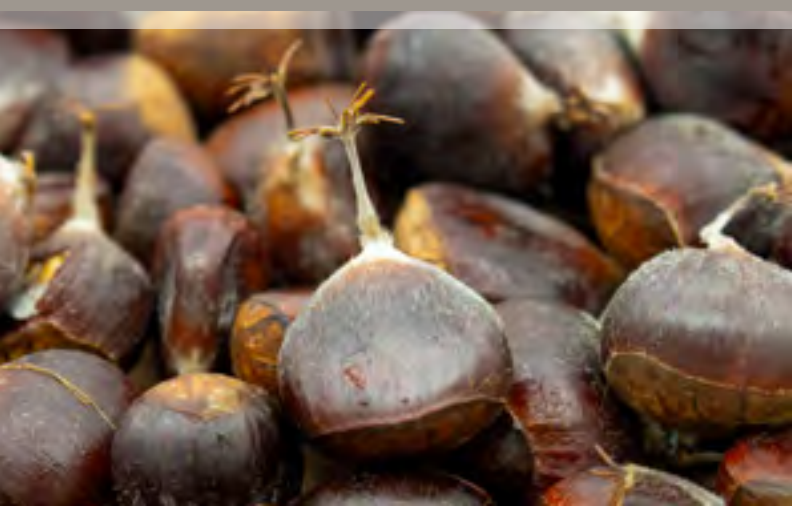
TACF will be selling wild-type American chestnut seeds on Tuesday, March 18, 2025. This members-only program sells out quickly!

Online and phone sales will open on March 18 at 9:00 AM. A link will be emailed to active members on Sunday, March 16 and again on Tuesday morning. Members must be active as of March 1, 2025 to receive the link.

NOTICE: Wild-Type Sale has changed from seedlings to seeds

We are now selling wild-type seeds, not seedlings, which will allow more members to participate. These seeds are still sourced from verified wild-type American chestnut trees grown in the wild or in TACF orchards.

Check our website at tacf.org for more details.



Mud pack on American chestnut at SUNY-ESF's Lafayette Road Experiment Station.

- Dr. Hill Craddock, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga and TN-TACF Chapter president, offered information about research the Chapter has been involved with, and shared updates on other *Castanea* species including the newly named Alabama chinquapin.

Hypovirus

- Amy Metheny, University of West Virginia (WVU), updated attendees on an experiment involving eight isolates of *Cryphonectria parasitica* and hypovirus strains, testing their performance at six different temperatures to assess their effectiveness in temperate regions.
- Dannielle Mikolajewski, Ph.D. student at WVU, compared *Cryphonectria radicalis* and *Cryphonectria parasitica*, exploring their differences and impact on red and white oak species.

The conclusion of this conference was a field tour at SUNY-ESF's Lafayette Road Experiment Station, where attendees observed ongoing research such as common garden experiments, mud packing, germplasm conservation efforts, and Ozark chinquapin x chestnut crosses. This annual conference plays a crucial role in promoting the exchange of ideas and progress in chestnut restoration, bringing together researchers, students, and agencies to tackle the complex challenges of restoring the American chestnut.

2024 TACF Photo Contest

Thank you to everyone who participated in TACF's 2024 Chestnut Photo Contest!

This year, we received an incredible variety of photos, from detailed close-ups of burs to captivating shots of wildlife and more.

The winning photo shows a blue-gray gnatcatcher nest high in a backcross American chestnut tree at Berry College's orchard in Rome, GA. Made from longleaf pine needles and lichens, it symbolizes the connection between longleaf pine and chestnut restoration. Captured by Berry student Anna Rose during the Georgia Chapter's pollination project, it highlights decades of collaborative restoration efforts at Berry.

ABOUT OUR GUEST JUDGES

Dr. Jennifer Koslow and her students at Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) judged this competition. Jennifer is associate professor of Biology at EKU and became involved with TACF in 2015 through discussions about EKU's regional chestnut orchard. She joined the Kentucky Chapter Board in 2019 and became Vice President in 2020. Dr. Koslow supports TACF's mission through teaching, research, mentoring, and outreach. She co-developed and taught Chestnuts and Change in Appalachia, mentors undergraduates in research at EKU's orchard, studies the impact of fire on chestnuts, grows seedlings in the Biology greenhouse, and has recruited hundreds of volunteers since 2016.

Chestnut Beer Hall

HOW DOES A CHESTNUT SCIENTIST TRANSITION FROM CONDUCTING RESEARCH TO OWNING A BEER HALL?

By Mark Double, WV Chapter Member

Bill Rittenour at a few of his taps. All photos by Mark Double.

For Dr. Bill Rittenour the route has been circuitous. Bill began his academic career at Penn State University as an architectural engineering major before switching to forestry. After his degree, Bill moved to Morgantown, WV to work with Dr. William MacDonald, professor emeritus of Plant Pathology at West Virginia University, on a chestnut project from 2003-2005. During this time, Bill conducted Master of Science field research on American chestnut trees using genetically engineered fungal strains developed by Dr. Donald Nuss at the University of Maryland.

In 2006, Bill pursued a Ph.D. at the University of Nebraska, working on a wheat pathogen. It was in Nebraska where he began brewing beer. Inspired by Charles Papazian's *The Complete Joy of Home Brewing*, Bill joined a group of home brewers called the BrewMan Group. His first sale – beer for a tenure party hosted by biochemistry professors – may have whetted his appetite for brewing on a larger scale.

Following his Ph.D., Bill moved back to Morgantown in 2009 and began working at the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). He researched identifying fungal spores from air samples but found that work unfulfilling. Because Bill was somewhat disenfranchised with fungal spores and protein blots from allergens, he began brewing beer at his home.

In Morgantown, Bill became involved with the Morgantown Area Society of Home-Brewers (MASH). He began culturing yeast from Belgian beers, and his love of science and beer led him to quit NIOSH in 2012 and begin brewing beer full time. In 2012, there were only six breweries in the entire State of West Virginia, and few were producing modern-style American IPAs (India Pale Ale).

Bill initially brewed 60 gallons of beer at a time in a brewhouse he built by hand, serving four local accounts in Morgantown. One of his beers, Halleck Pale Ale, named after the road on which he lived, became one of his most popular beers. It had a good hop taste without the bitterness. He was hand delivering his beer from his Honda CRV, and after two years, he knew he needed to expand.

Bill did considerable research, not only about beer making, but also business planning, how to obtain loans, cash registers, employees, fermenters, etc. He found a location and did many of the renovations himself. Bill set up his brewery with a 7-barrel brewhouse, 4 x 14 barrel fermentation tanks, and 2 x 14 barrel 'brite beer' tanks.

His on-site brewpub/taproom officially opened in April 2015. At that time the market was prime for a small craft brewing business.

That all changed in 2020 with the advent of Covid-19. Bill's biggest markets were restaurants in a 35-mile radius of Morgantown. Because of social distancing and mask-wearing, restaurants closed, and so did Bill's market. He survived the Covid crisis by hand-delivering beer to individual, loyal customers. Federal Paycheck Protection Program loans also kept him afloat.

Bill's taproom had limited seating and parking, so once again Bill began the process of expanding. He needed a larger space that had parking, character, and was affordable for him and his six employees. Bill found a site, and his new facility offers food and live entertainment. The tables in the Chestnut Beer Hall are made of American chestnut that he procured from an old church in Doddridge County, WV. Bill hand-carved all the chestnut leaf-shaped handles for his taps from American chestnut. His new surroundings leave no doubt that Bill loves chestnut. The pillars are painted to look like chestnut wood and 'CHESTNUT' is spelled out in large industrial lights. Bill even procured a chestnut church pew for his customers to sit on while they sip one of his many beers.

The final piece to this story is the name of his establishment. Bill kicked around all sorts of ideas, some of which included oak, but when the idea of Chestnut Beer Hall came to mind for his new establishment, it felt right, given his research on chestnut blight fungus. Bill met a local artist, Brian Pickens, at a beer festival who asked if Bill needed any graphics. The two of them pondered over more than a dozen sketches until they finally agreed on the one shown.

It has indeed been a circuitous route for Bill, but he adheres to a quote modified from Charles Darwin: "The species that survives is the one that is best able to adapt and adjust to the changing environment in which it finds itself." Bill has certainly adapted and married his love for chestnut and beer.

If you find yourself in Morgantown, WV, stop by 132 Pleasant Street to enjoy a local brew surrounded by a world of chestnut.


Bill Rittenour at a hand-made American chestnut table.


Beer taps hand-carved from American chestnut wood, in the shape of American chestnut leaves.

A Letter from Kendra Collins

Former Director of Regional Programs and
New England Regional Science Coordinator

To My Chestnut Family and Friends:

After nearly 17 years with The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF), I have made the difficult decision to move on and pursue a new professional opportunity. My chestnut journey began almost 20 years ago, when I had an American chestnut research project all but dropped in my lap during graduate school at the University of Vermont. Through that project I ended up joining a small group of chestnut enthusiasts and optimists as a founding board member of the VT/NH Chapter. Upon graduation, I met with TACF's then-CEO Marshal Case for a job interview and was offered the New England regional science coordinator position on the spot. I accepted without hesitation and have never looked back.

It has been in large part the people and the mission that have inspired me to work at TACF for so long. Chestnut is a surprising and excellent connector, and I am so grateful for the many chestnut friendships I have made with staff, members, and partners over the years. TACF's member-supported structure

Kendra (left) and science leadership teammates Sara Fitzsimmons, Vasiliy Lakoba, and Jared Westbrook (joining online) workshopping science plans for TACF.

is unique, and making our science program accessible to the New England chapters and collaborators has been a great joy.

