

# ETF News

[www.eugenetreefoundation.org](http://www.eugenetreefoundation.org)

• NEWSLETTER OF THE EUGENE TREE FOUNDATION •

## TREEmendous Firsts Mark the Beginning of 2010-2011 Planting Season

By Jeff Lanza

Our planting season has had an exciting and busy start. Several important firsts achieved by ETF have broadened the scope of our planting program and allowed us to reach a higher level of success by partnering with key businesses and organizations. We continue to work with the Urban Forestry staff and the NeighborWoods program at the City of Eugene for project planning and logistical support, but we are aware that this partnership may become limited in the near future as the city struggles with budgetary constraints and the complexity of managing various public resources.

Since November, we have completed five tree planting projects—three of which were in Eugene's Trainsong Neighborhood—thanks to grants from the Home Depot Foundation and the Alliance for Community Trees, (see Fall 2010 Newsletter).

Two hundred new trees were planted in the Trainsong Neighborhood—including native trees along Bethel Drive, native trees in Trainsong Park, and private-yard trees throughout the neighborhood. The Trainsong planting events were sponsored by Oakshire Brewing, which proved to be an excellent fit, as many enjoyed sampling the company's quality products in the tasting room of its facility after a morning of planting and being outdoors.

We also partnered with the City of Eugene Stream Team to complete a vital link along the

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Nearly 100 volunteers, young and old, came out for the Trainsong Neighborhood planting on November 20, 2010.



Photos this page by Mia Baki



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### Mission Statement:

*To enhance community livability for present and future generations through the collaborative stewardship of Eugene's diverse and vibrant natural landscape*



### EUGENE TREE FOUNDATION

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# President's Column



Happy New Year!

I want to thank all the great ETF supporters and volunteers who helped plant trees, care for nature, and build healthier

and more attractive neighborhoods in 2010. Many more volunteers have been attending ETF events in 2010, enabling us to get more good work done in our community.

In November I was fortunate to attend the Partners In Community Forestry conference in Philadelphia where I met workers in other tree groups and heard about projects in cities all across America to plant trees and strengthen communities. It was inspiring to see new street trees and riparian restoration along the Schuylkill River in Philly, and to learn of the volunteer and financial commitment of citizens and community leaders in cities across the country to build healthier cities through planting trees.

I'm very grateful for a NeighborWoods Scholarship from the Alliance for Community Trees—a Washington DC-based nonprofit urban forestry organization—that was donated by the Home Depot Foundation, and helped make this trip possible. At the conference, I was honored to accept the NeighborWoods grant award for the \$10,000 grant ETF received—also from Home Depot Foundation and Alliance for Community Trees.

This NeighborWoods grant was a big boost to the organization in 2010. Implementing the Trainsong Project required ETF to improve volunteer tracking, develop a canvassing program, learn the new planning process for the parks, initiate a crew leader program, increase the scale of our stewardship work, and much more. In

the Trainsong Project, ETF carried out its first industrial-area planting, fruit tree planting, significant yard planting, and the first large planting independent of the city. ETF is very grateful for the support of the NeighborWoods grant. The November 20 Bethel Drive event that kicked off the Trainsong Project plantings was a wonderfully sunny day, with nearly 100 volunteers having a great time together planting 119 trees. We look forward to another planting in Trainsong in 2011 along Highway 99.



*Handprints and writing in concrete commemorate a Trainsong Neighborhood project in 2006.*

ETF has collaborated with the City of Eugene on nearly all its projects until now. The city, however, is under major budget constraints, and it's not clear what shape ETF's collaboration with the city will take in the future. ETF's adoption of the Friends of Trees funding and planting model adapts well to this new environment. In this approach, every part of the planting process for street trees except the issuing of the planting permits can be done by FOT staff or volunteers, eliminating most costs to the city. Or, Friends of Trees/ETF and the City of Eugene can find a hybrid approach

to collaboration. The FOT approach is flexible and collaboration with the city of Springfield may be structured differently than in Eugene. Instead of funding coming solely from the city and individual donors, funding in the FOT approach comes from a combination of tree fees, contracts, grants, businesses, individuals, fee-for-service, and other sources, so no single source shoulders too great a burden. In ETF's Greenspace planting program, similar groups of volunteers plant and care for trees in natural areas, along roads, and in parks and open spaces.

