



eNTS

The Magazine of the
Native Tree Society
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eNTS: The Magazine of the Native Tree Society

The Native Tree Society and the Eastern Native Tree Society

<http://www.nativetreesociety.org>

<http://www.ents-bbs.org>

Volume 1, Number 7, July 2011

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The Native Tree Society (NTS) and its parent organization the Eastern Native Tree Society (ENTS) are a cyberspace interest groups devoted to the documentation and celebration of trees and forests of the eastern North America and around the world, through art, poetry, music, mythology, science, medicine, wood crafts, and collecting research data for a variety of purposes. ENTS is the premiere tree measuring group of the eastern forest of the United States. This is a discussion forum for people who view trees and forests not just as a crop to be harvested, but also as something of value in their own right. Membership in the Native Tree Society and its parent organization the Eastern Native Tree Society is free and open to anyone with an interest in trees living anywhere in the world.

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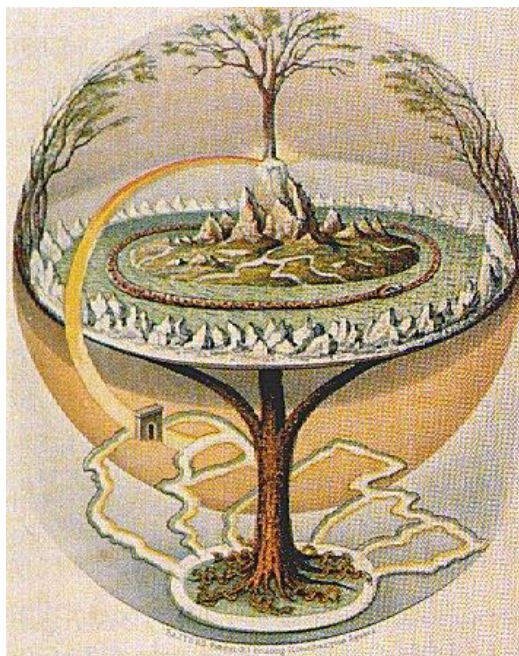
COVER: Ancient Cedar, Great Sand Dunes National Park, CO - photo by Robert Leverett 2011.

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An 1847 depiction of the Norse Yggdrasil as described in the Icelandic Prose painted by Oluf Olufsen Bagge -
From *Northern Antiquities*, an English translation of the Prose Edda.

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Guest Editorial: The Beginnings of The Western Native Tree Society



By Don Bertollette

The Western Native Tree Society (WNTS) was formed relatively recently in the context of the original organization, the Eastern Tree Society (ENTS). ENTS, the creation of Robert Leverett, David Stahle, Matt Therrell, Will Blozan, and Mike Perlman, was formed in 1996 to reach out to a larger audience of those who revered trees in all their forms, whether in words, or art, or alive in the woods.

The evolution of WNTS was a natural extension of ENTS and another positive result of my long-time association with Robert “Bob” Leverett, going back to my pursuit of a graduate degree (MS in Forestry, 1993) from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. My thesis was using satellite imagery to identify old-growth forest ecosystems. Early on I met with Bob who was widely known then as an old-growth hunter/enthusiast, and soon we were often found rambling through the woods of northwestern

Massachusetts in search of the wily old-growth. This was at a time when researchers were scrambling to find a comprehensive and useful definition for what Bob and I were recognizing as ‘old-growth trees and/or forests’. It was an exciting time, and much of our time was spent either in the woods, or in my case later, with computer workstations that were able to manipulate satellite imagery and geographic information systems (GIS). After the successful defense of my thesis, I returned west and headed north with my spouse Rhonda, to pursue our careers in Alaska.

I worked initially with the Chugach National Forest in performing an Information Needs Analysis for their upcoming Integrated Natural Resource Inventory, and the revision of their Forest Plan. I continued to have opportunities to further my use of remote sensing (RS) and GIS in classifying vegetation structure and composition in the remote and essentially undisturbed Chugach National Forest.

After our time in Alaska in the early 90’s, family obligations and educational opportunities enticed us to Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff. My academic interests and professional opportunities there sent me into the newly growing discipline of ecological restoration. After a year or so, I was working for Grand Canyon National Park, initially as a Fire GIS modeling technician and then eventually as a vegetation program manager in the role of the Park’s Restoration Forester. During these rambling years, I managed to find ways to reconnect with Bob and attend and/or present at several of his old-growth symposiums in the East. As Bob’s focus began centering on expanding ENTS to more fully encompass the burgeoning public interest in native trees, and the emotions and energies that trees evoke, it was natural to think of the western half of the US.

It was several years ago now that Bob approached me to gauge my interest in getting a WNTS forum/network going. This came at a time of my life when I was focused on retirement, and a move from Arizona back to Alaska to rejoin my spouse whose career had taken her back to the Last Frontier (a proud Humboldt State University grad, I retain close ties not only to my Arizona kin, but also an extended network of college friends scattered throughout

California and the West) . I was interested and it seemed a reasonable step for me at this junction in my life to take on the task of forming the Western Native Tree Society. Like many new retirees I'm finding that finding something to do isn't a problem; it's finding the time for all the things you want to do, that is the challenge.

WNTS has been slower to take off, I think, because the West doesn't share the same history of long-term occupation as the Eastern US. While I can't quote the acres/square miles of designated wilderness areas in the West, it is a significant figure. Although popular, visitation for many of the West's national park and national forest wildernesses, is probably much less than an Easterner might expect from their own experience, and because of the large scale, awareness of threats and change to the ecosystem is limited at best. . Much of the West's original forested extent has been reduced in many cases to less than 5%, often outside the attention of those who share an interest in vibrant old growth systems. I hate to say it, but I think that we in the West, we take our resources a little more for granted. One of my goals during my membership in WNTS is to increase public interest and involvement in revering our wonderful heritage, our native trees. To that end, I recently accepted the volunteer role of Big Tree Coordinator here in Alaska.

We have just celebrated our second annual WNTS rendezvous (the first was in Durango, Colorado in summer of 2010; and the second this year in Idaho/Wyoming). During both Rendezvous', we identified numerous species' maximum heights at the species highest elevations.

While still in Wyoming (in Grand Teton National Park!) we nominated our perhaps most notable WNTS member to the role of Vice President. It is with pride that we announce our new elected Vice President, Michael Taylor (shhh!, he's a casual guy and doesn't like a lot of formality). Michael has plenty of accolades in the world of big and tall trees having been involved in finding many of the tallest trees in the US, during the last decade or so. You can read about him in Richard Preston's recent book: "*The Wild Trees: A Story Of Passion And Daring*" (2007), and recent National Geographic articles and

videos on the tallest of redwoods

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2007/01/070123-redwoods-video.html> .

Among the elite, Michael is working on a technique that with an embarrassing amount of geometry/trigonometry (for me, anyway) can quite accurately estimate very tall, hard to access/approach trees from as far away as a mile, I'm told. Any of us who've made the effort to accurately measure a tall tree in a dense forest will appreciate such a technique!

The growth of these two branches (ENTS/WNTS) heralds the re-titling of our organization, to reflect the broader expanse that we now embrace, with forum members in the Western and Eastern US, and an increasing membership in Europe. Current thinking is that an appropriate title would be the Native Tree Society (a title already in use in various applications of our organizations), to be known as NTS (which still has a hint of the Tolkien-esque reference to Ents, tree form creatures that figured prominently in *Lord of the Rings* adventures).

We in the NTS would be proud to accept western tree lovers into our fold (WNTS). Come share your thinking, words, images, dreams with us...you'll find good company and good listeners for your tales and adventures!