The opportunity to participate in our mission to bring back the American chestnut tree, is what I believe has kept so many of our members returning year after year. Thank you all for that. Our science plan is on the best footing I have seen in several years and I am excited to see the recurrent genomic selection (RGS) path unfold, and along with it, many ways for chapters, partners, and collaborators to continue moving the mission forward.

To our volunteer leaders – you are the heart of TACF, and you are all so truly inspiring. I will always treasure the many friendships I have made through this work. So many active members exemplify a spirit of generosity and optimism that often refills my cup when I doubt our collective humanity. It is your commitment, dedication, and kindness that has contributed to the large piece of my heart that TACF will always hold.

I do intend to stay involved with the VT/NH Chapter, so I very much hope this is not "goodbye," but "see you later." It has been an honor and a gift to support and serve you. Thank you for all you do, and for being you.

With gratitude –

Kendra Collins

In the field with staff, volunteers, and partners was always a high point: measuring trees with Sara Fitzsimmons (left), inoculating orchards with Jack Swatt (CT-TACF) and Regional Outreach Coordinator Catherine Martini (top right), and working on a long-standing research project with Paula Murakami (USFS).

Support the restoration of the American chestnut and show off your love for this treasured tree with TACF's brand-new merchandise featuring our rebranded logo!

New Merchandise Now Available!

Rooted in Restoration T-Shirt & Hoodie

Stylish and sustainable! The t-shirt is made from 100% recycled cotton in a soft sage leaf hue, while the hoodie offers a slim fit in cozy charcoal.

American Chestnut Beanie

Stay warm and represent TACF with this olive beanie, complete with an embroidered logo.

Stickers & Window Clings

Perfect for cars, laptops, or notebooks! Durable and weather resistant.

Insulated Water Bottle

Keep your drinks hot or cold for hours with this sleek 20 oz stainless steel bottle.

Every purchase supports TACF's mission to return the iconic American chestnut to its native range. Shop now and wear your support proudly.

Visit support.tacf.org/shop to browse and order today!

DIVING INTO THE PAST TO ILLUMINATE THE FUTURE

THE AMERICAN CHESTNUT FOUNDATION'S 2024 AMERICAN CHESTNUT SYMPOSIUM

in Cromwell, Connecticut featured a fantastically diverse set of presenters, tours, and perspectives from across various disciplines. The science of chestnut blight resistance and species reintroduction are at the forefront of many talks and demonstrations at TACF events. But this fall's meeting stood out in its embrace of cultural studies, local histories, poetry, pedagogy, and a kaleidoscope of points from which the American chestnut has been, is, and can be treasured by all.

TACF was honored to host two distinguished keynote speakers who took us on journeys through deep geologic and evolutionary time to uncover the origins of our beloved American chestnut as well as the other organisms and environments that have accompanied and molded it over timescales that are typically beyond our grasp. However, understanding the distant past and how we got here is crucial to a holistic and mature view of our role in the grand drama of this species' demise and return. By gazing into what we know of chestnut origins and what shaped it in the perpetual evolutionary dance among genes, traits, and ecosystems, we can begin to better discern the meanings of our work.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

SIR PETER CRANE

President, Oak Spring Garden Foundation

On October 25, Sir Peter Crane addressed the symposium audience with his talk *The American Chestnut and Its Allies in Space and Time*. A paleobotanist and evolutionary geneticist by training, Crane traced the path of scientific taxonomy's understanding of the order Fagales. Encompassing not just the beech family (*Fagaceae*) that includes chestnuts, but also the birches (*Betulaceae*), walnuts, hickories, and pecans (*Junglandaceae*), and other global relatives, the Fagales were noted for their pattern of floristic disjunctions. Many of the genera and species highlighted in Crane's presentation followed a pattern of refugia in eastern North America, European mountain regions, and east Asia after the last glaciation. In parallel with a fossil record that bears signs of evolutionary arms races between Fagaceae and rodents, Crane also emphasized the revolutionary role of molecular genetics in breakthroughs in plant systematics. As president of the Oak Spring Garden Foundation, whose charge includes the perpetuation of the late Rachel Lambert Mellon's botanical art collection, he also shared exquisite prints of chestnut illustrations from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – a testament to the wonder this species has inspired for ages.

DR. MARK ASHTON

Senior Associate Dean of The Forest School, and Professor of Silviculture and Forest Ecology at Yale University

On October 26, Dr. Mark Ashton addressed the symposium audience with his talk *What Replaced the American Chestnut in New England? Future Forests in a Changing World*. A Professor of Silviculture and Forest Ecology in the Yale School of the Environment as well as Director of Yale Forests, Ashton guided a deep dive into the history of New England – from Gondwana to the birth of the Appalachians to the Wisconsin glaciation to indigenous swidden agriculture and to the sheep craze of the 1800s. This narrative was permeated with the rhythms of forest disturbance. Between eskers and drumlins formed in the glacial retreat and infrequent major hurricanes, Ashton demonstrated how the palimpsest of geologic, climatic, and human forces on the forests of Connecticut can be seen in the species compositions and plant community adaptations up to this day. Taking a long view of climates that will continue changing and interacting with our work to restore the American chestnut, he made clear that the act of reestablishing populations is as much about managing fire, climate, and herbivory as it is about generating disease-resistant plants.

2024 Volunteer Service Awards

In the spirit of the 2024 American Chestnut Symposium theme, "Rooted in Restoration, Connected in Community," TACF had the distinct privilege of recognizing four community-builders and pillars of our volunteer network. Each year, the staff Awards Committee reviews all nominations to highlight one volunteer from each region for their above-and-beyond support of TACF's mission and vision. With the utmost gratitude for all our volunteers and their integral roles in TACF's work, we would like to share a few comments below from each winner's nomination:

New England Region Winner: Eva Butler, ME Chapter

Northern Regional Outreach Coordinator Catherine Martini presents volunteer award to Eva Butler.
Nominator: Mark McCollough, ME Chapter President

"Eva is an exemplary volunteer coordinator, outreach leader, and scientist. She devotes many hours each week to the Maine Chapter – from publishing and distributing the Chapter's *Urchin* newsletter to soliciting volunteers for our many events.

As Vice President and Outreach Coordinator for the Maine Chapter, Eva consistently brings joy, enthusiasm, and hope to chestnut restoration in Maine and New England. Eva brings her extensive experience with environmental nonprofits to help advance governance of the Maine Chapter, including meeting insurance standards and new bylaws.

This year, Eva helped to conceive and implement a new program, Chestnuts Across Maine (CAM), to build partnerships, engage members, and enlist schools, land trusts, and conservation groups to establish demonstration plantings of chestnuts.

In its pilot year, five to 10 chestnut trees were planted on lands owned by 10 land trusts, schools, and conservation groups. She intends to expand the program to 10 to 15 new partners in 2025."

North Central Region Winner: Bill Deeter, IN Chapter

IN Chapter member Bruce Wakeland accepts the award on behalf of Bill Deeter.
Nominator: John Hempel, PA/NJ Chapter

"Bill indefatigably tends numerous acres of American chestnuts that he has planted across many different plots over the past 20+ years. Cruddy bark is rampant in his groves and seems to be doing a good job of keeping his trees going. I think this will eventually become a valuable resource just for that reason alone. Bill puts up numerous posts on Facebook covering his chestnut groves that are quite educational. He also harvests a massive amount of nuts, which he freely distributes to anyone who asks for them. He is also happy to show his techniques for pollinating trees to others.

Bill's passion is conserving native trees, and educating others on how to recognize, harvest, and grow these trees, with American chestnut being a particular favorite. His focus on giving people knowledge and bringing them together has made him an excellent Chapter president for these past two years, and his warmth and generosity connects people far outside his own Chapter!"

2024 Volunteer Service Awards

Mid-Atlantic Region Winner: Ron Kuipers, MD Chapter

Karl Mech accepts the award from Cassie on behalf of Ron Kuipers. Nominator: Cassie Stark, Mid-Atlantic Regional Science Coordinator

"Ron is a wealth of knowledge from his many years of involvement with the MD Chapter. He is 80+ years old and has been a prominent member of the Chapter for years. This year we put in a common garden planting of 800+ seeds in MD, and Ron was so enthusiastic about it that he worked multiple days leading up to the event: drilling holes, getting tree tubes on-site, and tagging each position to help with ease of planting. To do this, he recruited multiple locals to help him by knocking on doors to tell them the story of the American chestnut and ask if they would be willing to help with the planting. This is just one story of the many that reflects how Ron assists in building TACF's community through recruiting and encouraging new members to participate in MD Chapter events, demonstrating the spirit of volunteerism."

Southern Region Winner: Jon Taylor, NC/SC Chapter

Jamie Van Clief presents to Jon Taylor. Nominator: Barb Wood, TACF Membership Coordinator

"Jon Taylor is an active member of the NC/SC Chapter and generously donates his time and talent to further TACF's mission. He has been a member for 18 years and has volunteered both his time and amazing artistic skills as a woodworker. Jon has created and donated numerous handmade chestnut pieces that have been used for fundraising or as gifts to dedicated members, partners, and volunteers, and he refuses any payment for his labor or materials. He is incredibly talented, generous, and committed to helping TACF in every way he can. Jon is currently serving as a board member of the NC/SC Chapter, and selflessly shares his talents to help promote and support the work of TACF."

CASE MOUNTAIN CABIN TOUR

By Catherine Martini, Northern Regional Outreach Coordinator

Attendees of the 2024 American Chestnut Symposium were generously invited to a private tour of Case Mountain Cabin in Manchester, CT. The cabin, built in 1917, is made entirely of American chestnut logs harvested from the property around the cabin. It was built as a summer home for the Case and Dennison families and was occupied until 2005, when the property was transferred to the Town of Manchester. After years of neglect, a "Friends of the Cabin" group was formed to raise funds to restore this unique historic property.