In addition to ETF's great plantings in 2010, we focused on stewardship work in 17 work parties in Trainsong Park, along Bethel Drive, and along Amazon Creek from Chambers to Jefferson streets. In 2011, ETF is continuing a series of work parties in these areas and beginning to work in the Whilamut Natural Area of Alton Baker Park.

In 2011, ETF moves closer to becoming the southern chapter of Portland-based Friends of Trees. We are excited to become part of one the most successful and effective tree groups in the country. With support and training from Friends of Trees, we will fund an effective office with growing Neighborhood Tree and Greenspace Initiative planting programs, create the most vibrant volunteer network in our region, and bring a new level of enthusiasm and involvement to planting and caring for trees in Eugene-Springfield. ETF will be offering training for volunteers to become leaders in our new programs, including neighborhood coordinators, crew leaders, and tree inspectors. Please let ETF know if you are interested in volunteering in one of these roles or in any other capacity. We welcome your interest and enthusiasm.

*Erik Burke*

Erik Burke  
ETF President

# Two Overlooked Native Trees

By Alby Thoumsin

One of the most exciting parts of being a tree lover is discovering species or varieties that are new to me. Even after nearly two decades in Oregon, I am still not familiar with all of the trees native to our great state. It took me a few years before I finally met the two trees I'm going to introduce to you here, for one simple reason: I didn't look closely enough at them, so I mistook them for their more common cousins.

First off, I'd like you to meet the white alder (*Alnus rhombifolia*). Although it's the most common alder here in the Willamette Valley, people typically mistake it for its cousin the red alder (*Alnus rubra*). The ranges of the two species do overlap, and some stands of trees actually contain both species, but generally, the red alder grows from the Pacific coast to about 100 miles inland, while the white alder is found from there, as far east as Montana.

A smaller tree than its red cousin, reaching a maximum of 80 feet, the white alder has a more delicate canopy with slender branches and droopy twigs. The bark is also rougher than that of red alder and eventually, with age, becomes scaly. The main difference, however, is in the leaf. Both alders have egg-shaped leaves, but the green margin of the upper side of red

alder leaves rolls slightly under, as if it were forming a tiny curl.

And although both white and red alders have doubly toothed leaves—each large tooth has many smaller teeth along its margin—the teeth of the white alder are smaller and more irregularly spaced.

Like all alders, white alder has nodules on its roots in which bacteria convert atmospheric nitrogen—which plants cannot use—to a form that benefits the tree and the plants sharing its root space, thus effectively fertilizing the soil.

If you hike in the Cascades, even a little bit, you have probably encountered more than once the second tree I wish to discuss, but perhaps mistook it for its much more common cousin, the vine maple (*Acer circinatum*), as I formerly did. The Rocky Mountain maple (*Acer glabrum*) is found primarily at higher elevations, while the vine maple grows naturally even here on the Willamette Valley floor if the right conditions are present.

A good place to see Rocky Mountain maple is along the Bohemia Mountain trail approximately 20 miles east of Cottage Grove. As you hike the trail, you will of course see many vine maples, but soon, a similar maple, but with somewhat different leaves, will appear. Like vine maple, Rocky Mountain maple usually has multiple trunks and a rather modest size—it seldom reaches 20 feet—and does best under larger trees. Rocky Mountain maple, however, seems to tolerate direct sun just fine, while a

sunny site tends to be more stressful for vine maple and may even stunt its growth.

The best way to differentiate these two maples is to examine their leaves. The vine maple leaf has seven to nine lobes and is generally round in shape, whereas the Rocky Mountain maple leaf has the classic silhouette of a maple leaf—like that on the Canadian flag.

