

Timber Tellings

Continued Impacts on Trees from Winter Storm

Texas A&M Forest Service

February 2021 will be remembered by Texans and by our trees as the year of the “Deep Freeze.” Even now, more than nine months removed from Winter Storm Uri, Texans are still seeing the effects of the “Deep Freeze.”

Winter Storm Uri effects still being seen in pine trees. (Stock Image)

Multiple days with below-freezing temperatures resulted in the crowns of a noticeable number of trees turning brown and appearing as if the trees had died. As the [Texas A&M Forest Service](#) reported earlier in the year, many, if not most, of those trees recovered and produced normal levels of foliage during the summer.

However, a recently observed effect is mortality in pine trees caused by Ips engraver beetles. These native insects, of which there are three species in East Texas, may attack healthy and stressed trees alike. Usually, they can successfully invade only severely stressed pine trees, such as those recovering from a hard freeze.

Beetle attacks

Allen Smith, Texas A&M Forest Service regional forest health coordinator, has inspected many tracts in East Texas this fall and has seen a large amount of pine tree mortality caused by Ips engraver beetles.

“Looking back at the past nine months, the fact that these beetles are now taking center stage in the decline and death of our pine trees is inevitable,” said Smith. “Uri was a major stressor of trees, and the following extended droughty conditions throughout the pine regions of East Texas added additional stress.”

These combined stress factors weaken trees’ natural defenses against all pests, including Ips beetles. As a result, even small-scale Ips beetle attacks successfully overwhelmed and killed individual trees.

Soon after adult beetles are attracted to and land on a stressed tree, they mate. The resulting developing larvae excavate tunnels or galleries under the bark, which, in sufficient numbers, essentially girdles the tree and disrupts the tree’s vascular system.



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“Death can occur quickly and is often measured in days, not weeks,” said Smith. “Along with Ips beetles, inspected trees are showing evidence of ambrosia beetles and southern pine sawyer beetles. The common trait among these beetle types is that they are all attracted to stressed pines.”

Typically, Ips beetle attacks are characterized by the presence of pitch tubes scattered about the bark. Pitch tubes, which look like popped popcorn, are formed as the trees try to prevent entry by pushing sap into the entry hole made by the beetle.

Recently observed trees show uncharacteristically small, desiccated pitch tubes, if they are present at all, indicating the lack of sap production and moisture inside the tree. When the bark is scraped to inspect beetle galleries, the exposed phloem—the region where sap flow occurs— is noticeably dry, indicating severe stress.



Managing the damage

So, what can be done? Usually, forests are managed to prevent bark beetles, including Ips beetles, by using a combination of well-timed thinnings and competition control treatments to promote tree vigor and overall stand health. In extreme cases such as the “Deep Freeze,” not much more can be done except to prepare for the next emergence of beetles in the spring.

Standing beetle-killed trees should be removed and burned or otherwise disposed of to prevent the emergence of beetles from the felled trees. If the bark has not yet begun to slip on enough beetle-killed trees to attract a service provider to the site, the trees may be salvaged and taken to market, providing some recovery of financial loss for the landowner.

With winter approaching, the Ips beetles will overwinter in trees, meaning they will emerge in 2022 with the start of spring. The best-case scenario for pine trees is to have wet weather this winter so that trees have good soil moisture when they start growing again.

For more information on pine trees in your area, contact your local forester at <https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/ContactUs/>.

2022 Texas Timber Tax Workshop

Texas A&M Forest Service

Many landowners continue to pay more than their fair share of taxes on their timber income. Even forest landowners who use accountants need to understand how timber expenses and income are taxed, since some tax preparers are not well versed in special tax treatment for forestry. Knowing the tax laws will give you an advantage in planning your forest management activities.

The daylong workshop will provide basic information about timber taxation and the latest changes to tax laws and rules for 2021 tax return preparations. Topics will focus on federal timber income tax issues for private forest owners with a refresher on local timberland property tax incentives. Participants will gain a clear understanding of commonly misunderstood timber tax issues.

The *free* Timber Tax Workshop will take place virtually on February 8, 2022 from 8:30 am-3:00pm. Register for the event at <https://tfsweb.tamu.edu/TaxWorkshop/> . Please contact Melissa Yeldell (979.458.6650, melissa.yeldell@tfs.tamu.edu) with any questions.

