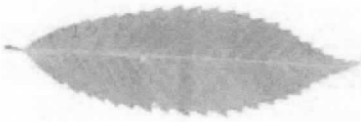


The

Canadian Sweet Chestnut

- Journal of the Canadian Chestnut Council



Issue # 52 January, 2010

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/~chestnut>

In this issue: - The AGM...Members' Correspondence...2010 Plot Plans...2010 Budget...and more!

Annual General Meeting Elects Revised Board

New Chair, Deputy Chair and Treasurer, and an additional Advisor for the next years.

The Annual General Meeting of the Canadian Chestnut Council was held at Onondaga Farms at 10:30 am 31 October. About 30 members attended.

New Board

A revised slate of Directors was elected. Chair Murray Alward changed places with Ron Casier, becoming Deputy Chair to Ron's chairmanship. In 2010 Mr Paul Faires will assume the Treasurer's duties, allowing Dr George Collin to concentrate on public relations and education. The new Board of Directors is listed on Page 2.

A minimum of nine directors is required by the Constitution. Each is elected for a term of three years, preferably staggered so an overlap occurs. Thomas Amorim, Dr Terry Anderson, Dr George Collin, Tom Welacky, Murray Alward and John Hill were willing to stand for re-election. No floor nominations were offered; so the candidates were elected.

In addition, Dr Adam Dale and Dr Greg Boland were appointed by the Board as Advisory Directors. Their vital contributions of labour and counsel in the past, and expectations of more assistance in the future, were so recognized. Dr Dale has continuously advised on breeding and Dr Boland provides blight serum for test purposes as well as pathological advice and testing assistance.

Presentations

The meeting was notable for the information presented by a number of speakers.

Stewardship assistant Ms Kelly Schafer showed her newly created, well developed educational DVD, which describes the work of the CCC with many photographs. She will play it for various audiences, particularly for school children.

Dr Adam Dale, the CCC's plant breeder, described the plans for future activities; details are provided on Page .

A lunch was provided by the CCC and Tim Horton Onondaga farms. Then the meeting toured the CCC tree orchard, where the year's blight test results were apparent on

the tagged trees.



Dr Greg Boland thanks Dr McKeen for his work.

The guest speaker was Ms Danijela Muricmladenovic of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources. She described her work in "Vegetation Modelling and Mapping, Pre-Settlement."

Once European settlers arrived in Ontario and began clearing land for farms, the composition of the forests changed. Ms Muricmladenovic's task is to determine that original forest composition, to create standards of comparison and possible emulation. She examines early survey records, which often reported on local forest cover, and studies soil and climate conditions to postulate what might have grown before clearing occurred. She reported that old-growth forests consisted largely of sugar maple, ash and elm trees, which are shade-tolerant and therefore dominated woodlands. The American chestnut dominated in places where it had gained a foothold.

This research program may assist tree planters in helping to show what types are most likely to flourish in selected terrain.

The Canadian Chestnut Council

The CCC is a scientific and charitable organization with the mission to restore the American chestnut. All its officers volunteer their services both in the field and at the desk. The CCC annual meeting, the web site and this Newsletter dispense information to generate support for saving and restoring this once-important forest tree.

Executive

- Chair - Mr. Ron Casier, 45490 Southdale Line
RR # 2, St Thomas, ON N5P 3S6
519-631-5279
- D/Chair: - Mr. Murray Alward
Riverbend Farms, Box 31, Port Burwell, ON
N0J 1T0 519-773-5522
- Treasurer - Dr. George Collin
6827 2nd Line, RR # 3 Fergus, ON
N1M 2W4, 519-787-1849
- Secretary - Mr. Charles Hooker, RR # 2, Orangeville,
ON L9W 2Y9 519-942-8085
- Founder - Dr Collin McKeen
62 Westmoreland Ave, Orangeville, ON
L9W 3B6 519-941-9513

Board of Directors (by county)