Don Bertolette

President of Western Native Tree Society

and

Alaska Big Tree List Coordinator (please visit my website at www.akbigtreelist.org)

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Fontainebleau State Park Live Oaks, LA

by Larry Tucei » Sat Jul 02, 2011 10:15 pm

ENTS, Mandeville La., located on the northern shore of Lake Ponchartrain has an annual Seafood festival every year on 4th of July weekend. It's only an hour drive from my house in Gulfport, so I decided to make the trip on Saturday. The festival is in beautiful 2800 acre Fontainebleau State Park. An old sugar mill was one located here and the ruins can still be seen today.

Bernard de Marigny de Mandeville, founder of the nearby town of Mandeville, suggest an interesting history for this site, and indeed there is. The wealthy Marigny developed this area across Lake Pontchartrain from New Orleans as a sugar plantation

until 1852. The plantation income helped support his lavish lifestyle. He named his large land holding Fontainebleau after the beautiful forest near Paris, a favorite recreation area of the French kings.

The park has 4 Live Oaks registered with the Louisiana Live Oak Society that I've been wanting to measure. So this was a good time to go and add them to my every growing project of documenting the biggest Live Oaks in the Southeastern US. These new additions bring the listing to 167 Live Oaks of substantial size. There are many Live Oaks in the 16-19' CBH range but these 4 were the largest at the park. Two of the trees I did are growing in an Oak Alley that was planted around 200 years ago; they are the Marigny Oak and the Nott Oak.

The Marigny Oak measured CBH-22' 4", Height-66' and Spread-112' x 126'.



Marigny Oak



Maigny Oak

The 3rd tree I measured the Bonnabell Oak, was growing near a nature trail on the eastern side of the park. The measurements of it are CBH-20' 2", Height-64' and Spread-96' x 100'.

The Nott Oak measured CBH-21' 1", Height-66' and Spread- 112' x 114'.



Nott Oak



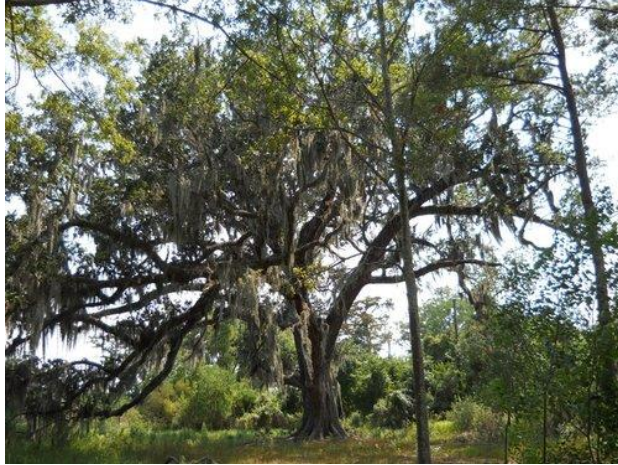
Bonnabell Oak



Nott Oak



Roquett Oak



Roquette Oak

The last tree measured the Roquette Oak, CBH-22' 6", Height-75' and Spread-120' x 126' is located on the western side of park near the cemetery.

<http://www.fontainebleaustatepark.com/>

Larry Tucei

[Lake Itasca State Park, MN](#)

by dbhguru » Sat Jul 02, 2011 5:38 pm

It has been awhile since I've posted, so I'll play catch-up before the start of the second WNTS rendezvous tomorrow.

First a few words about the rendezvous. Michael Taylor will be arriving in the morning and Don Bertolotto in the afternoon. We'll then be able to officially kick off the 2nd annual WNTS rendezvous.

Of course, we'll look for notable trees in the area, perhaps returning to Grand Teton NP. We'll present slideshows, discuss the Dendromorphometry book, Don's Alaska website, Michael's Triangle Method, etc. We'll partake of my son-in-law's excellent cooking. It will be loads of fun. However, I regret to say that we're a little short of attendees to this momentous gathering, but I have a plan. I intend to recruit my daughter's two dogs to up the number of WNTS participants. We all know that dogs have a special way of communing with trees (and fire hydrants). But that will be for tomorrow. This is about catch-up. What have Monica and I done in the period since my last post?

From the old-growth forests of the Porcupine Mountains we headed across northern Wisconsin for

a brief visit to the Apostle Islands. We stayed in the small town of Bayfield one night at a quaint motel that featured decorative Native American wall paintings. A couple from Connecticut had passed up the room, so we grabbed it. Other motels and Inns were filled. We both liked Bayfield, Monica especially. The pace there is slow enough that the friendliness shown by the residents is genuine. I get a good feeling from the locals. However, my sense is that, as a whole, the Apostle Islands were hammered in the past by timber and mining exploiters. The land is in a slow state of recovery, which is still too early for the forests to be of interest to me. You see seedy aspen, birch, and red maple everywhere. Not much to look at. There is lots of white pine, but not impressive. The lake scenery is interesting, but the island forms are subdued by my standards. I realize there are interesting sandstone formations with sea caves, but I relate to other parts of Lake Superior far more, so, I was eager to get on the road.

Our route west was through Duluth, MN and on to Itasca State Park. Lake Itasca is the headwaters of the Mississippi. On the way we passed through bog areas dominated by black spruce. It is always an odd sight. Itasca would represent a return trip for me and would be Monica's first. We routed ourselves through the area because Itasca State Park is worth visiting for many reasons. To my mind, the top two are: (1) the gorgeous stands of virgin red pine, and (2) the source of the Mississippi River. In order of priority, I put the red pines first. That may seem odd, even for me. The source of the Mississippi at the end of Lake Itasca is fine, but hardly overpowering. The area is a little too developed to provide a sense of the early exploration that titillates the imagination. Current day Lake Itasca is a popular destination. Visitors are from all over and naturally want to stick their feet in the beginning of the father of waters. But for me, outside the refreshing feeling of the cool waters on tired feet, the principle attraction for me is the feel I get when I'm in appreciation mode. The historical significance of the place is immense. Even so, most of the impact must be left to the imagination. Throngs of tourists shuffle to and from the lake, talking on cell phones, complaining of the mosquitoes, and taking pictures of each other. The source of the mighty Mississippi is but a momentary diversion, a novelty. The natural history of the lake, the source of the Mississippi, the role of indigenous culture in the region are far removed from current day priorities and activities. However, the virgin red pine forest is a different matter. In terms of visual appeal, it is off the charts. In fact, it impressed Monica as Itasca's greatest natural treasure.

While at Itasca, I hurriedly re-measured the champion white pine. It is 106 feet tall, although the sign says 112. The girth is 14.4 feet and it looks every bit that much. Farther along the access road to the wilderness area is a brief walk to the former red pine champion. It is dead now. The sign listed its height when alive as 126 feet, but that is highly improbable. I measured at least 36 red and white pines while cruising the area and could not even approach 126 feet for even the whites. I presume someone used a tape and clinometer or a hypsometer employing the tangent method. My guess is around 110 feet for the champ when alive. But height doesn't matter much for those gorgeous red pines. They are stunningly beautiful and reminded me of how un-aesthetic, or bland, the red pine plantations around Massachusetts's reservoirs are in comparison. It is another example of forcing a noble species into an ecological straightjacket in order to derive economic benefit.

Here are seven images from Itasca. The first four show virgin red pines and the next two show the headwaters of the mighty Mississippi. I won't recount any of the history of the discovery of the source of the river, because that information is so readily available on the Internet. The origin of the red pine communities is inextricably tied to fire, which the region periodically saw in the past from natural causes.



Parks like Itasca are gems. Many people visit and enjoy them, but often with little thought to their origin. Itasca's beginnings are especially interesting. Here is an excerpt from Wikipedia.