On a gorgeous fall day TACF's Symposium attendees were given a guided walk-up to the cabin and found a few American chestnuts along the way – offspring and remnants of the trees that were used in the construction of the cabin.

During the tour of the interior of the cabin, TACF members pointed out the wormy chestnut wood paneling adorning the first floor walls to our tour guides. They were also able to provide some history about the wood itself, making this an enlightening experience for

TOURS


Front view of the Case Mountain cabin.

everyone involved! The exterior, with original chestnut logs, provided an interesting look at the French-Canadian craftsmanship used in the cabin design, especially the ropes used as chinking between the logs.

There was so much to explore in the cabin that the group stayed until dusk, enjoying the views and talking about construction and history with our hosts.

We would like to thank the Friends of the Cabin members who also served as tour guides for this enjoyable outing: Matt Panecki, Phil Radding, Susan Barlow, Malcolm Barlow, Mark Connor, and Steve Belmore.

The Case Mountain Cabin is a unique piece of American chestnut history. If you are interested in learning more, following along with restoration efforts, or supporting their work, visit savethecabin.org.

CONNECTICUT AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION CHESTNUT TOURS

By Dr. Susanna Keriö,
Forest Pathologist and Ecologist,
Connecticut Agricultural
Experiment Station

The field tours organized in the chestnut research orchards of the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) offered symposium guests the opportunity to admire nearly 100-year-old chestnut trees with a key role for chestnut breeding in the United States. The tours were guided by Dr. Richard A. Jaynes (CAES 1962-1983), Dr. Sandra L. Anagnostakis (CAES 1966-2012), and Dr. Susanna E. Keriö (CAES since 2020). Lockwood Farm Manager Richard Cecarelli and his crew had removed vines and mowed ground vegetation which made the tours even more enjoyable.

In the Sleeping Giant orchards, symposium guests strolled under the canopies of these large, old chestnut trees. The oldest and largest in this group are Chinese chestnuts planted by


One of the older hybrid chestnut trees at Sleeping Giant.


Participants enjoy a tour of chestnut trees at Sleeping Giant orchards.

Dr. Arthur H. Graves on his land in 1930. Through the efforts and collaboration of Dr. Graves (1879-1962), CAES plant geneticist Dr. Donald F. Jones (1890-1963), and Yale students (Hans Nienstaedt, Richard A. Jaynes), the chestnut collection grew with several hybrids and American backcross trees. Notable trees in these orchards include 'Mahogany' (1930), 'Smith' (1931), 'Hammond' (1931), 'Sleeping Giant' (1937), and 'Graves' (1953). In 1949-1950, Dr. Graves sold and gave the land to the Sleeping Giant State Park Association for the purpose of CAES chestnut research.

In Lockwood Farm, participants learned about chestnut blight biocontrol research and saw specimens of nearly every species of *Castanea*, and notable trees like 'Clapper' (graft 1960) and 'Lockwood' (1946). Tour guests admired a plot of American chestnut trees planted in 1976 by Dr. Richard A. Jaynes. In 1978-1981, Dr. Jaynes, Dr. Anagnostakis, and CAES research staff treated these trees with hypovirulent strains of *C. parasitica*, to spread a virus that slows down canker expansion. Due to excellent care provided by the Lockwood crew and this biocontrol experiment, many of these trees have made it to relatively large size, including the current Connecticut Champion American chestnut (40' tall).

EDUCATIONAL ROUND TABLE

By Catherine Martini, Northern Regional Outreach Coordinator

TACF IS FORTUNATE TO HAVE MANY TALENTED AND PASSIONATE EDUCATORS AMONG ITS MEMBERS,

all working to ensure the public – and future generations – understand the story and restoration journey of the American chestnut. During our in-person gathering in Cromwell, CT, we took the opportunity to workshop ideas for engaging and impactful education initiatives.

The session kicked off with presentations by two outstanding educators: Eva Butler (ME Chapter Vice President) and Kristin Daley Conti (MA/RI Chapter member and science teacher at Tantasqua Middle School). Eva shared her experience collaborating with Samuel Burne of the Wells-Ogunquit Community School District in Maine to create a middle school curriculum aligned with next-generation science standards. Kristin highlighted the success and lasting impact of integrating American chestnut education into her classroom and overseeing the Chestnut Club, which manages a school orchard and participates in outreach events throughout the year.

Volunteers, members, and staff collaborate in small groups during the educators session at the 2024 American Chestnut Symposium. Kristin Conti (back to the camera in green shirt) is sharing her students' projects with the group.

Participants then broke into groups to discuss specific educational opportunities such as tabling at fairs, teaching poetry classes, forming chestnut clubs, or presenting to garden clubs. Ideas were shared with the whole group at the end of the session, leaving attendees inspired and with broader networks to help educators achieve their goals.

As Lincoln Vaughn, a science teacher at Renbrook School in West Hartford, CT remarked, "Our teachers don't have to tackle American chestnut education alone anymore!"

If you are interested in working on American chestnut education with us, please contact our regional outreach coordinators at rocs@tacf.org.

2024 Partner Awards

CONNECTICUT AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION (CAES) PARTNER AWARD

Dr. Susanna Kerič receives the award from Southern Outreach Coordinator Hannah Leeper and Operations Specialist Christine Oglesby.

We are thrilled to recognize the CAES and the team at Lockwood Farm as one of our 2024 Partner Award Winners!

Dr. Susanna Kerič's dedication to American chestnut research, supported by grants from TACF, has been invaluable to restoration efforts. The Lockwood Farm staff ensures the maintenance of a vital chestnut collection, including the nearby orchard at Sleeping Giant.

CAES and Lockwood Farm are exceptional partners to both TACF's national organization and the Connecticut Chapter. Their support includes hosting outreach events, providing meeting spaces, and actively participating in education efforts through talks and Plant Science Day.

CAES contributions were pivotal in planning the Symposium, from logistical advice to hosting a tour of their remarkable chestnut trees. Susanna and the Lockwood Farm staff exemplify collaboration and commitment, and we are grateful for their enduring partnership in the mission to restore the American chestnut.

EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY (EKU) PARTNER AWARD

The partnership between TACF and Eastern Kentucky University (EKU) has proven invaluable in advancing chestnut restoration efforts while fostering education and engagement. The TACF/EKU Orchard is an important resource, not only for its contributions to Kentucky's restoration efforts, but also as an educational hub. EKU biology students regularly participate in volunteer days at the orchard, working alongside Kentucky Chapter members to gain hands-on experience in conservation.

Established in 2016, the 2.5-acre orchard includes trees from Kentucky and Georgia lineages and serves as a living laboratory for courses like Intro to Ecology and Chestnuts and Change in Appalachia. EKU's support ensures the orchard thrives as a space for education and restoration.

At EKU, education meets real-world impact with degrees in Wildlife Management, Biodiversity and Conservation, and Biology, alongside certificates in Environmental Education and GIS. Students gain expertise through managed natural areas, environmental education programs, and partnerships creating pathways to careers in conservation. Learn more at apply.eku.edu.

Undergraduate Sasha Carrasco in the EKU orchard doing research on photosynthetic responses of chestnuts.

2024 Partner Awards

EMORY & HENRY UNIVERSITY

Hope Christensen, an Equine Assisted Therapy major at Emory & Henry University shucks and counts chestnuts during the 2024 harvest at TACF's Meadowview Research Farms.

The partnership between TACF and Emory & Henry University has been instrumental in advancing the mission of restoring the American chestnut tree. Emory & Henry has provided crucial support by offering affordable rental housing for our summer interns, without which placing highly qualified interns from across the country in the Meadowview area would not be possible. Emory & Henry also boasts a dedicated cohort of Bonner Scholar students who contribute their efforts at TACF's Meadowview Research Farms as part of their service learning scholarships. This collaboration is increasingly multifaceted as Emory & Henry is also fostering academic growth by beginning to integrate its genetics classes with TACF's laboratory at Meadowview. This initiative promises to enhance the visibility of chestnut molecular genetics, offering students hands-on experience in a research environment with real-world conservation impacts. The partnership also holds the potential to develop a pipeline for future laboratory assistants at Meadowview, strengthening the long-term success of the chestnut restoration project. Together, TACF and Emory & Henry University are shaping the future of chestnut restoration and conservation education.

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF FORESTRY (VDOF)

The Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) has more than 50 years of chestnut breeding and restoration history in its orchards, state forests, and Virginia Chapter orchards. Partnering with TACF began shortly after TACF's founding, nearly 40 years ago.

VDOF shares trees for breeding from its backcross orchards, an orchard of large surviving Americans, and a 10-acre orchard of hybrid trees. VDOF contributes staff time and equipment, including bucket trucks, to assist with breeding and harvesting. The VDOF seedling nursery grows thousands of American and hybrid chestnuts each year. The agency has planted chestnuts in restoration projects on state forest lands.

This valued partnership can be measured by the 249 VDOF trees receiving the highest blight resistance rating (blight1), representing 59% of such trees in the Central breeding region. VDOF also provides, at no cost, office space for the Mid-Atlantic Regional Science Coordinator.

Virginia Department of Forestry Research Technician and President of the VA Chapter Dr. John Scrivani trims away male catkins to allow for easier access to a female flower during controlled pollination at Lesesne State Forest.

POSTER SESSION AWARDS

By Catherine Martini, Northern Regional Outreach Coordinator

After going virtual for October 2023's Chestnut Chat, TACF's annual poster session returned to its in-person format, bringing back the energy and connection of face-to-face collaboration.

