



Highlights from the President's 1991 Annual Report

• During blossom season, we conducted our second aerial search for American chestnuts in the Western region. The results were better than last year but there were not many trees large enough to see. In the prime areas there appear to be on an average only three chestnut trees per a 10 square mile area during the first two year of searching. (We have two airplanes in the 9th District for blossom-time '92 and two in other Districts of the State.)

• The large trees we found on the ground after aerial location were mostly blighted and will die in less than 5 years. The largest to date is only 20" DBK. However, we have found five trees that appear blight-free, the largest of which is 14" DBH and 65' tall. We are going to experiment by injecting it with approved fungicide to see if we can keep it from acquiring the blight.

• Our pollination efforts on one large tree paid off in the collection of 700 nuts. There were 669 more were collected from 14 other trees. We were disappointed to lose 400 nuts to predators who burrowed under our wire screen protection.

• Our Chestnut Day planting last April attracted 40 people. With their effort we planted 155 sprouted nuts in canons and 60 trees from one to two-years-old stock. When last checked we had lost only three trees and six seedlings from nuts.

• Our First Annual Meeting on December 14 was a great success. We had over 63 people in attendance to see the displays, listen to the seminars and to conduct the business of the Chapter.

• Directors for seven of the nine New York State Districts were elected and are in various stages of setting up their District organizations. The two remaining Districts without leadership are Metro New York City and Long Island. (One goal for 1992 is to get all Districts up and running)

• Our membership is now over two hundred and we expect it to grow steadily.

• The Chapter believes very much in the genetic-engineering research approach and feels it may lead to the final solution. Therefore, we have focused the majority of our money from fund raising efforts to this end. We have donated \$10,000 seed money to Syracuse University and pledged another \$5,000 for 1992 to insure continuance. The critical path is such that we could cut the overall time down significantly if we could raise the dollars to work on a second leg of the research simultaneously.

• My thanks to all who have worked so hard to make 1991 a success. Onward through 1992.

*Herbert F. Darling, Jr.
President*

Western New York Planting Day

The second annual Chestnut Day will be held on Saturday, April 25, 1992. Chestnut Day is the special day when the 9th District plants young chestnut trees as part of its program to reestablish the American Chestnut.

Approximately one hundred seedlings will be planted alongside last years planting of over two hundred. The planting site is at the **Zoar** Valley Multiple Use Area, Town of Collins, Erie County, approximately three miles east of Gowanda. Everyone who is interested in helping and learning more about the American chestnut should be at the intersection of Vail and Unger Roads at 10:30 a.m. Please bring a bag lunch, shovel and outdoor chair.

Other activities planned for the day include chestnut identification training, measuring and collection of data on the seedlings planted in 1991, treating chestnut cankers by the mudpack method, advice on planting chestnuts on your property and the distribution of pre-ordered chestnut seedlings (see column "Seedlings for...available").

Membership Renewals Coming Soon

Letters will be in the mail soon for 1992 membership renewal. We urge you to respond promptly.

DISTRICT NEWS

Since the election of District Directors for seven of the nine Districts in New York State, there has been a flurry of stand-up and planned activities with the goal of consolidating the Chapter organization during 1992. Here are District Directors and some of the highlights:

District 9: William Snyder, Buffalo, Home - 716-839-5456, Office - 716-634-3431

An American chestnut tree will be planted in conjunction with the WNY Nurserymen's Association at the South Park Botanical Gardens on Arbor Day, Friday, April 24. (Gordon Nursery will donate the tree). Wayne Cooper and Michael Fay will chair the second annual Chestnut Day planting by 9th District members on the day after Arbor Day, Saturday April 25*. Plans are in progress for a tour to see blooming trees during the period of June 20 to July 11*. District 9 along with the New York State Chapter will host the National Convention of the AFC October 10 and 11, 1992*. The District 9 Board consists of William Snyder, Wayne Cooper, Michael Fay, Carol Siegel and Fred Thurnherr. (*See separate columns for details)

District 8: David Vercolen, Rochester, Home - 716-654-8536

An announcement for a District formation meeting in early summer will be coming soon. Meanwhile the District is coordinating with 4H Clubs and a local television station in a program to plant chestnuts.

District 7: Roy Hopke, Nineveh, Home - 607-648-5512, Office - 607-693-2690

The District will have a meeting to plan its programs in April. District members are searching for the location

of American chestnuts of over 10 inches DBH. And for future planting, the District is looking for suitable planting sites.

District 6: Darrel Rippiteau, Alexander Bay, Home - 315-482-2685 (Alternate contact : Bernard Davies, Dept. of Environmental Conservation, Lowville NY 13367)

Announcements concerning the formation of the District have been made through the media. The District will be working with the NY State DEC at an older American chestnut planting site near Lowville.

District 5: Richard Nelson, HCR - 1 Box 196, Warrensburg, NY 12885

Media announcements have been made concerning the formation of the District organization. In anticipation of a planting program, suitable sites are being sought.

District 4: Lewis Decker, Gloversville, Home - 518-725-0473, Office - 518-863-4545

The first meeting of the District attracted 24 interested people. In an attempt to better cover the area, the District will set up a group in each county. Members are actively looking for mature American chestnut trees as the first step in their program.