"In the late 19th century, Jacob V. Brower, historian, anthropologist and land surveyor, came to the park region to settle the dispute of the actual location of the Mississippi's headwaters. Brower saw this region being quickly transformed by logging, and was

determined to protect some of the pine forests for future generations. It was Brower's tireless efforts to save the remaining pine forest surrounding Lake Itasca that led the state legislature to establish Itasca as a Minnesota State Park on April 20, 1891, by a margin of only one vote.[3] Through his conservation work and the continuing efforts of others throughout the decades, the grounds of Itasca had been maintained."

Itasca's first supervisor was a woman, an unlikely prospect in a male-dominated period of our history. She had to contend with rapacious lumbermen. She stood up to them. If she hadn't, the lumbermen would have trashed the remaining area like they trashed the rest of the immediate region, like they trashed virtually everything they touched. Residents of areas that were notable timber producers in the past are often proud of their logging history and offer logging museums to visitors. Personally, I find little to feel proud of in such exploitation of our natural landscape. Yes, I benefit from what has happened in the past, but I don't have to be proud of our abuse of the environment. It happened, and that is that, but taking pride in it? It isn't that we shouldn't use natural resources or cut trees for timber, it is how wanton, shortsighted, and greedy we've been in exploiting the natural world. Oops, this is starting to sound like a rant. I'll say no more on this topic.

I'll close with a final image from the wilderness area of Itasca. It is a gorgeous wetland surrounded by virgin red pines. I would have taken many images, but the mosquitoes were ferocious. They went through my citronella-based mosquito repellent like it was salad dressing on a gourmet salad. The repellent was actually an attractant. Bad!





Wilderness area of Itasca State Park, MN



The mighty Mississippi River at its origin



[ENTSCatchup.doc](#)

Robert T. Leverett

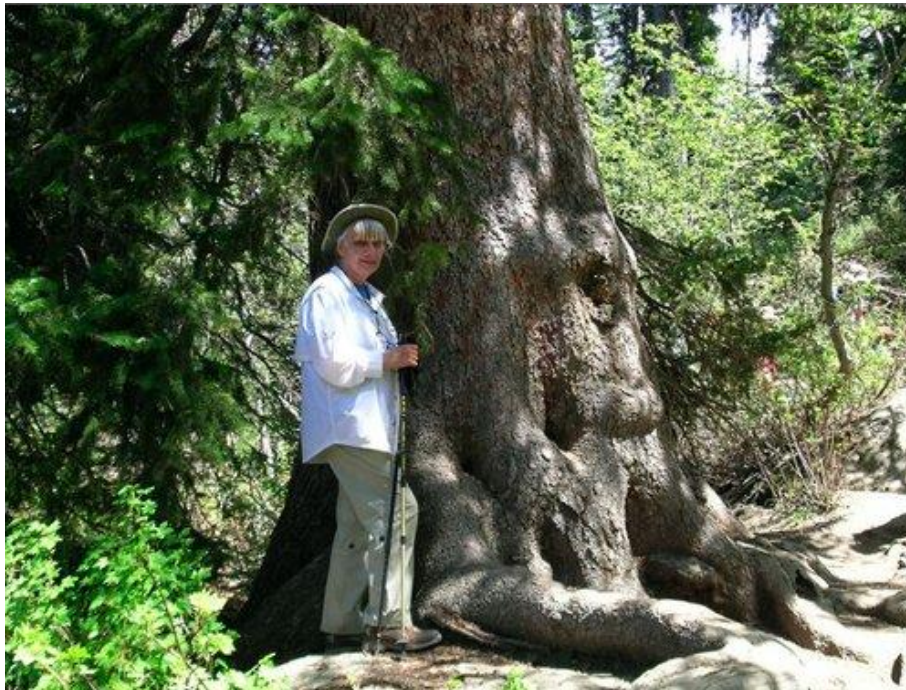
Grand Tetons, WY

by dbhguru » Sun Jul 03, 2011 2:01 pm

It is a little past 11:00AM and I'm sitting at my daughter's kitchen table awaiting the arrival of Michael Taylor sometime this morning or early afternoon. We'll pick up Don Bertollette later today, and then the 2011 WNTS rendezvous will officially begin. While I'm waiting, I'll pass along some

images from Monica's and my recent visit to the Tetons in Wyoming. The first image is of a huge Englemann Spruce in Cascade Canyon near Hidden Falls. People were bypassing it without a single glance. The Park Service seems to be barely aware of it. There's work to be done in GTNP.

I pose a question to ENTS tree measuring experts. What would you place its girth as? Its height is 120.5 feet.



I measured Englemann Spruce trees in the vicinity to 131.4 feet in height. Most are 8 to 11 feet in girth, with 3 really large ones. I was not expecting this from the standpoint of trees. The Tetons don't even make a blip on the radar scope for good western tree habitat. However, from a mountain standpoint, the Tetons are a hard act to follow. They are very young mountains, geologically speaking, the youngest range of the Rockies. According to current theory, they began forming from 6 to 9 million years ago. On their eastern side, they rise abruptly above their immediate base, which varies between 6,500 and 7,000 feet. At 13,774 feet altitude, the Grand Teton rises fully 7,000 feet above its immediate base, and about 7,300 feet above the Snake River to the East. The sudden uplift is very dramatic as viewed from Jackson Hole. The next few images show Teton scenery.





While in the Tetons, we saw 4 adult grizzlies plus two cubs. A grizzly in the wild is an intimidating sight. We also saw elk, mule deer, yellow-bellied marmots, and bison. I'll report more as time goes on.

Robert Leverett

Giant Forest, CA tree hunt 5-22-2011

by Will Blozan » Sun Jul 03, 2011 1:18 pm

Logistical snafus, weather delays, and climbing restrictions gave me some opportunities to explore parts of Giant Forest in search of superlative trees. Dr. Bob Van Pelt gave me a list of what was considered superlative for several species in the area.

The first area I went to was an area I will call the "Giant Forest Appendix". It is a narrow strip of sequoia dominated forest that runs down a steep ravine off the main plateau. The ravine gives good shelter and the moisture of the creek, some fire protection. I had spotted some tall-looking sugar pines (*Pinus lambertiana*) and incense cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*) on the drive up the previous week.

According to Bob's cheat sheet, 250 feet (76.2 m) was notable for a sugar pine. The first tree I measured was close- 245.5' (74.8 m) on a 65.4" DBH (166.2 cm) trunk. Next to this tree was a fine cedar- and if I could find one over 175' (53.3 m) I would be in possession of a new Sierra height record. The day was off to a good start as the cedar soared to 178.1' (54.3 m) on a modest 54" DBH (137.1 cm) trunk.

I continued down the ravine and found more pines in the 220's then the forest became dry so I drove down the road to Crystal Cave. More 170' (51.8 m) cedars were scattered about as well as numerous more sugar pines in the low 200's (61 m). As I drove past a small creek, strange foliage caught my eye. It was a small grove of California nutmeg (*Torreya californica*)- one of which was a new Sierra height record of 71.2' (21.7 m). In this grove were some pacific dogwoods in bloom (*Cornus nutallii*).



Torreya bark detail



Pacific dogwood blossoms



Pacific dogwood bloom detail

I explored many, many flats and slopes along the road but did not get any new records until a small sugar pine dominated ravine. The pines were large and close to 230' but what caught my eye here was a slender cedar that I shot up into out of the car window. From the car I got over 200' above eye- a height never thought possible for the species at this latitude. I parked and went to the base to measure diameter and zero the base. A clean shot from the opposite side of the ravine was an astounding 217.7'! Bob says this may be the second tallest ever recorded for the species.



217.7 foot cedar



~18 foot CBH sugar pine near tall cedar

As the road entered the drier forests of oak and pine (including some 220'+ ponderosa pine; *Pinus ponderosa*) I turned back and went back up to the Giant Forest plateau.