The poster session allows for students, citizen scientists, and professionals alike to present their work, and network with TACF members and science staff. Topics included cost-effective pollination methods, reviews of a chestnut common garden experiment, controlled pollination for backcross breeding, *Phytophthora* and fungicides, results of progeny testing, and new methods of resistance screening. The 2024 poster competition featured students from as far away as the University of Idaho, alongside submissions from citizen scientists and professionals, fostering engaging discussions and showcasing diverse research. As is tradition, the poster competition and subsequent awards were available only to students, and competition was tight!

Student posters are judged by a combination of TACF staff and volunteers. This year we would like to thank Dr. Carolyn Keifer, Dr. Vasiliy Lakoba, Cassie Stark, Dr. Jared Westbrook, and Jamie Van Clief for contributing their expertise to the judging process. Students and judges were given an hour in a closed session to discuss their methods, findings, and opportunities for further research. Some students also presented their research during our Flash Talk session, while the evening kicked off with a lively social hour where students and their posters took center stage.

Vincent (Vinny) Varsalona was awarded first place for his poster titled "Optimizing Controlled Pollination in Backcross Chestnut Breeding."

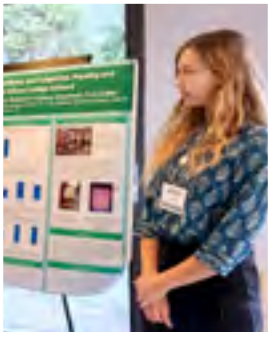
NOW, LET'S MEET THE WINNERS OF THE 2024 POSTER AWARDS!

Our first-place winner may be familiar to fans of our documentary *Clear Day Thunder* or to volunteers in the Mid-Atlantic region, where he worked alongside Cassie Stark as an intern doing fieldwork over the summer. Vincent (Vinny) Varsalona, an undergraduate student at Reinhardt University in Virginia, was awarded first place for his poster titled "Optimizing Controlled Pollination in Backcross Chestnut Breeding."

POSTER SESSION AWARDS

Second-place winner Kelvin Kwame Sakyi.

Our second-place winner was Kelvin Kwame Sakyi, an undergraduate student at the University of Idaho, along with his research partner Christina Riddle. Their poster was titled "Investigating Genetic Diversity of American Chestnut in the Inland and Pacific Northwest."



Third-place winner Rachael Trowbridge.

Our third-place winner was Rachael Trowbridge, an undergraduate student at the University of Rhode Island. Her poster was titled "Chestnut Common Garden Experiment at University of Rhode Island."

Congratulations to our student poster award winners, and thanks to everyone who traveled to and participated in our 2024 Symposium poster session and flash talks.

Poster abstracts, as well as PDFs of posters, are available on our website at tacf.org/poster-sessions/. Past years' posters are accessible at the same link.

EXPLORING SLEEPING GIANT: A SYMPOSIUM ADVENTURE IN CONNECTICUT

On October 25, while members of the Executive Committee of The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) were immersed in morning meetings during the Symposium, a group of staff, TACF members, and several board members seized the opportunity and crisp fall weather to explore the iconic Sleeping Giant State Park in Hamden, Connecticut, just a short drive away.

Taking advantage of a break in the agenda, the crew loaded themselves into two vans and headed for the park's most popular trail – the Tower Trail. This 3-mile round-trip hike led the group to the "head" of the Sleeping Giant, a unique rock formation that resembles a reclining figure. At the summit, hikers were greeted with sweeping views of Long Island Sound and the historic stone observation tower, affectionately known as the "castle."

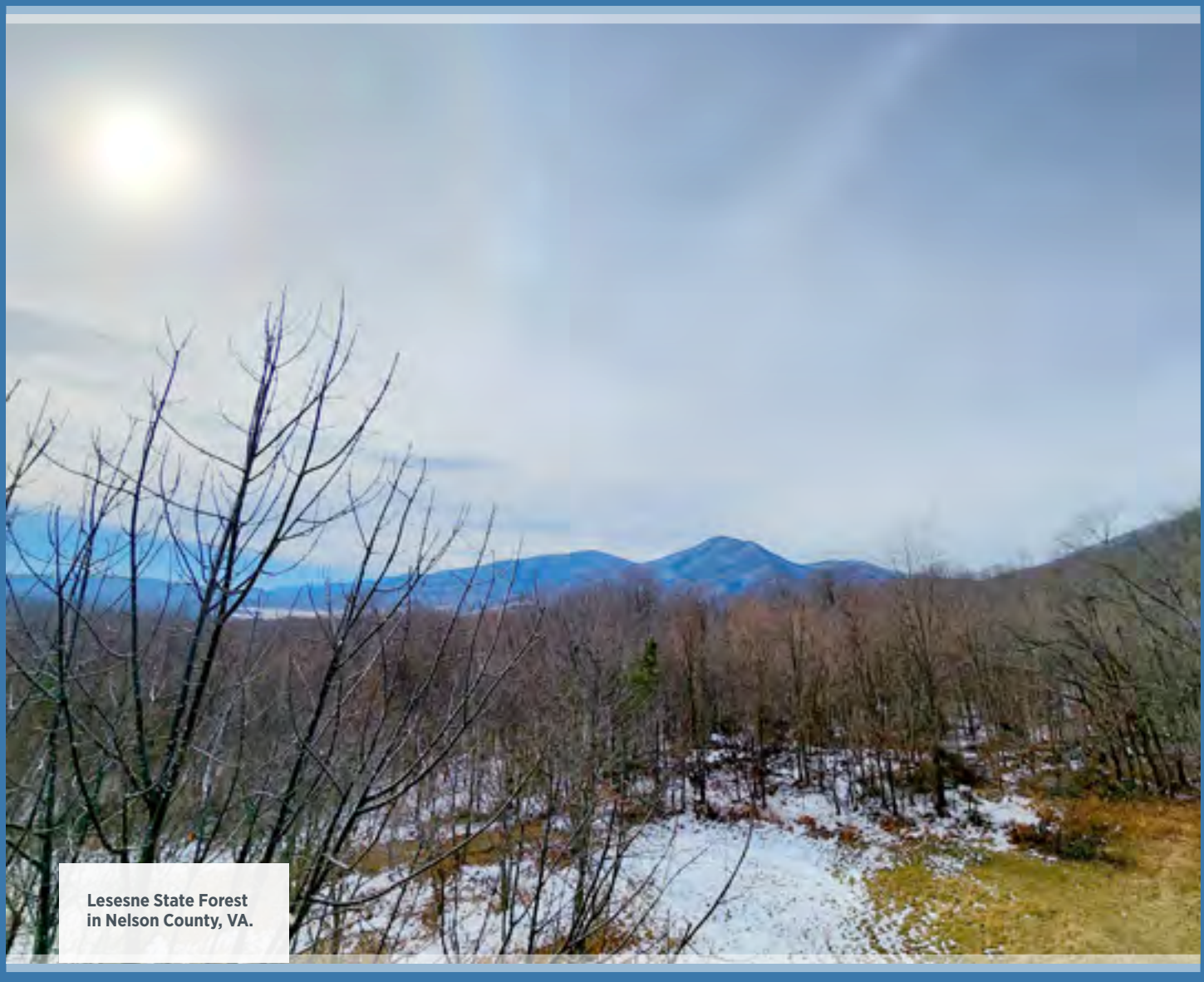
Unsurprisingly, several hikers spotted a few American chestnut trees along the trail. One particularly impressive tree reached over 25′ tall, a reminder of the species' dominance and importance to the area. It was a day of camaraderie, breathtaking scenery, and another reason we work to restore the American chestnut to its native range in the eastern United States.

THE PATH TO RESTORING THE AMERICAN CHESTNUT VIA

Incremental Restoration

By Cassie Stark, Mid-Atlantic Regional Science Coordinator

The American Chestnut Foundation's (TACF) Restoration Committee is developing a comprehensive plan that focuses on reintroducing American chestnut into the landscape. This process will take years, if not decades, to realize successful reintroduction.



Lesesne State Forest in Nelson County, VA.

PHOTO 1: Mixed planting of hybrid and American chestnut, oak, and pine species at Lesesne State Forest.

Restoration of an entire species typically involves incremental changes that are not immediately visible but gradually accumulate over time. Thus, the beginning efforts of TACF's restoration plan are centered on the concept of "incremental restoration." This approach involves the gradual planting of chestnut trees in forested environments, where ongoing monitoring and management can help assess factors such as competition with other species, disease resistance, and survival rates. The goal is to create region-specific plans tailored to TACF's 16 state chapters throughout the historic range of the American chestnut. These plans will serve as templates for our chapters to follow and complete if they are interested and able.

Success through partnerships

One of the most important aspects for successful chestnut restoration is collaboration. The VA Chapter has utilized its partnership with the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) to determine potential sites for incremental restoration plantings. In 2023, 400 trees were planted on state forest land as part of a mixed planting project that included hybrid chestnut, American chestnut, white oak, and short leaf pine species (**Photo 1**). This planting will be replicated at two other state forests in VA. These findings will help build a better understanding of how chestnuts interact with other species in forest ecosystems and how best to manage those interactions for successful restoration.

VDOF's Research Program Manager Zoe Bergman is studying regeneration on a 60-year-old hybrid chestnut stand at Lesesne State Forest (**Photo 2**). This study involves examining the effects of deer exclusion fences and mid-story tree removal on chestnut regeneration. Deer browsing has been a significant obstacle to forest regeneration, and reducing browsing pressure may allow chestnuts to establish and grow more successfully. Additionally, removing competing mid-story trees can help improve growing conditions for chestnuts.

These kinds of partnerships are crucial for effective restoration efforts. Working with local agencies, landowners, and conservation organizations that have in-depth knowledge of forest management can help identify suitable sites for reintroducing chestnuts and ensure that the trees are properly cared for once planted.