The leaf shape of Rocky Mountain maple can vary, however, from one tree to the next. The leaves of some trees are simply three-lobed; but the leaves of other trees are deeply cut or “dissected” almost to the mid-vein; and other trees of this species possess leaves with three separate leaflets, making what is called a palmately compound leaf.

Both white alder and Rocky Mountain maple can be found in the nursery trade, so I would encourage you to consider planting these two trees. Make sure, however, to use the trees’ botanical names with the nursery person, so you’re not sold a *red* alder or a *vine* maple—both of which are fine plants, too, but not substitutes for their lovely cousins.

My tip this time? Sometimes, slowing down permits us to discover treasures.

Until next time



Alby Thoumsin is a certified arborist.

## ETF Wish List

ETF needs several items for its office and tools for our plantings and work parties. We welcome your in-kind donation.

### Office

Calculator  
Computer  
Printer/Scanner

Bookshelf  
Electric kettle

### Tools

Pitchfork  
Shovels  
Terra hoe/Pulaski  
Heavy rake  
Wire rake  
Push broom  
Hand pruners  
Contractor’s wheelbarrow  
Weed-whacker with metal blade

## Let us know what you think.

### **Letters to the Editor**

We like hearing from you. Write to us at [www.eugenetreefoundation.org](http://www.eugenetreefoundation.org), or at P. O. Box 12265, Eugene, Oregon 97440.

# Port-Orford-Cedar

By Whitey Lueck

This attractive conifer was once commonly planted in our area. It is most easily distinguished from the three other "cedar-like" conifers native to Oregon and planted in gardens—all of which produce fern-like sprays of flattened needles—by its cones which are spherical and pea-sized. But unlike the other three species—western red-cedar, Alaska yellow-cedar, and incense-cedar—Port-Orford-cedar is highly susceptible to a root disease that is fatal to the trees.

You might have noticed local conifers that suddenly turn reddish-brown, with not a green needle left on the whole tree. These are Port-Orford-cedars (*Chamaecyparis lawsoniana*) that have contracted Port-Orford-cedar root disease. The disease is caused by a fungus that lives in the soil and kills only Port-Orford-cedars. The infection begins via the tree's root system and kills the tissues near the base of the tree, preventing the tree from transporting water and nutrients to its canopy. So the tree dies.

Although Port-Orford-cedar, as its name implies, is native to southwestern Oregon—as well as northwestern California—the fungus that is killing these trees both in the wild and in cultivation apparently arrived from Asia in the early 1900s. It quickly killed the trees growing in nurseries and, in the following decades, has continued to spread in parks and gardens throughout the maritime Northwest, as well as in the forests where it is native.

In the wild, logging trucks and recreational vehicles are the most common ways that the spores of the disease are moved over any distance, but elk hooves, hikers' boots, and other means can also spread the disease locally. Spores can infect entire watersheds, too, by moving underground in wet soil, or in streams. In cultivated areas, the root disease is spread by lawn mower tires, muddy boots, or even birds and other animals which can carry a small amount of infected soil on their feet. In short, there's not much we can do to prevent its

continued spread.

What is especially tragic is that Port-Orford-cedar was for many years a popular hedge plant. These hedges, long since overgrown, have turned into long lines of attractive, graceful trees. When one tree in the line becomes infected with the disease and dies, the rest of the trees quickly succumb as the fungus spreads rapidly underground from one tree to the next.



Top, ripening seed cones; bottom, ten-year-old Port-Orford-cedar.

It is unlikely that the disease will ever find and kill all of our area's Port-Orford-cedars—just as Dutch elm disease has not found and killed every elm. So I encourage the replanting of these lovely trees—one here and two or three there, instead of in long rows

of the same species. They grow relatively fast, are adapted to our winter-wet/summer-dry climate, and deserve a place in our gardens and parks.

Because Port-Orford-cedars are no longer grown by nurseries, there is an obvious problem of availability. But seedlings can often be found in the vicinity of established trees, and new trees can also be started by rooting cuttings.