- Brant - Mr. John Hill, 254 Glen Morris Rd E
RR # 2 St. George, ON N0E 1N0
519-448-1749
- Norfolk - Dr. Terry Anderson
888 Rd. 3 E., Kingsville, ON N9Y 2E5
519-733-3796
Mr. Tom Welacky (Chair, Research Cttee)
527 Lake Drive, Kingsville, ON N9Y 3S6
519-981-4076
- Elgin - Mr. David Depuydt, 615 John St. N
Aylmer, ON N5H 2S8 519-773-4704
- Waterloo - Mr. Thomas Amorim, 9 Elm Street,
Cambridge, ON N1R 3X7 519-621-5564
- Wellington - Mr. Paul Faires
8724 Wellington Road 18, RR # 5
Belwood, ON N0B 1J0

Corresponding and Advisory Directors

- Dr Adam Dale, Dept of Plant Agriculture
University of Guelph Box 587, Simcoe, ON
N3Y 4N5 519-426-7127 Ext 333
- Dr Greg Boland, Dept of Environmental Sciences
Room 3234 Bovey Building
University of Guelph, Guelph, ON
N1G 2W 519-824-4120 Ext 2755
- Stewardship Assistant – Ms Kelly Schafer

Honorary Directors

- Mr. Leslie Corkum, Falmouth, Nova Scotia
Mr. Harley Hotchkiss, Calgary, Alberta
Mr. Arthur Loughton, Vittoria, Ontario
Dr. Peter Rice, Ottawa, Ontario

EDITORIALS

Writing Opportunity

It comes to all us writers eventually. The Muse departs and we are left with no new ideas. Particularly this Editor, who for eight years has been churning out CCC newsletters to inform the readers about Council activities and plans. Now he wants to retire (again) to grow trees.

It's time for a new Editor.

The CEO of a well-known car rental company once wrote a book of rules for CEOs, called "Up the Organization." He believed (and so do we) that CEOs (and Editors) should yield to new blood after six years so fresh ideas can be generated (and published).

We therefore announce our retirement as Secretary and Editor of the Canadian Sweet Chestnut after the 2010 Annual General Meeting.

This is an opportunity for someone new to step forward now, to understudy the position until taking over in November.

Is the work difficult? No, or we would have been fired long ago. There are a few guidelines for creating a newsletter, and a computer, camera and Secretary files to be collected.

The best part of this job is receiving emails and letters from members. We count many good, new friends arising from this correspondence. We have also learned to rite beter.

There is a drawback. One's bad witing, spelking and twyppn habits become public; then we must acknowledge our failings to ourselves as well as to the readers.

But there is satisfaction in seeing one's own declamations in print, and - an Editor's privilege - in counting oneself as plural.

Who wants to take on this challenge? Write to the Secretary. Soon.



Membership Fees

A reminder that the annual membership fee is now \$20, not \$15 as before. We don't plan another hike for a long time to come.

Renewals

Have you renewed your membership for 2010? The CCC does not mail renewal notices as the rising cost of postage does not justify that extravagance. Check the year of renewal on your newsletter envelope's address label to ensure that it reads "10" and not the digits of another year. Please renew!



Correspondence

From West Virginia, USA

I want to thank you and the CCC for sending me the Canadian Sweet Chestnut newsletter. I have been friends with Colin and Bea McKeen for many years and have spoken to your group. I know several people in the CCC. I am always appreciative of the newsletter. - Mark Double

From Bispgården, Sweden

I am working with rural development in the forestry sector in northern Sweden. I became interested in the American chestnut when I planted a tree in the Arboretum at the University of Agriculture in Umeå Latitude 63*50 north. It did remarkable well. Later on I have planted two additional trees in Bispgården on Latitude 63*05 but slightly more continental than Umeå. They are all doing fine but there are some little dieback in the winter. The Umeå tree was collected in Michigan and sent to us by Frank Telewski at WJ Beal Botanical Garden in East Lansing. The Bispgården plants were from seeds delivered by Itasca Greenhouse, a nursery company in Minnesota. The origin of these seeds was Wisconsin.