Site selection

Ample sunlight is required for chestnuts to thrive. Historically, chestnuts flourished in large gaps in the forest canopy, where they could access direct sunlight. These gaps were often created by disturbances such as storms, fire, or disease. In

modern forest management, gaps are typically created through techniques such as shelterwood cuts or clearcuts. By planting chestnuts in these gaps, we can provide the ideal growing conditions for seedlings to establish.

Planting in areas where wild-type chestnuts are present may help promote natural regeneration and are indicators the site is well suited for a planting. In addition to selecting appropriate planting sites, it is important to consider other environmental factors that may impact success, including soil drainage, saturation, pH, and the presence of competing vegetation.

Results to date

TACF and its partners have been planting these trees for several decades, significantly increasing forest outplantings since 2008. Over the years, we have gained valuable insights into how these trees perform in the forest and their resistance improvements. For instance, Clark et al. (2023) found that first generation B_3F_3 seedlings planted across three national forest sites in the southeastern U.S. exhibited a 13% - 20% increase in chestnut blight resistance compared to wild-type American chestnuts. Although this gain is insufficient for long-term restoration, through TACF's Recurrent Genomic Selection program, hybrid chestnuts for restoration plantings will continue to gain resistance improvements for generations to come.

PHOTO 2: Zoe Bergman and David Crouch collecting overstory data for regeneration study on a 60-year-old hybrid chestnut stand at Lesesne State Forest.

Start small with test plantings

While large-scale restoration projects are essential, small-scale test plantings will play a crucial role in site selection on the early side of this restoration process. "Test plantings" consist of 10 to 20 trees of different chestnut species: American chestnut, Chinese chestnut, and hybrid varieties. These plots are planted in various locations to evaluate factors such as soil conditions, the presence of diseases like *Phytophthora cinnamomi* (root rot), and the capacity of landowners or partners to maintain and care for the trees. By gathering data from test plantings, restoration efforts can be refined and scaled up more effectively.

Conclusion

The restoration of the American chestnut is a long-term endeavor that will require ongoing dedication, collaboration, and adaptive management. The idea of incremental restoration will necessitate the involvement of our chapters and partners to work toward the goal of reestablishing chestnuts in eastern U.S. forests. While it will take time to see significant results, the gradual reintroduction of this species is not only a tribute to its historical role in our ecosystems, but also a vital step toward building more resilient and biodiverse forests for future generations.

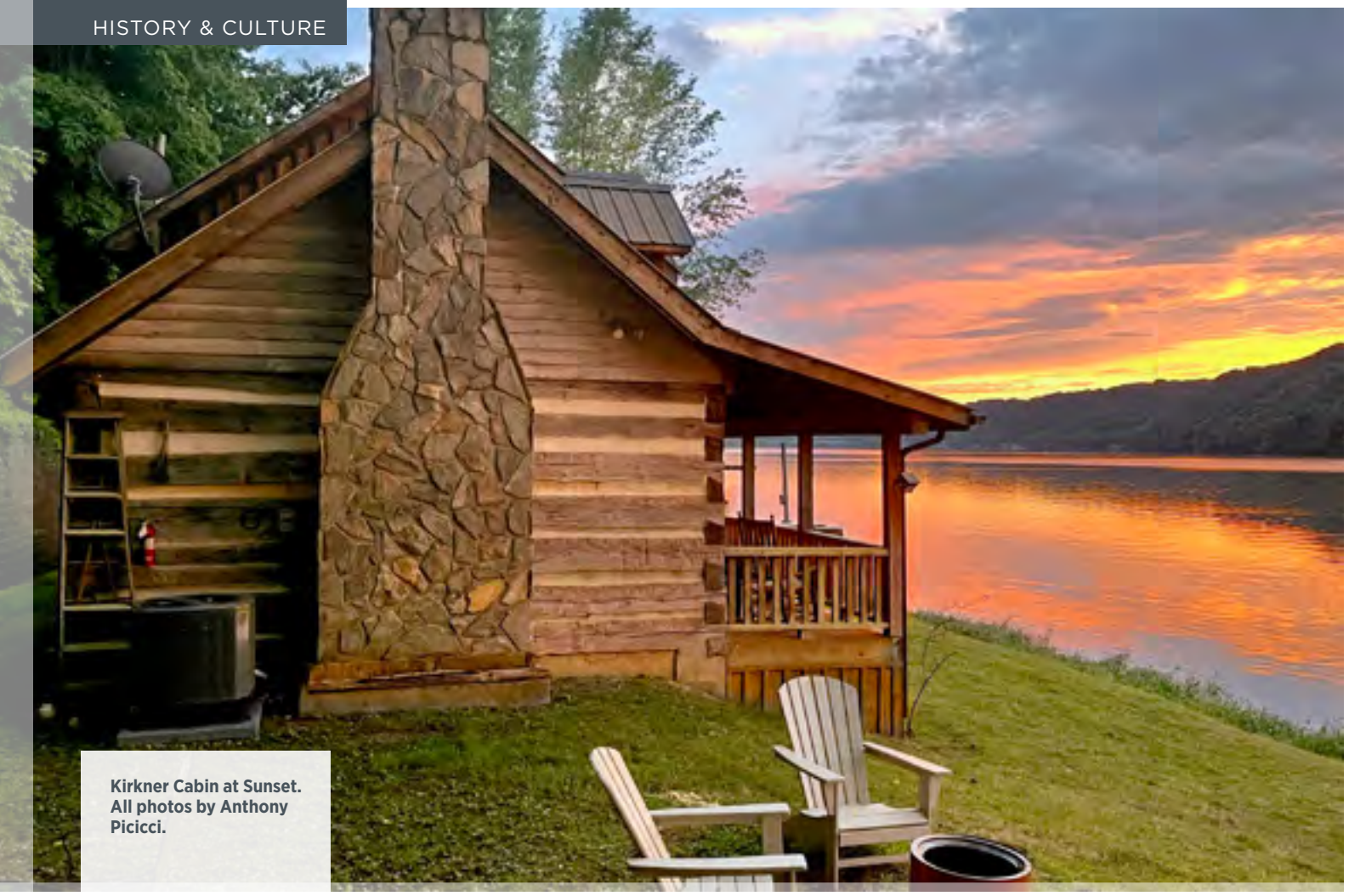
CITATIONS:

Clark, S. L., Schlarbaum, S. E., Saxton, A. M., Hebard, F. V., & Pinchot, C. C. (2023). Eight-year field performance of backcross American chestnut (*Castanea dentata*) seedlings planted in the southern Appalachians, USA. Forest Ecology and Management, 120820. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.foreco.2023.120820

A View

FROM MEADOWVIEW

The American Chestnut Foundation's (TACF) work to rescue the American chestnut tree would never be possible without generous and transformative philanthropic giving. Last year, supporters of our Spring Appeal and an anonymous major donor gave us an unprecedented opportunity to turn a dream into reality. These visionary gifts established the new research-grade greenhouse at Meadowview Research Farms as well as a solar array to power the whole complex, including the seedling nursery, laboratory, offices, and operations building. We are overcome with gratitude for your inspiring support of and investment in our mission. In early December 2024, the project reached the substantial completion benchmark with only utilities connections awaiting completion before TACF staff will be able to outfit the greenhouse's fertigation system and sow chestnut seeds early in the New Year. From the Southwest Virginia-based general contractors and advisors, to the Connecticut-based greenhouse designers and Iowa-based prefabrication team, to the Tennessee-based solar engineers and Miami-based greenhouse builders, this project's completion mirrors how all of us come together from across the country and beyond to fuel TACF's mission. This greenhouse opens new doors for research, pollen production, and volunteer chapter support as we advance our science and on-the-ground conservation impact.



Kirkner Cabin at Sunset. All photos by Anthony Picicci.

A Living Piece of History:

THE KIRKNER CABIN AND ITS AMERICAN CHESTNUT ROOTS

By Jen Picicci, Communications Specialist

On the banks of the New River, in the quiet town of Hiwassee, VA, stands a cabin with a rich and storied past. Constructed partly from American chestnut logs, this charming retreat offers more than just a peaceful getaway – it's a living piece of history.

Visitors to this tranquil place, often frequented by deer and other wildlife, will find a framed document on the mantle chronicling the cabin's past. It reads, in part: "*Kirkner Cabin has a long history, beginning in the 1840s as a slave cabin on a farm in Draper's Valley, Virginia. Slave families who worked the land lived in it.*"

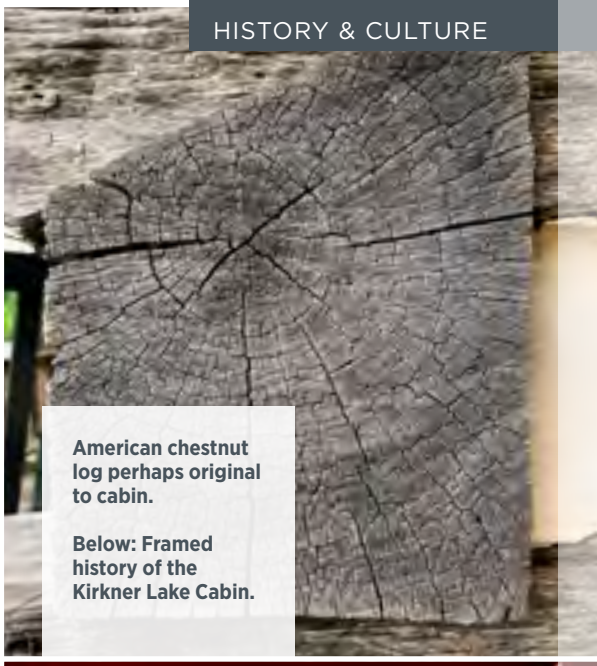
Following the Civil War, the cabin became home to both Black and White families. During World War II, a flag in the window represented three sons from the cabin who went off to fight – all returned safely. In the 1970s, the Kirkner family disassembled the cabin and moved it to its current location, just feet from the banks of the New River.