District 3: Frank Munzer, Clinton Comers, Home - 914-266-5138

The first meeting will be announced soon. Already arrangements have been made with the Mary Flager Cary Arboretum to plant American chestnuts sent from Buffalo. The group is arranging to engage an aircraft to locate chestnut trees during the late June-early July blossom season.

Informational Bulletins Available

The New York Chapter is moving along on the task of creating Information Bulletins for member use. Four are currently available and others are in the process of development. You may order yours by writing the Chapter headquarters. The following bulletins are on hand:

- Identification...How to distinguish American chestnuts from other chestnuts.
- Planting...Planting Chestnuts Seeds and Trees.
- Nut Storage...Storing Chestnuts before Planting.
- **Mud Packing...A Treatment to kill the Blight Fungus.**

The Bulletins in preparation are on the subjects of Pollination and Harvesting (you may order these for future delivery).

Western New York Blossom-Time bar

When there were millions of American chestnut trees before the deadly blight, observers compared hillside forests of flowering trees to a hill of snow. Now, for the present day observer, a flowering chestnut is much more of a rarity, unseen by most. For those in Western New York who would like to see trees in bloom, a tour is planned during the local bloom season between June 20 and July 11. If you are interested, phone (716) 632-1125 (Herb Darling's office) and leave your name, address and phone number with the answering switchboard operator. You will be contacted later about the exact date and details.

NY Chapter to Host ACF National Meeting

The New York State Chapter of ACF is honored to be invited to host the annual national ACF meeting on October 10 - 11, 1992. The Chapter also will hold their 1992 annual business meeting concurrently. Joint scientific sessions and social events will be enjoyed together by all participants.

The meeting will be held in the historic old Hotel Niagara in Niagara Falls, NY. This grand old hotel dates back to 1924 when it was a mecca for sumptuous social events and it was common to be dropped off and picked up by horse driven carriages. It is now known as the Fallsview Hotel and is owned by Days Inn. They have

done an excellent job of modernizing the facilities and still retaining unique features from the past such as the brass mail chutes, marble floor, and the gilded balcony overlooking the lobby. Marilyn Monroe did two of the scenes from the movie Niagara in this hotel and the original barbershop with entrance to the old tunnel to the train can be seen. It is in the center of town within walking distance of the Falls and other attractions.

The room cost will be \$55 per night for our group (Single or Double) and a

block of rooms will be held until September 9. Reservations should be made early to get a room with a view of the rapids and falls and guaranteed by credit card. Cancellations are accepted until October 6. The telephone number is 1-800-325-2625.

The registration fee of \$45 is planned to include all sessions, coffee breaks and a special tour of the famous

Old Fort Niagara on Lake Ontario

complete with an artillery demonstration with uniformed soldiers, costumed guides, and a candlelight buffet served in the officers dining room of the old French Castle dated 1726. Also of interest is a building made of large chestnut logs. A group rate for the world renowned Maid of the Mist will also be available. The boat

ride into the spray at the base of the Falls is an awesome experience no matter how many times you have taken it.

Content of the scientific program and details of the two day schedule will be published in the future when they are finalized. Since this is a holiday week-end your spouse or family may also wish to come. Sightseeing and shopping are close by and we hope to provide a hospitality area with information for them.

Seedling For Your Property Available

A limited number of one-year-old American chestnut seedlings for planting on your property may be ordered from the Western New York-District 9. Since chestnuts are self-sterile, the seedlings are being offered in pairs with a pair of protective tubes for a donation of \$10. You may order them by writing or phoning John Gordon, Jr., Gordon Nursery, 1385 Campbell Boulevard, Amherst, NY 14228, (716) 691-9371. Pick-up can be arranged at the Nursery or at the Chestnut Day planting site (see column "WNY Planting Day").

A Dozen Trees Entered in Supertree Contest ...you can still enter!

Have you an American chestnut of over 12" diameter DBH on your property? Write for a Supertree entry form and see if your tree can win the 9th District Supertree Award. Contest closes in late Spring with the award after verification (This is a Western New York contest only.)

Why the contest?

Our Location Committee wishes to keep a record of all American chestnuts that have reached maturity in order to track their history. Any that show blight resistance may be of great value in future experimentation. They may also be of value as a source for nuts for planting...either through natural or artificial pollination. It is interesting to note during the 1991 season in Western New York from 14 naturally pollinated trees 669 nuts were harvested whereas from one artificially pollinated tree (the largest) over 700 were harvested.

Chestnut Peasant Bread

Origin: Southern Europe (Serves 8)

- 1 cup chestnut pieces (cooked)
- 1 cup corn meal
- 1 cup pastry flour
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 1 cup yogurt
- 1/2 cup oil (vegetable)
- 1/2 cup water
- 2 egg yolks
- 2 egg whites, stiffly beaten
- 1/2 to 1 tsp. salt

Combine the chestnut pieces, corn meal, flour and baking soda in a large mixing bowl. Stir well, and mash through your fingers to further break up the chestnut pieces. Mix oil, egg yolk, water, yogurt and salt in a separate bowl. Thoroughly and quickly, stir into the flour mixture. Beat slightly, until all lumps are gone, but no more, then fold in stiffly beaten egg whites. Pour into a well greased 8" cake pan, iron skillet, or dutch oven and bake for one hour. Good served with stew.

“What a perfect chest the chestnut is packed in...”

— THOREAU

CHESTNUT DAY 1991



President Darling instructs on planting seedlings...and our youngest enthusiast.