



Welcome to the Backyard Tree Farm program

In the News –

The American Tree Farm System (the BYTF parent organization) is now formally recognized and endorsed as an internationally credible sustainable forest management certification system. PEFC Council (Programme for the Endorsement of Forest Certification) in Geneva Switzerland voted to accept the ATFS after a 14 month review. You can read more about this topic on the PEFC website http://www.pefc.org/internet/html/news/4_1154_65/5_1105_1894.htm

Paa-Ko is working on becoming a recognized Firewise Community. To quote from the Firewise website: "The National Firewise Community program is a multi-agency effort designed to reach beyond the fire service by involving homeowners, community leaders, planners, developers, and others in the effort to protect people, property, and natural resources from the risk of wildland fire - before a fire starts." You can learn more about the Firewise Community Program from their web site <http://www.firewise.org/index.php> In addition to community information the website includes a checklist on how to protect your property.

Mark your calendars –

What: BYTF meeting - Grasses of New Mexico
When: Saturday, September 13, 10 a.m. to noon (bring a sack lunch)
Where: Sandia Ranger Station in Tijeras.
Who: Dr. Kelly Allred from NMSU will talk about grasses. Dr. Allred wrote *A Field Guide to the Grasses of New Mexico*. He will show slides. Depending on time and interest we may take a short field trip. Keep your eyes open for the grasses growing around you. Collect samples of any you would like to have identified.

The meeting is free and friends are welcome.

Messages from members to members – *(The focus of the BYTF is to share information with each other. Got a problem, a solution, a tip ... Send your messages to laura@unm.edu for inclusions in a future bulletin.)*

I've been reading about eradication. A friend suggested the following - cut the tree down, drill several holes in the stump about 12" deep and then pore in potassium nitrate down them and they die from that. Potassium nitrate is a strong solution that pulls water out of the living cells much like if you add too much nitrogen to your vegetables, you will burn them. The residue is a harmless fertilizer.

Here in the city Ted and I have killed Trees of Heaven by a similar process. Immediately after we cut the tree down we drill a series of holes with a 1" bit about an inch deep and

an inch or two apart. We fill these “cups” with Bush B Gone or a similar killer. As soon as the tree absorbs the liquid we refill the cups. On my property in Torreon I have successfully killed small diameter scrub oak by dribbling a killer on the stump immediately after it is cut and again after the first application is absorbed.

Laura’s message –

Arthur C. Clarke, author of *2001: A Space Odyssey* and one of the most influential science-fiction writers of all time said: “Information is not knowledge, knowledge is not wisdom, and wisdom is not foresight. But information is the first essential step to all of these.” If, like me, you purchased forest land after living an urban lifestyle there is lot to learn.

First, what goes and grows naturally? The BYTF sells two books that will help you. *Field Guide to the Sandia Mountains* is one of the best introductory books I have seen on the region. Its coauthor Mary Stuever started the BYTF program in New Mexico. *Mountain Wildflowers of the Southern Rockies* by Carolyn Dodson and William Dunmire goes beyond the scope of a field guide in discussing the wildflowers that grace our area. Dr. Kelly Allred will be talking to us in September about grasses in New Mexico.

Learn about the flora and fauna; spend time paying attention to what is around you. In time you will begin to develop what artists call “the eye” that is you learn how to “see” the forest. When I first bought my property outside Torreon I thought it was perfect. I remember saying “no tree shall be cut”. Now my Husky and I hum a different tune. And I’m seeing results in healthier trees and meadows.

Maintaining viable forest property is like gardening, albeit on a somewhat different scale than most of us are used to. Trees growing too close together have to be thinned, just like a row of carrots or onions. Diseased plants have to be removed, just like tomatoes with curly leaf wilt. You have to keep a gimlet eye out for pests and decide when and how it is best to intervene. Pruning trees for shape or because of injury or disease is just as important as in an orchard.

In New Mexico there is a lot of competition for food and water, so many times improving an area means removing trees. The hardest part is removing trees that would be desirable if they were in another location. I used to leave trees that I knew I might take out in three to five years but with so little moisture I have begun culling these trees sooner. I call this “cutting for drought”. I cut more trees than I would if my basic concern was fire. I also leave some slash and chips along the contour lines and over the ground to hold what moisture we get in the soil, prevent erosion and promote the growth of bacteria and microbes in the soil because like any garden –
IT ALL STARTS WITH THE SOIL.

Just as in a yard garden the forest will have plants you may want to put on your list of “The Unwanted”. But even the unwanted can be beneficial at times. Snake weed and one seed junipers are on many peoples list of the Unwanted. It was a drought year when I bought overgrazed pasture land. About all I saw were juniper trees, snake weed, and ant hills. Because the land was so fragile I had the cattle removed and eradicated many of the ant colonies. When the rains came late in the summer I was glad to have the juniper and snake weed roots to hold the soil in place.

Those of us that have chosen to own forested land have a direct responsibility for our piece of the environment. If we are going to break the natural order by preventing the cleansing effect of wildfire then we must assume the responsibility for doing maintenance using other methods. In other words we must view ourselves as a tool of nature in maintaining a viable forest. Many animals use tools but humans are the only animals that have opposable thumbs and chainsaws.

Because we can do more we have a responsibility to do more.

Member discounts -

The BYTF is selling two books at a terrific discount to members. *Field Guide to the Sandia Mountains* is \$22 for non-members and \$18 for members. *Mountain Wildflowers of the Southern Rockies* is \$18 for non-members and \$15 for members.

Copies may be purchased at BYTF events, from the BYTF office, or by mail (include \$5 for postage and handling of each book.)

If you would like to purchase copies of these books please contact our Treasurer Carol at
BYTF
Attn: Carol Moritz
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Remember the meeting September 13 and bring your friends.

BYTF program

Laura White, President
Carol Moritz, Treasurer