The cabin as it stands today was created from parts of three historic log cabins, brought together in the late 1970s and early 1980s. NC/SC Chapter member Jon Taylor, who assessed photos of the logs, observed: "*Two of the photos show medullary rays, so those are oak. The other two photos definitely look like American chestnut. Most often, cabins were built with whatever was close by, so they usually included several species in the same structure.*"

The KIrkner family sourced the logs from three cabins in Floyd County and Carroll County, VA, and spent five to six years rebuilding the home. Much of that time was devoted to the fireplace, constructed with rocks hauled from Walker Creek in Giles County. Buddy Kirkner built half the fireplace by hand before a mason completed the rest.

Remarkably, no mechanized tools were used during construction. The

Front windows with sunset reflection.



American chestnut log perhaps original to cabin.

Below: Framed history of the Kirkner Lake Cabin.

KIRKNER CABIN

Kirkner Cabin has a long history beginning in the 1800s as a slave cabin on a farm in Draper's Valley, Virginia. Slave families who worked the land lived in it. Many similar slave cabins indicate that the children slept in the loft; the mother and father slept in the corner by the front door; and the cooking was done in and around the fireplace. The table would probably have been to the right of the fireplace or in the area where the present kitchen is located. Most activity took place outside the cabin. The fireplace was the center of indoor activity. It provided light by night, heat for warmth and cooking. It was a place around which all gathered to sing and talk. The water was heated here for the weekly bath. The bathing took place in front of the fireplace to provide the necessary warmth.

Black families and white families occupied the cabin following the American Civil War. Many families rotated in and out of this small cabin but it was always warm and solid. The sturdy chestnut logs have stood the test of time. They are as solid as they were 167 years ago when they were hewn and stacked. The opening in the wall to the right of the fireplace shows how the cracks were plugged before being filled with mud chink. The flag hanging in the window represents three sons who left the cabin and went off to war in World War II. They all came home and eased the heart of a dear mother. Many great Americans were shaped in such humble beginnings.

In the early 1970s, the Kirkner family disassembled the cabin and moved it to this present sight on the New River. Mrs. Kirkner hand washed each log in the river before the family reassembled the cabin; hence, the beautiful golden color of the logs. Here, the Kirkner extended family spent many happy days fishing and enjoying the New River. Don Holt and Dallas Cox purchased the cabin in 2003. Don did the extensive remodeling and his wife, Rose Ann, did the

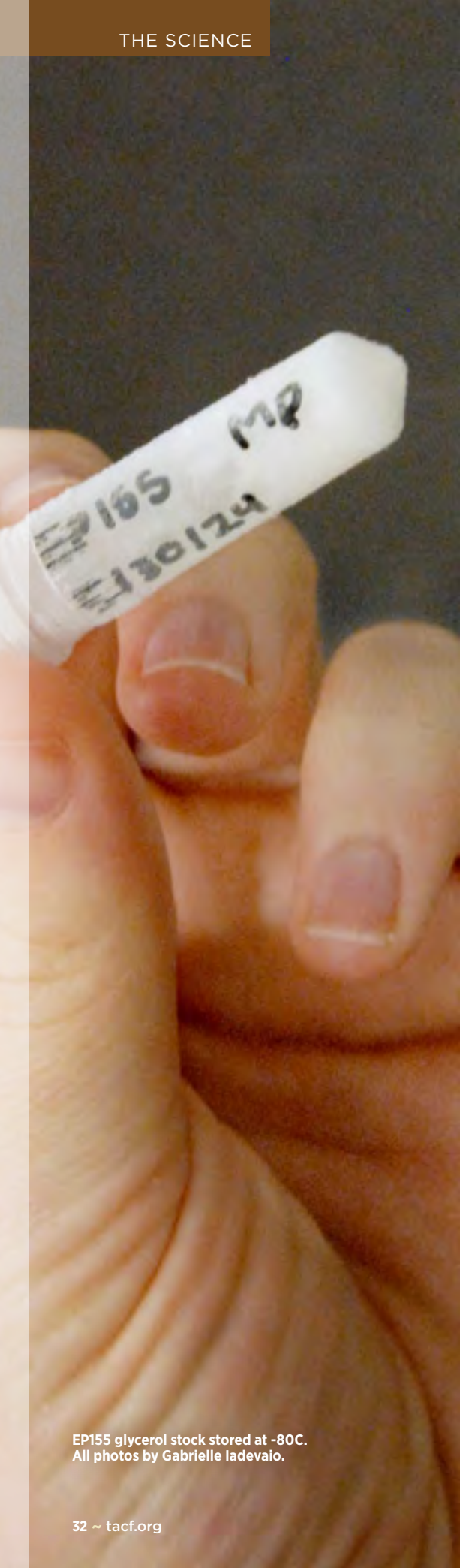
family laid the cabin logs by hand, chinked them, and built the upstairs loft from sawmill lumber. The loft girders were salvaged from other historic log cabins, and, according to legend, Mrs. Kirkner hand-washed each log in the New River, giving them their distinctive golden hue.

Since its reconstruction, the cabin has never been occupied full-time. Initially used as a vacation home, it was purchased in 2003 by Don and Chipper Holt and Dallas Cox, who began renting it out as a vacation property. They named it *Kirkner Lake Cabin* in honor of the family who rebuilt it. Don added personal touches, including wormy chestnut trim in the windows, which he salvaged from an old Johnny house.

In 2023, the property was purchased by the Minter family, who fell in love with the New River while visiting the area during their son's time at Virginia Tech. They knew the Kirkner Cabin was exactly what they wanted for a vacation and rental property.

If you're looking to experience the charm and tranquility of staying in a historic cabin with American chestnut ties, you can visit Kirkner Cabin by contacting Blue Ridge Escapes at brescapes.com.

During the writing of this article, we contacted the current owners and learned, sadly, that the cabin was flooded during Hurricane Helene in late September 2024. The Minters are working to restore the lower level and aim to reopen the cabin by Summer 2025.



EP155 glycerol stock stored at -80C.
All photos by Gabrielle Iadevaio.

PRICE RESEARCH LABORATORY: Cryopreservation OF *CRYPHONECTRIA PARASITICA* FOR LONG-TERM STORAGE

By Lauren Kerwien,
Meadowview Research Farms Laboratory Scientist

One of the roles at Meadowview Research Farms (MRF) is to distribute *Cryphonectria parasitica* inoculum to researchers, staff at The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF), and state chapter members studying chestnut blight resistance. As the lab scientist at MRF, I culture the *C. parasitica* inoculum TACF uses in nursery and field trials to characterize a tree's resistance to chestnut blight. In nursery trials, data collected includes seedling survival post-inoculation and the size of the resulting canker. In field trials, blight resistance is scored by the severity of the canker, presence of exposed wood, presence of *C. parasitica* spore producing structures, percent of dead canopy cover, and if the main stem is alive or surrounded by stump resprouts among a few other physical traits.

There are two methods of maintaining a fungal strain long-term. The first is to continually subculture the fungus so that once it has used up all of the nutrients it had access to on the nutrient medium, a small amount of the fungus is transferred to fresh nutrient medium. The fungus continues to grow and grow on nutrient medium until it is used to inoculate a tree in the field. The second method is to freeze the fungus until inoculation season starts back up in the spring. Historically, *C. parasitica* has been frozen on filter paper, where the filter paper is laid down on the nutrient agar and *C. parasitica* grows over and on top of the paper. Once covered in *C. parasitica*, the filter paper is dried overnight and frozen at -20°C (about -4°F).

Over the past year I have developed an additional protocol for freezing *C. parasitica* for long-term storage, which could last years or even decades. I adapted a method for freezing bacteria to freeze *C. parasitica* instead. In this method, *C. parasitica* cultured in nutrient broth was disturbed so that small bits of fungal hyphae were evenly distributed throughout the broth. I then mixed the inoculated broth 1:1 with 50% sterile glycerol. (Glycerol prevents the fungal cells from growing ice crystals when frozen.) Ice crystals physically disrupt the cell membrane

Lauren Kerwien holds a test tube of EP155 glycerol stock.

so that when the cell thaws, everything contained in the cell oozes out. Freezing *C. parasitica* in glycerol keeps the fungus alive but dormant, when the frozen fungal cells are placed on nutrient medium and incubated at room temperature, or warmer, the cells grow and develop into a colony ready to be subcultured or used to inoculate a tree. Freezing a fungal strain is important because continually subculturing a strain can lead to genetic mutations over time, especially mutations that favor growth in a controlled lab setting and not as a pathogen.

The inoculated field and nursery trials performed by TACF staff and chapter members to characterize a tree's resistance to blight would not be as effective if the *C. parasitica* strains used in these trials were not as virulent as expected. Being able to go back to a freezer stock and start a culture from the same starting point every time means we are working with *C. parasitica* cultures that are almost identical genetically. This ensures that the *C. parasitica* inoculum chapter members use to inoculate their orchards in Maine is just as pathogenic and virulent as the inoculum used in Georgia!

To construct the wall, slash (tops, limbs, and lesser valued trees) is piled up to a minimum of 10′ and can be as thick as 20′ at the base for stability.