~220 foot "Pondie"

Here I began a search in a sheltered, north facing bowl that showed great promise for tall trees. Earlier in the week Bob had measured a sequoia from the road that exceeded 300'. This was only the third tree known in Giant Forest to exceed 300'. I went way up slope to measure this young, double topped tree and with my Nikon 440 and clinometer got a height of 306.1 feet (93.3 m). Intrigued, Bob came up with his impulse laser and after careful shots got 306.7 feet (93.5 m). Typically Bob and I have such close height numbers- a great endorsement for the techniques we use in ENTS. This is also why the western tree hunters bank on our numbers and don't question our reports.



306.7 foot tall young sequoia

Near this tall tree were the crumbled remains of a former giant tree recorded by Wendell D. Flint at over 30,000 cubic feet. It has a teetering single limb system on the edge of a burned out shell of a trunk.



306.7 foot sequoia with crumbling hulk to left



Cameron and Rikke on base of shattered giant

I continued upstream from the new tall sequoia to see what else lurked in the bowl. I measured numerous sequoia over 280' - a good sign as this is a significant height for the species. Some of you may recall that 311' (94.8 m) is the tallest recorded- a tree I climbed in 2009.

http://www.nativetreesociety.org/fieldtrips/us_west/california/20091007-sequoia/sequoia_adventures_3_5.htm

While upslope measuring an adjacent tree I spotted a thrifty top arising from a big break on the top of a huge sequoia. I roughed it to over 300' (91.5 m)! Number four over 300'! I went to the base to find midslope and measure the girth (these tall trees involved a lot of hiking to get the base referenced... and then get back up to a spot to see the tree).



Me at base of new giant tall sequoia

Holy moly! This was a big tree (19.5' or 5.95 m at BH)- and I would later learn that it is the largest 300 footer ever discovered. The wood volume of this tree may be close to 30,000 cubic feet. I did the best I could on the base shot since there was still three feet of snow on the north side. My shot from two separate locations yielded the exact same height of 303.4' (92.5 m). How was this tree not previously discovered? I hope Bob or Steve Sillett can return to this tree and reticle it for volume.



Stitch of 303.4 foot giant sequoia



303.4' from upslope

While at the base of the new sequoia find, I spotted a Sierra (or California) white fir (*Abies lowiana*) that looked quite tall. My last trip here set a new height record for this species of 247.7' (75.5 m). This tree was a tad shorter at 240.1' (73.2 m). From the sighting position for the fir measurements I spotted a sugar pine that although young, was quite large and arrow straight. It turns out this tree would be the tallest found on this trip and the current park height record of 247.6' (75.5 m). The fire-scarred base was a respectable 73.7" (187.3 cm) diameter.

I continued to measure more tall sequoia- one to 290' but no more over 300'. I returned down the other side of the ravine and the only notable tree was an outstandingly small white fir that although only 52.2" (132.6 cm) in diameter rocketed up to a top 242.8' (74.0 m) high! What was even crazier was this top

was on a reiteration that arose after the main top broke out- indicating it was quite possibly much taller.



240.1 foot fir

Bob, Steve and I all believe it is just a matter of time until a 262' (80 m) fir is found. 80 meters is considered the superlative threshold for the pine family.



Tallest sugar pine

For now, Giant Forest has only begun to be surveyed for trees other than sequoia. Bob and Steve are now in possession of high resolution LiDAR data that promise to reveal some exciting stuff. Bob already has several dozen points over 295' (90 m) to check out- including one hit over 311' (95 m).

Now, if only I wasn't so far away...

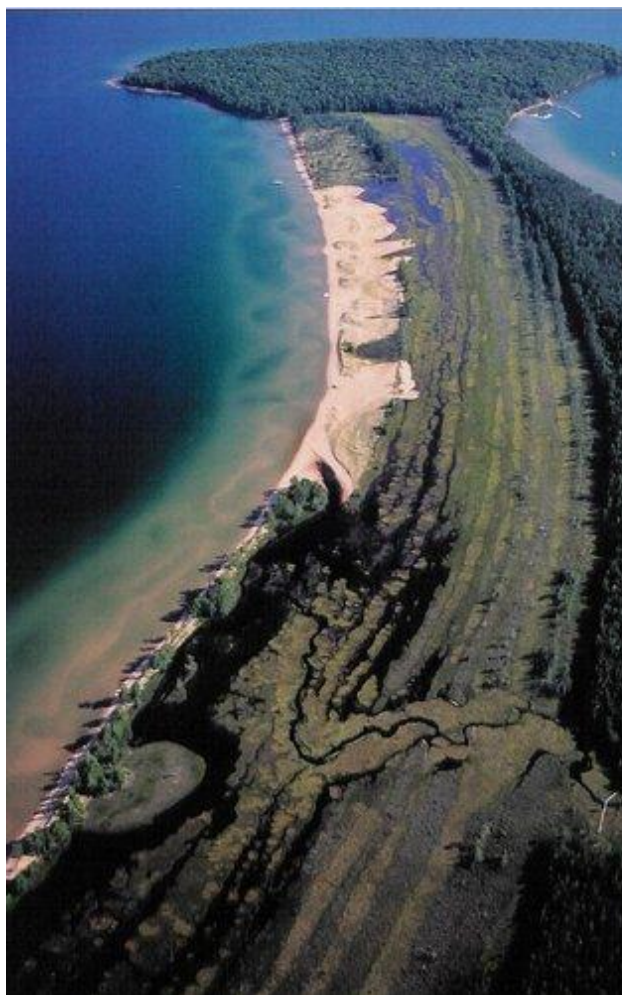
Will Blozan

[Apostle Islands, WI](#)

by Lee Frelich » Tue Jul 05, 2011 10:11 pm

...Regarding the Apostle Islands--there are several islands that have not been logged, and a few that have not been logged and have no deer, which are a jungle of yew in the understory and have Trilliums and other wildflowers with huge sizes not seen elsewhere (unfortunately I don't have pictures). The outer portion of the islands that face Lake Superior have very interesting cliffs and caves (first picture), several historic lighthouses, and an unusual geological formation known as a tombolo, small island that gets connected to another island or the mainland by sand bars, in this case a series of sand bars with swales between (2nd picture). However, to see these you need to get in a boat and it takes a few days. It is also interesting to note that some of the historic lighthouses are surrounded by unlogged forest because the Coast Guard acquired substantial acreage around the proposed building sites for lighthouses well before logging occurred in the Great Lakes Region. A substantial proportion of Lighthouses are located in very remote areas and surrounded by excellent remnants of natural vegetation. The third picture shows Raspberry Island lighthouse with a few acres of second growth nearby, but also unlogged maple, yellow birch and hemlock in the background.





Lee Frelich

Root Grafts and Living Stumps

by Rand » Tue Jul 05, 2011 1:27 pm

Apparently it is possible for two trees to be conjoined by the roots, such that if one is cut down, the stump and root system remain alive via the graft. I've only seen a couple of examples.



This one in Cascade Range in southern Oregon



Bald Cypress in Reelfoot Lake State park in far western Tennessee



This one in Neldors Grove Area of the Sierra Nevada:

Has anyone seen broadleaf trees do this?