And, thanks to the work done over the past decade or so by the USDA Forest Service Dorena Genetic Resource Center—located just east of Cottage Grove—we may someday once again be able to find these lovely trees in nurseries. Within the Port-Orford-cedar (POC) species, some natural resistance to this non-native disease occurs. By purposely infecting thousands of POC seedlings, then crossing the survivors, infecting their progeny again, etc., researchers have been able to produce a small number of individual trees that appear to be almost completely resistant to POC root disease. Seedlings of these trees may eventually be made available to reforestation agencies—for planting into the wild to restore POC's place in the forests from which it has been lost—as well as to the public, for planting as cultivated trees in parks and gardens.

One of the oldest surviving Port-Orford-cedars in Eugene stands at the northwest corner of Collier House on the University of Oregon campus. This tree appears in a photograph taken about 1900—when the tree was about five years old—and is still in good health. Although this individual may escape the root disease for another year or even another century, it is highly likely that, eventually, it will succumb.

To ensure that Port-Orford-cedars continue to grace the landscapes of western Oregon campuses, parks, and gardens, we need to consider implementing a planting program that will introduce, as soon as possible, disease-resistant individuals so that, a hundred years from now, Eugeneans will still be able to admire one of the loveliest of Oregon's many native conifers.

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## TREEmendous Firsts Mark the Beginning of 2010-2011

### Planting Season

Amazon Creek corridor by planting appropriate native trees along the waterway's banks between Polk and Chambers Streets. Approximately 135 new trees were planted along this section during December and January.

Here are some of ETF's firsts:

- Our biggest event so far this season was along Bethel Drive and the Union Pacific rail yard in the Trainsong Neighborhood on November 20th, where close to 100 volunteers and nearby neighbors helped plant 119 trees on public property and on adjacent Union Pacific rail yard land.

Negotiations that started early last year between ETF and Union Pacific created one of the first tree planting projects upon UP land within their 23-state region, where land owned by UP is leased by a non-profit organization for the planting of trees. The project included many valley-floor native conifers that, along with trees planted upon City of Eugene right-of-way will buffer the residential neighborhood from the existing industrial rail yard facility.

Many thanks go to Brock Nelson, Director of Corporate Public Affairs in Oregon and Washington for Union Pacific. Brock was instrumental in initially lending an open ear and mind to the idea of planting trees upon the rail yard land, and ultimately played a key role in making the project a reality.

- We had our first private-yard tree planting project of 55 trees, which included 38 fruit trees in the Trainsong Neighborhood.
- Thanks to the improved communication and event notification on our website, facebook, e-mail, and press releases providing up-to-date notices of our events, this year marks the first planting season with consistently large numbers of volunteers turning out for planting and stewardship work parties.
- Improved planting techniques include planting smaller trees to reduce transplant shock and initial costs—and to increase survivability rates—and placing heavy rings of mulch atop thick donated coffee bean bags at each tree to suppress grass and weeds and reduce watering needs during the tree's establishment period.

ETF will continue its fall planting projects and will encourage others to follow our example. Here in the Northwest, conditions at that season are ideal, with workable soils that are still warm from summer and have yet to become saturated from our winter rains. Fall planting also gives new trees in our area more time to establish a healthy root system before the stress from the heat and drought of the first summer season takes hold.

None of our work would come to fruition if it were not for our dedicated volunteers and community neighbors



Photo by Jeff Lantz



Photo by Marion Forstach



Photo by Alia Baki

From top, Arbor Day, 2010, Trees-for-Concrete planting outside the Eugene Weekly office in downtown Eugene; weekend clean-up; Eugene Mayor Kitty Piercy and Commissioner Rob Handy, seen here with ETF president Erik Burke (far left) lend support in ETF tree planting.

who help us fulfill our mission in many ways. This season our volunteers braved the cold, the wet, and even some lightning and thunder in the Trainsong Neighborhood.

If you have not joined us at one of our planting projects and would like to help out, please give it a try—you might be pleasantly surprised. It is amazing to witness how much work and community building can be accomplished at one of our events. Check our website or facebook page for event schedules and volunteer opportunities and help make our community even more TREEmendous than it already is!



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**We can't do what we do  
without your generous and  
continued support!**

November-December 2010

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