Slash Walls

A NOVEL METHOD FOR DEER EXCLUSION IN A REGENERATING FOREST

By Jack Swatt, CT Chapter President

Breeding blight-tolerant American chestnut trees is just the first obstacle in our efforts to restore the American chestnut to the eastern U.S. forests. Ultimately, we will need to plant thousands of trees in a setting where they will benefit from abundant light and be able to compete with other forest species, and forest management or restoration projects will make ideal locations. As forests continue to replace the open spaces that were once farmlands, deer have expanded exponentially, unchecked by predators, making them problematic in areas of high density. Deer are well known to feast on garden favorites such as hosta, azaleas, lilies, and vegetable plants, but in the deciduous forests of the east, deer preferentially browse on highly palatable sprouts of oak, hickory, maple[1], as well as chestnut. Dr. Jeff Ward of the Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES) was studying adjacent plots of forest regenerative harvests that have been performed on Regional Water Authority (RWA) property in 20-year increments. He noted that the white and red oaks that dominated the 40-year-old plot were replaced by black birch in the 20-year-old forest. Suspecting that over-browsing by deer was preventing the oak from regenerating in the study area, he decided to use a deer exclusion fence when planning the latest regeneration harvest. He used a technique designed by Dr. Peter Smallidge from Cornell University called a slash wall.

A slash wall is constructed during a timber harvest by stacking the tops and limbs of harvested trees, as well as lesser valued trees and undergrowth, around the periphery of the study area. The slash is piled up to a minimum of 10′ and can be as thick as 20′ at the base for stability[2]. Slash walls were built at two study sites on different RWA properties in 2022 and will be included in Dr. Smallidge's ongoing studies of regeneration within the slash walls compared to plots outside the exclosures. While deer are prevented from entering the area, other wildlife are unaffected. According to RWA Forester Casey Cordes, trail cameras have recorded bobcats, coyote, and even bears within the slash walls, and the thick regrowth is providing ideal habitat for Chestnut-sided Warblers, Prairie Warblers, and Blue-winged Warblers. Cordes adds "The walls will settle and breakdown over time at a rate of about 10% per year. Eventually deer will be able to enter the harvested area, but by then, most of the regenerated oaks,

The slash wall prevents deer from entering the interior of the exclosure (better growth seen above the wall), while outside the wall, deer browse is extensive.

maple, and hickory will have grown tall enough that they will not be affected."

The construction of a slash wall will add to the cost of a harvest. It will vary depending on the size of the harvest, length, and positioning of the wall and other factors, but estimates run about $3 per foot and up to $100 per acre for understory cutting[2]. The added cost is still much less than the cost of installing traditional deer fencing and, since it breaks down naturally, there is no added cost for removal of metal or plastic fencing. Since slash walls are a relatively new concept, finding a harvester familiar with the process and has the appropriate equipment for building the slash wall is essential. Over time, as familiarity with this construct increases, more harvesters may become proficient in building slash walls, decreasing the time necessary

Inside the slash wall (left), vegetation is growing back in lush thickets, while outside the wall (right), less palatable vegetation survives and stumps show no evidence of sprouting new vegetation.

to construct them, and ultimately, making them even more affordable.

When planning large-scale chestnut restoration plantings, a slash wall for deer exclusion may be a very affordable and environmentally sustainable consideration. Although it was not part of any formal study, about 500 backcrossed American chestnut seedlings from The American Chestnut Foundation were planted within one of the two RWA slash walls where a lone flowering American chestnut tree was spared from the harvest. Time will tell if these seedlings will survive in this protected regenerating forest.

FOOTNOTES:

[1]Influence of Deer Hunting and Residual Stand Structure on Tree Regeneration in Deciduous Forests. Jeffrey S. Ward and Scott C. Williams., Wildlife Society Bulletin, Vol 44, Issue 3, September 2020. Pgs 519-530.

[2]Slash Walls: Concepts and Applications for the Control of Deer Impacts to Forest Vegetation. Brett Chedzoy and Peter Smallidge. Forest Connect, https://blogs.cornell.edu/cceforestconnect/

Regional Water Authority Forester Casey Cordes stands before a slash wall gate, explaining the construction of the wall to tour guests.

Exciting Changes

COMING TO *CHESTNUT* MAGAZINE!

ISSUE TRANSITION

Beginning this spring, *Chestnut* will shift from three issues per year to two: spring/summer and fall/winter. This adjustment allows us to maintain affordable membership costs while continuing to provide in-depth content that highlights TACF's American chestnut restoration efforts.

FRESH REDESIGN

The 2025 spring/summer issue will feature a fresh redesign incorporating our new brand colors and additional sections such as donor profiles, a special segment for youth, and updates from our outreach team, alongside existing segments, like news and science that make *Chestnut* so engaging.

DIGITAL OPTION

Members will soon have an opportunity to choose how they receive the magazine by opting for our new digital version and physical copy, switching entirely to digital, or sticking with the print issue only.

These changes ensure TACF remains environmentally conscious and member focused. Questions? Contact Director of Communications Jules Smith (jules.smith@tacf.org). Thank you for your continued support of this crucial restoration mission!

THE American Chestnut FOUNDATION

Chestnut Pierogis in Butter and Peas

Recipe shared by Angus Mullis-McCord, TACF Development Analyst

Photo by Angus Mullis-McCord.

TACF's Development Analyst Angus Mullis-McCord had never heard of pierogis growing up, but once a close friend of his served him pierogis in butter and peas, it quickly became one of his favorite dishes. Usually, pierogis are filled with potatoes, but in this unique recipe Angus has substituted chestnuts, and since he always serves pierogis with peas, he's included them in this warm and cozy recipe. Enjoy!

Ingredients

DOUGH:

2½ cups of bread flour (All-purpose flour works too)
1 cup of whole milk Greek yogurt
1 egg

FILLING:

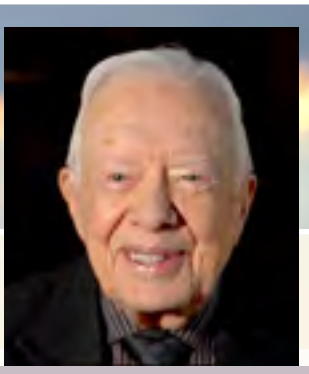
1¼ cup roasted and peeled chestnuts
10 oz stiff farmer's cheese or queso fresco
1-3 tablespoons of heavy whipping cream (optional)

SAUCE:

5 tbsp salted butter
½ lb fresh or frozen peas
4 sausages (Italian, bratwurst, or your preference)

Instructions

1. To make the dough, add the flour, egg, and yogurt into a large mixing bowl.
2. Mix until a shaggy ball forms. Transfer to a floured surface and knead the dough for 5 to 10 minutes, until the dough is smooth. The consistency of the dough should be very pliable and soft. Once the dough is fully kneaded, place back in the bowl and cover. Let the dough rest while you prepare the filling.
3. Cook and peel your chestnuts. You want about 1 ¼ cups of peeled nuts.
4. Add the chestnuts into a blender or food processor. Crumble the cheese into the blender. Blend until the chestnuts and cheese are evenly mixed. You can add some heavy whipping cream if you desire a smoother textured filling.
5. Bring a large pot of water to boil while you roll and fill the pierogis.
6. Make 40 even balls of dough. The easiest way to do this is by forming two "snakes" of dough about ¾ to 1 inch in diameter and chopping each "snake" into 20 even segments before rolling each into a ball. Lightly coat the doughballs in flour so they don't stick together.
7. Roll each ball into a circle of dough about ⅛ inch thick.
8. Fill each dough circle with a spoonful of filling and pinch the ends of the dough to form a semi-circle. Asking someone to help fill pierogis is a clever way to force your loved ones to spend more time with chestnuts, plus it makes this process go faster!
9. Add the butter and peas to a large pan on medium high heat. If you want to cut up sausages and add them to this pan, do that once the peas have mostly cooked through.
10. Add the pierogis to the boiling water in sets of ten. Once the pierogis float (about two minutes), scoop them out with a slotted spoon and set aside. Add the next batch of ten until you have cooked all the pierogis. You can also freeze some of the pierogis at this stage.
11. Move the peas and sausage to the edge of the pan or remove them if there isn't enough room. Add more butter and pierogis to the pan to sear. Once they've seared for about a minute, gently fold the peas and sausages together with the pierogis to coat the pierogis with butter.
12. Serve and enjoy!



THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF OF THE AMERICAN CHESTNUT FOUNDATION (TACF) JOIN COUNTLESS OTHERS IN MOURNING THE LOSS OF PRESIDENT JIMMY CARTER.

A towering figure in public service and a dedicated steward of the environment, President Carter held the title of Honorary Director at TACF since the organization's early days. He passed away on December 29, 2024, at the age of 100 in his beloved hometown of Plains, Georgia.

His connection to the American chestnut was deeply personal. President Carter recalled chestnut trees growing in his yard when he was a boy and that he could take the nuts to school to trade for "a couple of really nice marbles." President Carter was captivated by the transformative potential of restoration science.

To take part in the outreach and efforts of TACF's mission, President Carter helped coordinate a chestnut demonstration orchard at The Carter Center in 2016 and attended the orchard's dedication the following year. He also participated in the Foundation's award-winning documentary film, *Clear Day Thunder: Rescuing the American Chestnut*. His legacy at TACF continues with the 2021 appointment of his daughter-in-law Becky Carter to TACF's board.

As we reflect on President Carter's influential life and contributions, we are inspired to carry forward his vision and dedication toward restoring the American chestnut and a family legacy that will continue to grow for generations to come.

Remembering John C. Baker and Yurij Bihun

The American Chestnut Foundation recently lost two long-time supporters. We will greatly miss them and their contributions to advancing TACF's mission toward American chestnut restoration.

JOHN C. BAKER, CT CHAPTER

The CT Chapter lost a dedicated chestnut orchard manager, board member, and friend to all in September 2024 when John Baker passed away after a brief illness. John's professional life was mostly spent abroad, but when he returned to CT and settled down in Litchfield, he devoted his time to conservation. John was a stalwart beekeeper and active with the Connecticut Beekeepers Association, helping for years with their annual Bee School to educate new beekeepers. As a member of the Litchfield Hills Audubon Society, he spearheaded efforts to plant a backcross orchard on one of their properties and helped pollinate local American chestnuts to fill it. John was a board member of the CT Chapter for 15 years and served as the chairman of the Nominations Committee. He will truly be missed, not only by Chapter members but those of the other organizations he worked with.