Randy Brown

Basin and Range, Idaho

by dbhguru » Tue Jul 05, 2011 6:30 pm

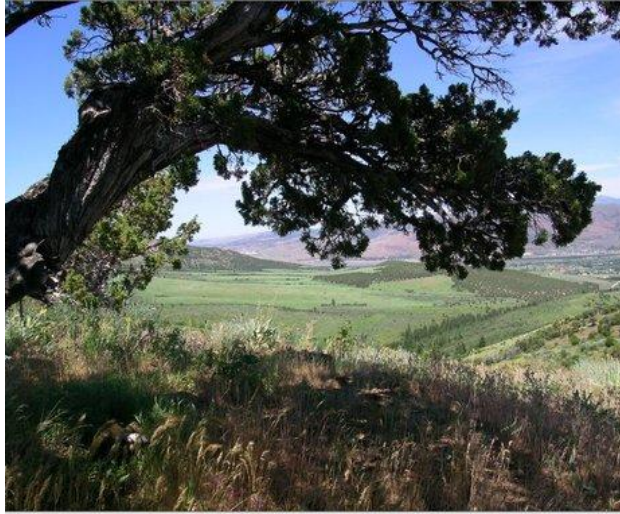
Yesterday Monica, Don, and I held our first WNTS event by going up the Gibson Jack trail that starts a few miles from my daughter's house. Gibson Jack winds its way up to the top of a small mountain range in the Pocatello vicinity. The starting elevation of the trail is 5,080 feet at a small stream. The trailhead is a meeting place for hikers, mountain bikers, dirt bikers, and ATV users. From my brief observation, all seem to coexist – a good thing.

From the trailhead, we climbed up a long ridge and eventually to an altitude of 6,500 feet before calling it quits. We had panoramic views all the way. Our specific objective was to document the plant

communities and enjoy the scenery, along the trail. There are lots of Douglas Fir in the gulches and ravines in the surrounding area. However, none are of exceptional size on or near the trail we chose. This was a disappointment, but so it was to be.

What was exceptional about yesterday's walk was the range of visual impressions. We enjoyed an array of subtle colors. The light greens of the meadows, aspens, and distant fields were visibly differentiated and punctuated by the darker greens of the conifers, snaking their way up the ravines. Up close, there was mountain mahogany, and unknown shrub, and some very old junipers to look at. We have no way of knowing their ages, but 400+ years seems reasonable for several of the trees we saw. The first two images show what we believe to be several centuries-old junipers.





Dirt bikers use the trail we were on, so it has lots of loose gravel, making for difficult walking. However, it is well worn. You could follow it in the dark. In the next image, the trail is visible going up 6,775-foot Gibson Jack Mountain. Don and Monica gaze contemplatively at the trail in what was a rapidly rising temperature. We had donned rain gear under cloudy skies at the outset, but the clouds were rapidly dissipating and we were heating up in a brightening sun.



In the next image we see Don and Monica resting in the shade. We had reached an altitude of 6,440 feet, courtesy of my Garmin GPS. Monica went on for about 0.2 miles farther for the view while Don and I languished under a mountain mahogany contemplating the compelling features of the western landscape. The clear air, the sweeping vistas, the

sharp range of colors, the fresh feel of the land, the pioneer spirit, etc. We triumphantly ticked off the appealing features. We were westerners in spirit – Don a born westerner, and I an honorary recruit.

When Monica returned, it was my turn to amble around looking for photo ops. However, while taking images, I had a need to introduce myself to a novel use of the young leaves of the arrow leaf balsamroot. I won't be indiscreet and describe the use given the leaves, leaving that to the imagination, but I highly recommend this prolific plant. It has versatility for many bodily requirements.



An indispensable feature of the West is its distant vistas. The long view is emphasized even in western movies that concentrate on the social aspects of the West. The West is about space. In fact, it is inconceivable to me to travel toward western horizons without developing a deep appreciation for the expansiveness of the landscape and absorbing its grandness through its broad color pallet, the juxtaposition of contrasting colors, the sound of the wind, the sheer scale of the physical features. Standing beneath a lone juniper, I attempted to capture some of the feel of western expansiveness in the next three images.



photography. We had many choices.

Indian paintbrush is one of my favorite species. I like both its name and appearance. I could have concentrated exclusively on wildflowers. There was no shortage of subjects: arrow leaf balsamroot in abundance, larkspur, Indian paintbrush, wild geranium, scarlet gilia, yarrow, blue penstemon, harebell, elderberry, sego lily, a couple of unidentified purple flowers, prickly pear cactus, to name a few.



I will present two final images, with a preface. Even the most ardent tree or big landscape enthusiast will not overlook the abundant wildflowers as a subject of

I will now turn the podium over to Don, who will add his own thoughts about yesterday's experience in a future posting.

Bob Leverett

Forest blowdown in Burnett County WI

by Lee Frelich » Thu Jul 07, 2011 10:20 am

On July 1 a derecho crossed Minnesota and Wisconsin. Many boats were overturned on the lakes in Minneapolis, and 1000s of trees were blown down in Minnesota. However, the storms seemed to reach their highest level of severity just after crossing into Wisconsin, where forests were leveled and a number

of people in campgrounds were injured or killed. Burnett County, Wisconsin, about 70 miles northeast of Minneapolis, had the worst damage. The three photos below show: (1) mammatus clouds--when they are this well developed, you know something grand is going to happen. (2) large hail like this is capable of stripping bark from pine trees (in 2000, 5000 acres of pines were killed in northern WI by hail). (3) pine forest leveled by winds of probably 100-110 mph.



Photo by Stacy Hopke, Burnett County Sheriff's Department

More information and photos at:

http://www.crh.noaa.gov/dlh/?n=1jul2011_winddamage

The line of severe thunderstorms that moved through Pine County, Minnesota, and northwest Wisconsin, produced widespread, non-tornadic wind damage. Such winds are also often referred to as "straight-line winds" or "downburst winds". The damage included some areas of very intense forest blowdown. The

National Weather Service in Duluth conducted a storm damage assessment the following day in parts of Pine, Burnett, Washburn, and Douglas Counties. This assessment was aided by aerial flyovers of the damage by the Burnett County Sheriff's Department. Both the ground and air assessments concluded that the damage across the area was caused by widespread, non-tornadic, straight line wind gusts in excess of 60 mph, with smaller pockets of intense winds in excess of 100 mph. (continued)



Mammatus clouds July 1 2011

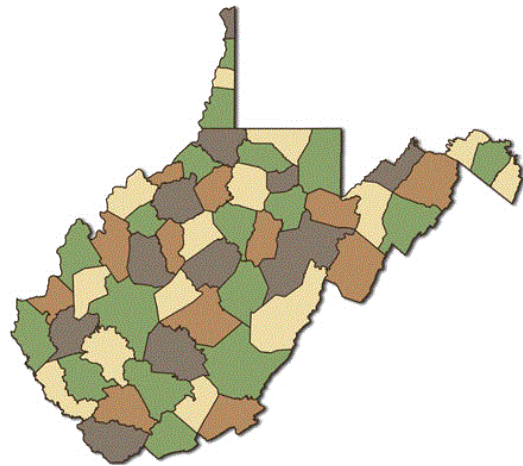


Lee Frelich

[Updated WV Maximum Dimension List](#)

by tsharp » Wed Jul 06, 2011 4:48 pm

Attached is a maximum dimension list for WV updated through 5/6/11. The list contains only trees/shrubs that are native to West Virginia. Any know dead trees have been removed with the intention of accumulating a historical maximum dimension list.



The surprise of the year was a Serviceberry with a height of 101 feet. It was ID as *Amelanchier arborea* - Common or Downy Serviceberry. It is on private property and the landowner recognized it as unusual and left a buffer zone of trees around it after selling some timber.

The East Maximum Dimension List that Jess Riddle developed shows 73.4' height for *A. arborea* - and 108.8' height for *A. laevis* - Allegheny or Smooth Serviceberry.

Any comments and questions are appreciated.

Turner Sharp



[2011 WV Maximum Dimension List-ENTS.xls](#)

Edison Arboretum and Johnson T. Janes Park, WV

by tsharp » Fri Jul 08, 2011 10:09 pm

I am somewhat behind in getting some Rucker Indices organized from some tree measurements done last winter.

Both of these tracts are in the city of Parkersburg, Wood County, WV.