I saw your homepage and read about your work. It would be very interesting to try Canadian material here and see how it will do. Is it possible to buy some seeds from your organization? Or if you please can help me to get some seeds of Canadian provenances of American chestnut.

- Håkan Schüberg, Jilu-Tema Skog, skogsvägn, 840 73 Bispgården, Sweden email: hakan.schuberg@jill.se

A prompt reply was sent, regretting that the CCC does not sell product, but that some members have on occasion given away extra nuts. If anyone can help Mr Schüberg, please feel free to write to him directly. - Ed.

From Burlington, Ontario

I am part of a non-profit organization, Burlington Green. Although only 18, I have become quite the amateur naturalist and passionate about environment issues, especially endangered tree conservation efforts. I would LOVE to volunteer in any way that I can.

In fact, all the members of Burlington Green would love to volunteer! Everyone is enthusiastic and we have done native species recovery programs in the past. We could be restoring the natural environment, too far neglected. If you need help with summer pollinating, that would be excellent time for us.

I have worked with the Royal Botanical Gardens in their efforts to search for any American Chestnuts on their property. I would certainly be interested in helping! Thank you for giving me the opportunity to even ask to volunteer/work for the CCC, as I would want nothing more than to help the American Chestnut recover. Please let me know how we can help!

- Tom Nagy email: tom.nag@hotmail.com

From Prince Edward Island and Nova Scotia

Honorary Director Leslie Corkum of Nova Scotia and Ms Jocelyn Clarke of Prince Edward Island actively represent the CCC on the East Coast. Both have been scouring for American chestnut trees and reporting them for the CCC's tree registry, as well as propagating the species They have been persuaded to provide photographs of their work. - Ed.



Les and Jocelyn check the Ashdale Tree.

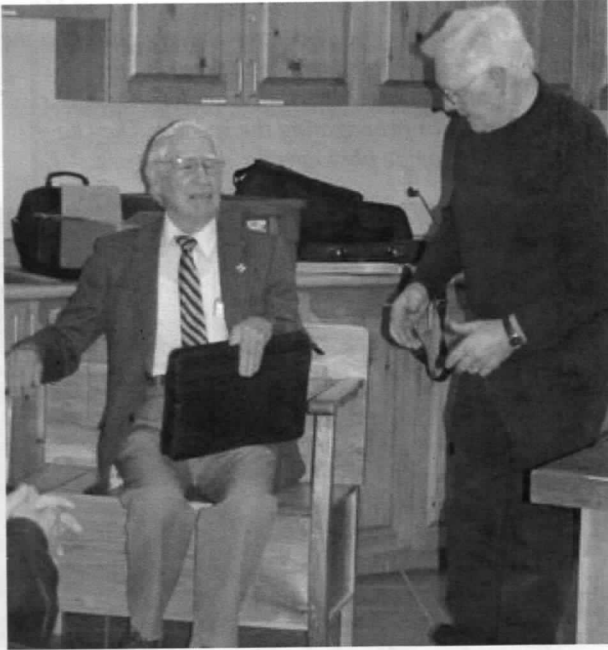


Jocelyn and Less take scions from a chestnut in Hantsport.



Scenes from the Annual General Meeting

Tim Horton Onondaga Farms Children's Camp, 31 October, 2009



Onondaga Farms Manager John Hill gave Dr Colin McKeen a handsome Deacon's Bench on his retirement from the Canadian Chestnut Council. A second bench John made for auction garnered a handsome sum for the CCC after fierce bidding from the members present. The benches were made from American chestnut lumber bequeathed to the CCC by Mike Nemerovski's estate.



The orchard tour attracted the meeting members despite the chill weather. Dr Adam Dale described the blight testing process - injections, lesion measurements over the summer, removal of blighted branches - to interested observers. In 2010 crossbreeding of hybrids to hybrids and to pure chestnut trees will commence.



Outreach Revs Up to Promote Awareness and Education thanks to \$19,000 OTF Grant

The PR Committee is happy to announce that the Canadian Chestnut Council has been awarded a grant of \$19,000 over 32 months by the Ontario Trillium Foundation.