YURIJ BIHUN, VT/NH CHAPTER

Yurij Bihun was an active TACF member for more than 20 years. As a forester with broad regional, national, and international experience and a background in tree improvement, he was drawn to TACF's hopeful mission. He joined VT/NH Chapter's board in 2010, became secretary in 2012, and after a brief term as Vice President in 2013, assumed the presidency later that year. In this role, he worked in all aspects of the Chapter's programs: newsletter, strategic planning, and salvaging and utilizing the wood of wild American chestnuts that succumbed to blight. He also served two terms on TACF's Board of Directors (2013-2019) and was a member of the Chapters and Restoration Committees. Beyond chestnut, he had an impressive career in forestry consulting, often using his extensive language skills to work internationally. Jim Talbot, a friend of Yurij's for more than 40 years, met him during a forestry project in Haiti in 1982. He shared, "One of the activities that Yurij was involved in was a group that sought to preserve the ancient beech forests of Europe, particularly in the Carpathian Mountains. When I visited this remnant forest in Puglia, Italy last month I was reminded that he had a hand in this kind of global forest preservation."

In Memory of our TACF Members

AUGUST 16, 2024 – DECEMBER 31, 2024

Marion
From:
Tom Vaughn

Carl Absher
From:
Dr. John A. Scrivani

John "Jack" Disque Agricola
From:
Joseph Mclendon

Robert and Elanor Allen
From:
Erik Armstrong

Edmond Watts Arthur
From:
Thomas Pappalardo

Audrey Bayliss
From:
Susan Robertson

Yuriy Myron Bihun
From:
Adrian Baranetsky
Kelly Cerialo
Kristen Coburn
David Ellenbogen
Stephen Groschen
Kathryn A. Halvorson
Patricia Heather-Lea
Carol and David Keszey
Andrew Lyman-Clarke
Sally Ma
Emily Schwartz
Dennis Torielli
Andrzej Tymowski
Christine Vaughn
William Stewart Warner
Trish and Rick Wiesel
Abigail Yanco

Carlene T. Blankenship
From:
Delia and John Olson

Guy H. Branaman, Sr.
From:
Beverly A. Branaman

Tom Brochu
From:
Margaret Brochu

Mr. and Mrs. Carl H. Carlson
From:
Darrel Carlson

President Jimmy Carter
From:
The American Chestnut Foundation

Alice & Willie Cruise
From:
Herbert Ley

Barbara Fallon
From:
Patricia G. Gundrum

Jane Vogel Fischman
From:
Lisa Fischman

Jason Fraley
From:
Angela Hosey

Gerald R. and Patricia A. Fry
From:
Michael Scott

G. Scott Funkhouser
From:
Jennifer Roberts

Anthony Genese
From:
Michael Genese

Suzanne T. Gouyer
From:
Rebekah Fisher

Edward A. Greer
From:
Edrie Greer

Gloria Guzzi
From:
Patricia Ward

Kathy Harper
From:
Charles Lednick

Ralph E. Henry
From:
Faye Henry

Richard L. Henry
From:
Joanne Henry

Charles John Hinckley
From:
Rebecca A. Kinn

Michael James Hoehn
From:
Michael Hoehn

Bill Kline
From:
Suzanne Foster

James R. Krupa, Sr.
From:
Karen Pizoli

Stan Latocha
From:
David Phillips

Bob Lenz
From:
Patricia Alexander

Lowell Edwin Lingo
From:
Deborah W. Loverd

Carl E. McAfee
From:
Nancy McInerney

Walter McAllester
From:
Brad McAllester

Colin McAskill
From:
Brooke MacPhail

William Bart McPherson
From:
Debra E. Adair

Diana Meyer
From:
Charles Meyer

Frank and Patricia Meyers
From:
Scott Meyers

Frank Miller
From:
Sarah Miller

Lela Mills
From:
Thomas R. Mills

Shirley Louise Munson
From:
Linda Chestnut

My deceased family members
From:
John R. Bogdan Jr.

Howard Myers
From:
Brenda Myers

Kenneth Nietering
From:
Emily A. Nietering

Richard Norrie
From:
John and Katharine Gove
Craig Norrie

Claudia Nunner
From:
Daniel Nunner

Vista Graybeal Oliver
From:
Dr. Joseph Steve and Terri Oliver

Joseph L. Rachael
From:
Jerel Rachael

Ruth Rappaport
From:
Luz Hermida

Ellen and Howard Rowland-Hall
From:
Ruth and Jeff Plum

Jack Rozek
Libby Gilley

Carroll Rudy
Martin Rudy

John Terry Sauve
From:
Kim O'Connell
George Economides
Tara McGrath
Ritch Cushway
Susan Cooley
Mike Gillespie
Deb Cardinal
John and Kathy Tanner
Cindy Sinicki

Jerry Sawma
From:
Christine Pinney

Jeanette Schlegel
From:
Howard J. Schlegel

Lawrence F. Setaro
From:
John A. Setaro

Warren Severance
From:
Kathryn Dalton
Jan Marie Aramini and Michael Pettersen

Donald Seybert
From:
Lungs at Work

Doug Smith
From:
Linda G. Roberts

John Lafayette Swanson
From:
Neil Swanson

Professor Kenneth Swisher
From:
Timothy Brian Hogan

Keith Tilley
From:
King Tilley

Lelia Vaughan
From:
Martha Vaughan

Dan Vlastelica
From:
Jane Vlastelica

W. Duane Waddell
From:
Kyla Grafton

Annebelle, Cheri, and John Wagner
From:
John and Helga Radick

Florence Walters
From:
Christopher Newman

Mike Wrublewski
From:
Peter Wrublewski

We regret any errors or omissions and hope you will bring them to our attention.

In Honor of our TACF Members

AUGUST 16, 2024 – DECEMBER 31, 2024

Mercy Alexander
From:
Peter Kopecek

Mike and Louise Aucott
From:
Aimee Landau

Connor Bachmann
From:
Lisa Bachmann

Ben Bear
From:
Alexis Bear

Erik Bertellotti
From:
Franklin Bertellotti

Russel Boyer
From:
James and Jean Bey

Bruce Calkins
From:
Elizabeth Hussey

Frank Colangelo
From:
Margaret Colangelo

Peter B. Dayger
From:
Peter Dayger

Paige Desiere
From:
Gail South

Branden Diehl
From:
Aerial Communications

Rose Battista and Mary Ann Elisco
From:
Anne Elisco-Lemme

Yvonne Federowicz
From:
John Stephen Huff

Laura Ford
From:
Marina Herrera

Richard Frase
From:
Mary J. Frase

Lesley Heiser
From:
Linda Rich

Anne E. Hills
From:
Elizabeth Paxson

Dorothy Hunter
From:
David S. Hunter

Jim Jacobson
From:
Roberta Kessler

Dr. Joseph James
From:
Kendrick Prewitt

Bill Jenkins
From:
Lewis Jenkins

Sandra R. Johnson
From:
Robert L. Johnson Jr.

Warren Laws
From:
Maureen Nichols

Lucas and Evan
From:
Jeff Francisco

Thomas Anthony Francis Lisiak
From:
Jonathan Lynch

Natalia Lyons
From:
Laurence Lyons

Jeff Maggio
From:
Alexander Maggio

Jennifer and Scott Manning
From:
Celia Sims

Keaton Marino
From:
Angela Kollet

John-Paul Martin
From:
John-Paul Martin

JT Maxwell
From:
Robin Maxwell

John Meiklejohn
From:
Kendr Meiklejohn

Dot Padgett
From:
Kathy Henry

Kathy Patrick
From:
Chris Patrick

Strother Purdy
From:
Diana Barthelmess

Alesandra Rodgers
From:
Joseph C. Rodgers

Chris Schlegel
From:
Howard J. Schlegel

David Schlegel
From:
Howard J. Schlegel

Eric Schlegel
From:
Howard J. Schlegel

Jane Schlegel
From:
Howard J. Schlegel

William Schlegel
From:
Howard J. Schlegel

The Bill Sharp Family
From:
Adrienne Sharp

Dr. and Ms. Waid Shelton
From:
Dr. and Mrs. John C. Toole

Doug and Barbara Smith
From:
Mary Hopper

Tom Soszynski
From:
Mike Soszynski

Jim Szymanski
From:
Jim Szymanski

Eleanor Tatman
From:
Benjamin Tatman

Frank Robert Terranova
From:
Ana Metaxas

Gretchen Tracy
From:
Erika Tracy

The generations to come
From:
Debra Barmichael

Rufin Van Bossuyt
From:
Bradford Blodget

Winston Wells
From:
Mark Stolz

Courtney and John Wilson
From:
Courtney Laird

Jane Wood
From:
Jeffrey R. Wood

Dean Yap
From:
Margaret Yap

THE American Chestnut FOUNDATION
50 N. Merrimon Avenue
Suite 115
Asheville, NC 28804

Get Wild

TACF's 2025 Wild-Type American Chestnut Seed Sale on March 18 at 9:00 AM

This members-only program sells out quickly!

We are now selling wild-type seeds, not seedlings, from verified wild-type American chestnut trees grown in the wild or in TACF orchards.

Online and phone sales will open at 9:00 AM on March 18. A link will be emailed on Sunday, March 16 and again on Tuesday morning to members active as of March 1, 2025.

CHECK OUR WEBSITE AT TACF.ORG FOR MORE DETAILS.