1. Edison Arboretum. 11/29/2010. The Wood County Board of Education owns this tract and acquired it when building a school in the early 1960's. About 10 acres was dedicated to an 'outdoor lab' for students and was heavily used by various classes in the school system in the late 60's and early 70's. Over the years use and maintenance declined until about 10 years ago the local Master Gardeners Club basically restored the trails and fence (no deer for 10 years), installed signage and labels. The elevation ranges from 700-850 feet with northwest aspect.

Northern Red Oak, *Q. rubra*, 5.8', 107.3': 6.1', 90.3'

Scarlet Oak, *Q. coccinea*, 6.6, 99.5

White Ash, *F. Americana*, 5.8, 93.4

Red Maple, *A. rubrum*, 6.9, 90.5

Chestnut Oak, *Q. prinus*, 4.2, 89.0

Black Cherry, *P. serotina*, 4.6, 88.5

Big Tooth Aspen, *P. grandentata*, 3.3, 86.1

White Oak, *Q. alba*, 6.3, 82.9: 7.1, 77.8

Black Walnut, *J. nigra*, 2.9, 77.8

Virginia Pine, *P. virginiana*, 3.4, 77.5: 3.6, 66.5

American Elm, *U. americana*, 3.5, 73.8

Persimmon, *D. virginiana*, 2.6, 70.1

The RI 10 is 89.2. The early successional species such as Virginia Pine, Persimmon, and Aspen are falling out of the stand. I cannot explain the lack of Yellow-poplar. Age of stand estimated from prior use at 50-75 years.

2. Johnson T. Janes Preserve. 1/4 and 1/10/2011.

This 90 acre tract is owned by the City of Parkersburg, in Wood County, WV and thus far is an undeveloped park with 90 percent of the acreage below the flood plain level of 610'. Much of the

acreage can be classified as a wetland and is subject to periodic flooding from Worthington Creek which is a tributary of the Little Kanawha River with both being subject to backup water from the Ohio River. In some years much of the acreage can stay flooded for 2-3 weeks

Sycamore,	<i>P. occidentalis</i> ,	8.8,	121.5
Cottonwood,	<i>P. deltoides</i> ,	6.8,	106.9:
8.2,		96.0	
Silver Maple,	<i>A. saccharinum</i> ,	7.5,	103.6
Yellow-poplar,	<i>L. tulipifera</i> ,	7.7,	103.4
Pin Oak,	<i>Q. palustris</i> ,	9.0,	103.1
Bitternut Hickory,	<i>C. cordiformis</i> ,	6.1,	99.8
Shellbark Hickory,	<i>C. laciniata</i> ,	5.4,	98.6
Green Ash,	<i>F. pensylvanica</i> ,	6.7,	97.6
Black Walnut,	<i>J. nigra</i> ,	3.8,	
90.9:4.8,		76.1	
Black Cherry,	<i>P. serotina</i> ,	5.1,	87.9
Red Maple,	<i>A. rubrum</i> ,	6.3,	82.0
Big Tooth Aspen,	<i>P. grandentata</i> ,	3.7,	78.6
River Birch,	<i>B. nigra</i> ,	5.2,	67.0
Boxelder	<i>A. negundo</i>	3.4	62.0

The RI 10 is 101.3. Seventy percent of the canopy is Sycamore and Silver Maple. The Yellow-poplar on this bottomland site is losing out in the canopy. I am pretty confident on the species ID for the Shellbark Hickory but the Squirrels had already hidden the nuts. I will be revisiting this tree for positive ID and because it is a taller Shellbark than any I have measured in WV. Age of stand estimated from a few ring counts at 50-75 years.

Turner Sharp

Red fir: *Abies magnifica*

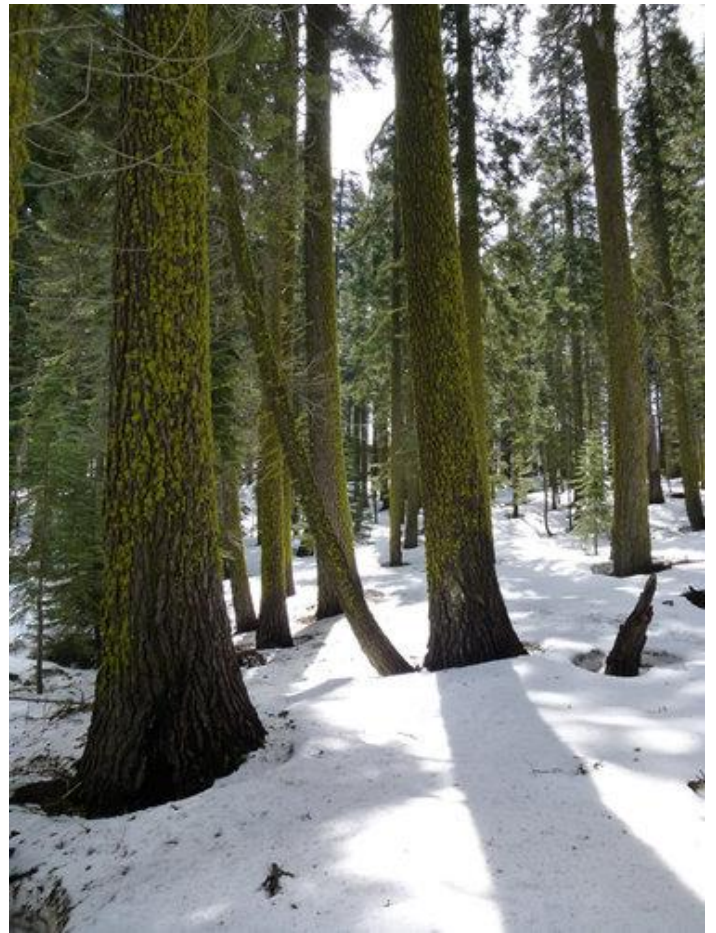
by Will Blozan » Sat Jul 09, 2011 1:34 pm

ENTS/WNTS,

I felt compelled to single out a species for its own post. The aptly-named red fir of the Sierras (*Abies magnifica* var. *magnifica*) is as deserving as ever. The red bark of mature trees and glaucous silvery-green of the new growth is striking against the other primary colors of the Sierra forests. The bark is often crusted in bright yellow lichen that also indicates the level of the average snow pack in that part of the forest. The red fir forest is often called the “snow forest” as the deep shade can allow the winter snowpack to persist well into the summer.



Old-growth red fir in Giant Forest



Red fir snow forest



Red fir snow forest



Snow melt waterfall



"Sno-nut" holes in red fir forest (astute observers will note the trunk is a Sierra white fir, though)

I was enthralled by the patterns, shapes, and forms the Memorial Day snow had on the firs. The snow helped highlight the fractal arrangement of the twigs and branches and when blended into a larger form, strangely reminded me of oak leaves.



Red fir twigs



Red fir "oak leaves"



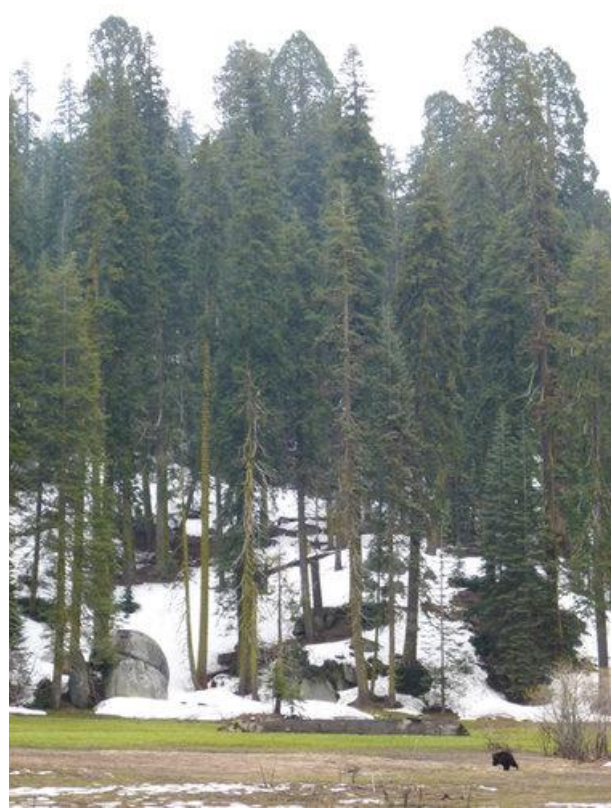
Little red fir in the deep snow



Who is ahead of us?