The PR Committee submitted the grant request in July 2009, which was followed up by a site visit to the plantation at Tim Horton Onondaga Farms in August, 2009. The PR Committee was notified in early November that the Trillium board had approved the funds to be used to increase outreach, upgrade marketing initiatives and broaden memberships, volunteer and partnership activities for the preservation of the American chestnut in southern Ontario.

The grant will be effective in aiding in the continued pursuits of the Outreach Coordinator and PR Committee, who strive to spread the word about chestnut recovery and thus attract further support from the general public, especially in the form of memberships and volunteerism. Support of the chestnut recovery is essential to ensure that scientific research aimed at returning a timber-type chestnut to the forests of southern Ontario can continue and succeed in its mission.

Grant funds will be used to increase further awareness of Chestnut preservation efforts and thereby sustain CCC activities in the future. Specific examples of where funds will be used include:

- Develop new educational workshop
- Upgrade the new, interactive CCC website
- Book outreach presentations for groups such as Service Clubs, Naturalist Groups and Stewardship Councils
- Train directors and volunteers to deliver presentations and supervise display at special events
- Effect increased membership and develop new partnerships
- Participate in conferences with like-minded partners and organizations
- Organize student volunteers to assist in planting seedlings at the two nursery sites
- Seek further sources of revenue for CCC endeavors

The PR Committee will submit progress reports as required to the Ontario Trillium Foundation, with the next one due June 01/2010. Future funding will depend on the ability of CCC actions and reports to satisfy the grant committee by meeting or exceeding goals as outlined in the Letter of Agreement (November 2, 2009).

Members of the Canadian Chestnut Council can help us to meet our goals by contacting us if you know of a group or club that would benefit from an interactive presentation about chestnut recovery. Presentations are currently being offered at no charge to groups that operate within the natural range of the American chestnut. The presentation is tailored to the needs of the group, and may include parts of the new DVD as well

as PowerPoint slides and, of course, a friendly and knowledgeable speaker.

The council is also interested in providing training to members who would be willing to give talks and promote education in their area or supervise the CCC display at special events. Materials can be provided for conferences and other special events by contacting the Outreach Coordinator. Please help us to spread the word about the important work being done to save the chestnut by referring a group or volunteering to assist.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation is an agency of the Government of Ontario. For over 25 years, the Foundation has supported the growth and vitality of communities across the province. It continues to strengthen the capacity of the volunteer sector through investments in community-based initiatives. For more information, please visit www.trilliumfoundation.org.

Please contact the Outreach Coordinator, Kelly Schafer, for more information and to book your presentation.

Kelly Schafer

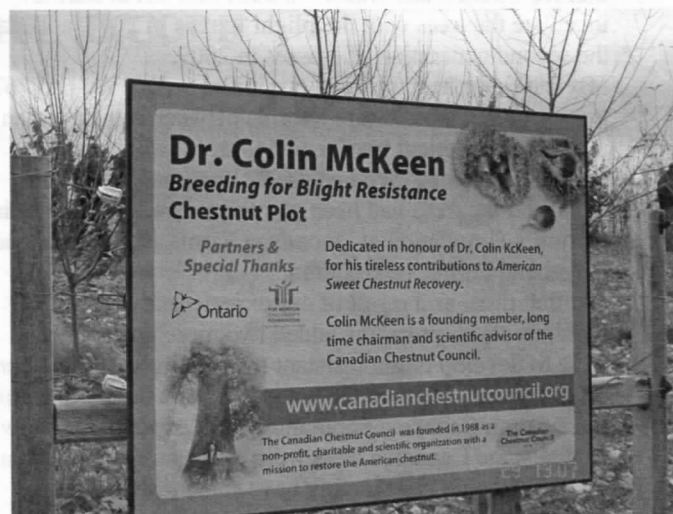
Home (519) 823-1458

kellys@canadianchestnutcouncil.org

New CCC Web Site

www.canadianchestnutcouncil.org

The new site is still under construction, but is aimed at being informative and interactive. Please visit and send your comments to outreach@canadianchestnutcouncil.org



The Onondaga Farms orchard has been named to honour Dr Colin McKeen, founder of the CCC.