Red fir snow pack



Red fir sequoia resident

This is what John Muir had to say of the species:

"Happy the man with the freedom and the love to climb one of these superb trees in full flower and fruit. How admirable the forest-work of Nature is then seen to be, as one makes his way up through the midst of the broad, fronded branches, all arranged in exquisite order around the trunk, like the whorled leaves of lilies, and each branch and branchlet about as strictly pinnate as the most symmetrical fern-frond. The staminate cones are seen growing straight downward from the underside of the young branches in lavish profusion, making fine purple clusters amid the grayish-green foliage. On the topmost branches the fertile cones are set firmly on end like small casks. They are about six inches long, three wide, covered with a fine gray down, and streaked with crystal balsam that seems to have been poured upon each cone from above." - Shamelessly lifted from the Gymnosperm Database webpage:

<http://www.conifers.org/>

Unfortunately, I was not able to experience a red fir from within the crown, but I'll take his word for it. My experience with red fir is purely incidental. I have done a few hikes through red fir forest and measured a few in association with the work I did with Humboldt State University in May 2011.



Pure red fir forest, Little Baldy peak 7-2009



Entire red fir crown



Snow hiking in red fir

In the southern Sierras where my experience with red fir has been, this high elevation species begins to form pure stands at around 7,000 ft and lower still in deep coves or other cold air drainages. This dominant tree forms a nearly pure band of mono-specific forests in a subalpine belt between the lower mixed conifer forests and the higher elevation stands of lodgepole pine and tree line.

The lower end of its elevation range allows it to mix with Sierra white fir (*Abies lowiana*), sugar pine (*Pinus lambertiana*), incense cedar (*Calocedrus decurrens*), and of course the giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*). It appears that it is in these ecotone mixes that great things happen regarding height. Thus far the height records for red fir have been associated with giant sequoia.



Red fir sequoia mix



View of red fir-sequoia mix from 80 meters



Red fir and sequoia compete for light



New height record red fir at Tharpes Log, Giant Forest; center



Trunk of current height record red fir in Giant Forest

Naturally, I am curious about maximum height so I was always on the lookout for tall trees. In a plot we were installing in Giant Forest, Dr. Van Pelt and I found his former height record tree of 252' (76.8 m) to have fallen into a moldering heap of shrapnel. I was able to explore (on snowshoes) in the vicinity of this former champion and find some fine trees, although none taller than the previous record. I did find one to 246' (75.0 m). Based on my limited amount of survey time a new record is bound to be found with little search effort. The new LiDAR data just received by Van Pelt and Sillett may in fact reveal the stands of super-fir that to date remain unsurveyed.

Here is more info on this spectacular tree:
http://www.na.fs.fed.us/pubs/silvics_manual/volume_1/abies/magnifica.htm

Will Blozan

Grand Tetons, WY Part 2

by dbhguru » Sat Jul 09, 2011 4:40 pm

The second annual WNTS rendezvous will soon enter the annals of WNTS/ENTS history. Unfortunately, car trouble prevented Michael Taylor from joining us. We were bummed out, but we've all been there, and sympathize with Mike. Michael is part of the team now. He is to become the WNTS Vice President, by concurrence of WNTS President Don Bertollette and myself.

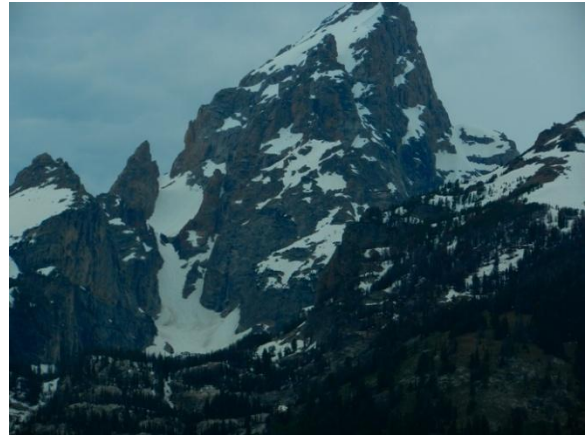
Long time friend Don flew in to Pocatello on July 3rd and left for Seattle yesterday. It is always a memorable time to see Don. Don had detoured from a European trip to make the WNTS event. He and wife Rhonda had been in Iceland.

Well, what do I have to report about WNTS 2011? So far, we've had three key events, two with Don's presence. On Sunday Monica and I will visit an old growth Douglas fir site in the lower Gibson Jack region, and then WNTS 2011 will move to Colorado, as we travel to Durango.

Our official events to date include a visit to Grand Teton NP on June 29th and 30th by Monica and me, the Gibson Jack hike with Monica, Don, and myself on July 4th, and a two-day return to Grand Teton NP, by the three of us, and my daughter's family. Both Teton excursions were rewarding in terms of the trees that Don and I measured, and extremely rewarding in terms of the wild life, the wild flowers, and the incomparable scenery for all of us.

Thursday's hike in the Tetons was farther up the Lupine Meadows Trail than Monica and I had done a few days before. We wanted the second visit to be an all-encompassing documentation of flora and fauna, so this time we went until the threat of thunderstorms persuaded us to turn around. I won't list all the species we documented in this posting, but will pass along some images and brief explanations. I'll begin with one of the mighty Grand, as it is called for short – the Grand Teton.

This view of the Grand is from the Jackson Hole flats. I never tire of gazing up to its summit. At 13,775 feet (latest NAVD88 elevation) it is the second highest summit in Wyoming. Only Gannett Peak in the Wind Rivers is higher, and only by a few feet. Gannett is 13,809 (again by NAVD88).



However, it is the Grand's abruptness above Jackson Hole that creates the dramatic relief. The lowest point in GTNP is 6350 feet. This allows for a maximum elevation change of 7425 feet. But the Snake River just to the east of the Grand Teton lies at about 6600 feet for about 7,200 feet of quick elevation gain, and that is what stands out so prominently, and has been the subject of many photographers.

The snowfields center left in the image of the Grand had been the target of extreme sport skiing. We met a climber-skier who was on the way down who had made the ascent and skied down the couloir. We also met a young man who had climbed the Middle Teton, and was returning. He was extremely fit, and I was envious. I recalled a time when I did slightly less challenging technical climbing and reveled in the challenge and experience. Alas, no more. So without further comment, may I present the Grand.



The next image shows Monica and me at a rest point along the trail. The elevation at the start of the trail is a relatively low 6,716 feet. Teewenot boldly rises 5,500 feet above the trail. Sagebrush dominates just

east of the trail. But at the west edge of Lupine Meadows, Lodge Pole Pines take over, reflecting one The Grand dominates the skyline from closer range. But from a distance, the other peaks of the Tetons' eastern flank line up like sentinels to present a long succession of rugged peaks with a sagebrush foreground as shown next. Unfortunately, I included some of the parking lot on the far left, which reduces the aesthetic appeal. Alas, it was a new camera, and my competence index is near zero.

of the dominant fire regimes of the Tetons. They are spindly trees – not much to look at. Very quickly, though, Englemann Spruce appear as a wetland is approached. Still farther up the trail, large boulders appear and provide convenient spots to stop and contemplate the geological processes that put them in place. The image below shows Monica and me in a shadowed recess.



Animal life is abundant in GTNP. Moose, elk, mule deer, mountain lion, pronghorn antelope, grizzly and black bear, wolf, coyote, bison, you name it. Elk and antelope are commonly seen in the meadows near the start of the trail started the wildlife ball rolling. That

was to be expected, since Jackson Hole is known for its elk herd and antelope are everywhere. However, a real treat for Monica, Don, and me was a yellow-bellied marmot on the trail that stayed still long enough for the next image. In addition, there were

striking Douglas Firs and Englemann Spruces measured to a maximum height of 123 feet. That is probably near maximum for tree heights the Teton - I think. Altogether we measured 16 trees along the Lupine Meadow Trail for an average of 110 feet. Girths are not dramatic. Lodge Pole Pines are slender and the biggest Doug Firs hardly exceed 9 feet in girth. We did not encounter trees equal to the Englemanns and Doug Firs encountered on the Hidden Falls and Phelps Lake Trails.

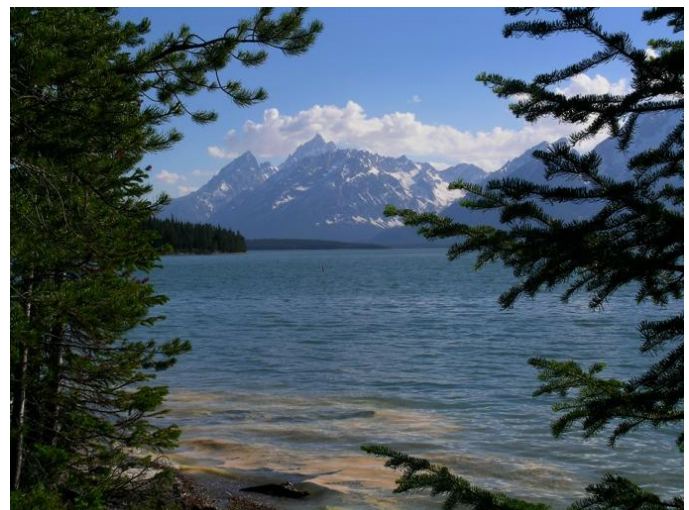
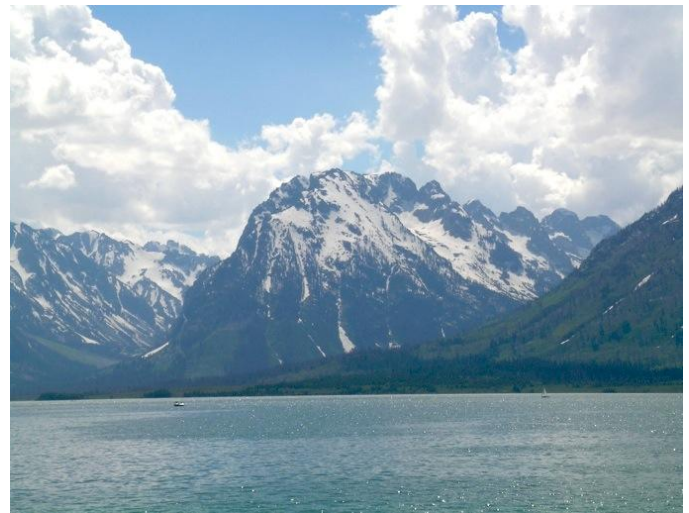
All data we collect will be passed on to the Park Service. I hope they will use the information provided. WNTS/ENTS has an excellent working relationship with the Great Smoky Mountains NP, Congaree NP, Morristown National Historic Park, the San Juan National Forest, the Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests, Pennsylvania's DCNR, Massachusetts's DCR, and other state and federal agencies. But acceptance by one organization does not guarantee the same from another. You build your reputation anew with each agency. That is just the way it is.



I will end with images from Jackson Lake as seen from Colter Bay and a final looking at the Teton fault block. All lake shots were taken in the evening with the sun in the west – not ideal, yet interesting effects can offset glare. Jackson Lake is the largest of the Teton lakes. The Snake River flows into it at one end and out the other. The true source of the Snake is in the Absaroka's to the east. The first picture shows the peaks north of Mount Moran. I am unsure of their names. The second view is more distant. You see the mountain shown in the first image along with 12,605-

foot Mount Moran to the south. This is not the same view as the usual view of Moran. The third image shows the pinnacled Grand. The yellowish stain at the water's edge is Lodge Pole Pine pollen. We were bathed in a yellow dust most of the time. I'm not allergic to the pollen, but I pity anyone who is.

The last image shows sparkles on the water. They did a dance as I stood mesmerized by the flashes. Wave action allowed for the glitter and flashes. I rank the views from Jackson Lake on a par with those from Jenny Lake.





In the last shot, we see the Grand in the center and Teewenot on the right. Teewenot is closer and rises to an altitude of 12,315 feet. It is the 6th highest summit in the Tetons. It is one of Monica's favorite

mountains. From our tent we could look out and see its summit on our first camping excursion. We got one of the two best campsites. The views were unforgettable. Both Monica and I hope to repeat the experience.



[Rucker Index for Roane Jackson Vo-Tech School property, WV](#)

by tsharp » Sat Jul 09, 2011 8:55 pm

This property is owned by the Jackson County Board of Education and is the site of the Roane-Jackson Vo-Tech School. The school and property is located just east of Frozen Camp, Jackson County, WV along the south side of US 33. The tract ranges from 1000 feet of elevation at top of the ridge down to 660 feet along Little Mill Creek. We measured in an unnamed hollow that faces due north and is drained by a wet weather stream. The aspect ranges for NW to NE. John Fichtner is a teacher there and after a little classroom time with his students and a quick introduction to the concept of a Rucker Index we had about 6 enthusiastic helpers. They measured all the diameters after learning the concept of mid-slope and unlearning measuring from the uphill side.

Trees measured and listed in descending height are as follows:

White Ash, *F. americana*, 6.1', 120.4'
Northern Red Oak, *Q. rubra*, 8.5, 116.6
Cucumber, *M. acuminata*, 6.0, 115.1
Red Maple, *A. rubra*, 6.5, 113.9
Chestnut Oak, *Q. prinus*, 6.6, 107.5
American Beech, 6.9, 100.7
Yellow-poplar, 6.1, 98.4
Pignut Hickory, *C. glabra*, 6.0, 92.2
White Oak, *Q. alba*, 6.9, 90.8
Black Oak, *Q. velutina*, 6.7, 89.0
Scarlet Oak, *Q. coccinea*, 6.3, 83.6
The RI 10 for this site 104.5'

We started measuring at the top of the ridge and worked down the hollow until we ran out of time. I was expecting to get some better heights further down the hollow but when we were walking back it was obvious that the timber was younger and the lower third of the hollow had been farmed and/or grazed.

Turner Sharp

[Gibson Jack Lower Trail - Caribou NF, ID](#)

by dbhguru » Sun Jul 10, 2011 5:52 pm

This morning Monica and I went in search of a stand of old growth Doug Fir on Lower Gibson Jack Trail in the Caribou NF. We found the old growth plus more. The wild flowers along the way were superb and the views excellent. It was a delightful trek in an area that is highly excessible and popular, but only for people you don't mind meeting on the trail. The bikers and hikers are courteous. You don't see the throngs of people shuffling along, looking bored or indifferent as is frequently the case on popular short hikes in the big national parks. We did have to watch out for moose. There is a healthy population of those big animals along with elk, mule deer, black bear, mountain lion, coyote, and a few miscellaneous varmints.

I took about 50 photos including 8 or 9 of the Doug Firs, but the trees are really secondary on this trail.

The first three images were taken near the start of the trail looking back.