BREEDING BLIGHT RESISTANT CHESTNUTS FOR ONTARIO - A PROGRESS REPORT -

Adam Dale, Department of Plant Agriculture
University of Guelph

Over the last 10 years, we have been making progress towards our goal which is to produce an American chestnut adapted to Ontario's environment and resistant to chestnut blight. This is a long process, as chestnuts take many years to mature. It is worth looking back to see where we came from, and to see how far we have progressed.

As you read through this article, remember two things. First, that we are dealing with a plant species and a host-pathogen relationship which are very variable. Variability becomes second nature to plant scientists, but often it is difficult for others to appreciate the full depth and complexity of the concept. Second, anything we do, any measurements we take, represent a small 'snapshot' of the biological system we are dealing with.

In the fall of 1999, I was asked by the Canadian Chestnut Council to come up with a plan to breed American chestnuts resistant to chestnut blight, so that we could reintroduce the endangered American chestnut back into the Carolinian forests of Ontario. We came up with an ambitious goal to breed blight resistant American chestnuts adapted to Ontario within 20 years.

Our breeding strategy was to hybridize existing Canadian trees with partially resistant trees from Dr Sandra Anagnostakis's breeding program in Connecticut, select the most resistant and hybridize them together. We would also use at least 20 Canadian trees and as female parents.

When we calculated the genetic probabilities, we concluded that a population of 240 trees would be sufficient to select 20 trees which were partially resistant.

We set timelines to measure our progress. These indicated that we would make crosses in 2001 and 2002, start to inoculate the trees with the blight fungus in 2007, and start the second generation of crosses in 2009.

By 2006, we had achieved our initial goals. We had 767 trees growing which were hybrids between our Canadian and the Connecticut trees, and 643 trees which were entirely Canadian. We had used 21 parental Canadian trees, and the trees had been planted at two locations: Tim Horton's Foundation at Onondaga Farms, St. George, and Riverbend Farms, near Calton.

At that time, as a result of our experiences over the previous seven years, we added two more goals. These were to develop blight resistant trees entirely of Canadian origin, and to maintain the present genetic diversity within the existing Canadian population. Our experiences showed us that some Canadian trees were dying more slowly than others, so could conceivably have some low levels of resistance.

To maintain our diversity, we have been grafting wood of our existing trees onto seedlings. We now have 14 of our

parental Canadian trees grafted, together with the trees from Connecticut. Grafts often fail; so we have been developing a technique to root cuttings directly.

The second stage of the breeding program was to inoculate our trees with the blight fungus so that we could select the most resistant or least susceptible ones. There was much discussion about what would be the best method to use, much of it about whether to inoculate branches or trunks. In the end, we settled on a method to inoculate branches. Our population of chestnuts is the largest in Canada and probably represents about half the trees existing in the country; so we wanted to keep them alive.

In our technique, we inoculate a branch with two isolates of the blight fungus and measure the progress of the blight lesions. We do this for two years on each tree and then select those with the slowest growing lesions.

We first inoculated trees in 2007, and now have three years' experience. We inoculated 126 trees in 2007, 226 in 2008 and 277 last year. We have repeated the inoculations on a number of trees and at the beginning of 2009 selected five trees at Riverbend Farms and six trees at Onondaga Farms to be used for the next round of crosses.

We expected the results to be variable but what surprised us was that they were consistent. Over the three years, the Connecticut hybrid population and the Canadian populations have behaved the same way, and the trees at the two farms have behaved the same way. This makes us wonder whether our Canadian trees carry more resistance than we thought.

Last Spring we were able to make the first crosses of the second generation. Unfortunately, we were able to use only the selected trees at Onondaga Farms, as spring frosts killed the flowers at Riverbend Farms. We were able to cross four trees at Onondaga Farms and have 474 seeds stored.

This second generation will be watched with interest, as it will tell us how good our progress has been. It will tell us whether our parents are as resistant as our results suggest they may be, and it may give us trees that, if not fully resistant, are almost so.

We are now about halfway through our 20-year plan, and have made steady and exciting progress. Whether we are half way there, or not, only time will tell. However, I do know we would not be where we are, without the dedicated efforts of many volunteers. All of them should be recognized, but three people - Mike Nemerowski, Dragan Galic and Wes Horley - should be mentioned in particular as they spent countless hours and drove many miles, over five summers, making the crosses on individual trees all over southern Ontario. Thank you everyone.



Canadian Chestnut Council
Financial Statement
for the year ended 30 September, 2009

Balance forward	32,774
Receipts	
Government and Organization Grants	-
Membership and donations	10,639
Nemerovski Memorial donations	150
Refund	1,000
Interest	305
Total receipts	12095
Disbursements	
<i>Administrative</i>	
Annual general meeting	588
Directors' expenses	578
Liability insurance	1,350
Peer Review	248
Postage and supplies	376
Fund raising	1,181
<i>Total</i>	4,321
<i>Public Relations</i>	
Newsletter	1,264
Outreach	3,976
<i>Total</i>	5,240
<i>Research and Breeding</i>	
Univ of Guelph Grant-in-Aid	13,000
Riverbend Trial	972
<i>Total</i>	13,972
Total Disbursements	23,533
Income (loss) for the year	(11,438)
Balance on hand	21,336



Submitted by Dr G Collin, Treasurer
Verified by Andrew Oakley, 14 October 2009

AMERICAN CHESTNUT SITE RECORD
Castanea dentata

The CCC wants to know where the chestnut trees are. You can help by submitting any of the listed information you can provide.

Owner's name, telephone, e-mail:

Street or rural address, township, county, province:

GPS or other location data:

Number of American chestnut trees:

Other environmental data:

Send to any CCC director. Thanks!



Our Feathered Friends

Some birds are more persistent than others.

The cliff swallow is noted for constructing mud nests on the sides of barns or brick walls. This one attempted to do so, building on the wall of our front porch. It became obvious because bits of mud and fauna fell to the porch beneath; so it was removed, despite appeals from the birds.

Time passed and the squatters were not in evidence for about two weeks. Then the back porch revealed more detritus and a glance upwards showed where the family had re-roosted. This time they were obviously well settled and nesting eggs.

It was immediately recognized as an opportunity to watch a bird family up close - very close. The two birds took offence, of course, and reminded the observers that they were intruding on their privacy.

The nest began as a small platform, but rapidly rose in height. It was built around the chain that suspended the wind chime. As it gained weight, the chime tilted alarmingly.

Eventually, the two adult birds commenced to ferry bits of food - grubs and worms - to the nest in relays, accompanied by chirps and complaints in small voices. The supply line lasted throughout the daylight hours for another few weeks, until one day a smaller head peeked over the edge of the nest and later the fledglings began their initial flights. That, too, was educational.



Ms Swallow observes the observer.

Membership

Membership fees and donations are tax deductible.

Membership Renewal:

Annual subscription = \$15.00 \$

Donations in excess of the annual subscription will be recognized in the Newsletter in the following categories. (Requests for anonymity will be honoured.)

Gold Leaf:	\$1,000 or more
Silver Leaf:	\$500-\$999
Bronze Leaf:	\$250-\$499
Green Leaf:	\$100-\$249
White Leaf:	Less than \$100

Donation: \$

Total enclosed: \$

**Please make all cheques payable to the
Canadian Chestnut Council**

Volunteers

We need your help! As our program grows and our activities expand, we very much need the talents and skills of our members. If you would like to contribute your skills, please tell us. We start pollinating in early summer!

I'm interested in (check all that apply):

- Membership
- Publicity
- Fundraising
- Library research
- Field work
- Other:

Return your completed form to the Secretary:

Charles Hooker, 431068 19th Line, RR # 2
Orangeville, Ontario L9W 2Y9
chuckh@sympatico.ca