Market Report- Sept/Oct 2021

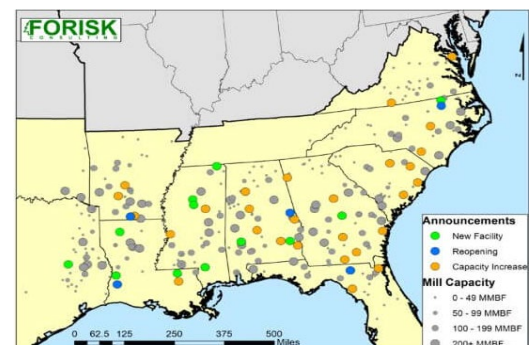
Product	Statewide Ave. Price		Previous Ave. Price		Price/ Ton Difference	
	Weight	Volume	Weight	Volume		
Pine- Sawlogs	\$29.42/Ton	\$235.36/MBF	\$29.32/Ton	234.58/MBF	0%	↑
Pine-Pulpwood	\$7.68/Ton	\$20.73/Cord	\$7.64/Ton	\$20.63/Cord	1%	↑
Pine-Chip-n-saw	\$15.12/Ton	\$40.81/Cord	\$14.80/Ton	\$39.96/Cord	2%	↑
Mixed Hardwood- Sawlogs	\$33.23/Ton	\$299.05/MBF	**	**	**	*
Hardwood- Pulpwood	\$8.57/Ton	\$24.01/Cord	\$10.36/Ton	\$29.01/Cord	-17%	↓

Texas Timber Price Trends is a bimonthly publication reporting average prices paid for standing timber in Texas. This report is intended only as a guide to general price levels. It should not be used to judge the fair market value of a specific timber sale, which may vary considerably due to many factors. It is recommended that you use the services of a professional consulting forester in managing any timber sale. Important factors affecting timber prices include the type, quality and volume of timber for sale, accessibility, distance to mills/markets, weather conditions, economy/market conditions, who is handling the sale or is buying the timber, and contract requirements by the landowner. The complete Texas Timber Price Trends can be viewed at <http://tfsweb.tamu.edu/timberpricetrends>.

Sawmill Expansions in the U.S. South

Amanda Lang, Forisk Blog

Softwood lumber mill capacity in North America is roughly 74 billion board feet (BBFT) per year – the same level in aggregate as twelve years ago in 2008. One key difference in softwood lumber capacity today versus twelve years ago is location: mills moved from the west to the south. Now, the U.S. South is the largest softwood lumber-producing region on the continent, with one-third of the sawmill production capacity. Mills have closed in Western Canada, and the region lost over 2 billion board feet of softwood lumber capacity in the last two years.



Growth continues for Southern U.S. sawmills with expansions, reopenings, and greenfield projects. Based on announced sawmill builds and expansions, the U.S. South could add an additional four billion board feet of softwood sawmill capacity by 2022. The map below includes announced investments since 2020. It includes 47 mill capacity increases, which includes 12 new mills and four reopenings. Of note, Roseburg Forest Products is building a 400 million board feet (MMBF) sawmill in Weldon, NC. Recently, there have been several new announcements in Louisiana. These include the Canfor 250 MMBF greenfield sawmill in DeRidder, Interfor's planned reopening of the former GP Dequincy 200 MMBF sawmill, and the partnership with Hunt and Tolko to build a 320 MMBF sawmill in Taylor, Louisiana.

Cedar Fever Season in Texas

Texas A&M Forest Service

Cedar fever season is upon us once again, complete with runny noses, itchy eyes and general misery. But what exactly is cedar fever, and why is it so insufferable this time of year?

For starters, cedar fever isn't a flu or a virus – it is an allergic reaction to the pollen released by mountain cedar trees. In Texas, the predominant species of mountain cedar is the Ashe juniper.

“Cedar fever is the worst west of I-35, where you have primarily juniper mixed in with oaks and some other species,” said Jonathan Motsinger, Texas A&M Forest Service Central Texas Operations Department Head. “And because all of those junipers are producing pollen at the same time, you’re going to get a higher concentration of pollen in the air.”

This is one of the primary factors contributing to cedar fever – the sheer quantity and density of Ashe junipers in central Texas. According to Karl Flocke, a woodland ecologist for Texas A&M Forest Service, the pollen from Ashe junipers isn't particularly allergenic or harmful – it's just so concentrated that, even if you aren't generally susceptible to allergies, it could still affect you.

“There are millions of junipers out there all releasing pollen at the same time,” said Flocke, “you can't help but breathe it in, and when you do, your body reacts as it would to any perceived threat - it tries to fight it.”

Since the pollen is spread by the wind, cedar fever can affect individuals far removed from areas with a high concentration of juniper trees. And the source isn't limited to Ashe junipers: in more eastern parts of the state, there are also eastern redcedars that pollinate around the same time and can induce a similar response from people's auto-immune systems.

Besides the sheer quantity of pollen released, cedar fever is mostly problematic because of when the pollen is released. Most trees pollinate in the spring when many are expecting to have allergies. Ragweed pollen and mold spores can contribute to allergies in the fall, but very few plants pollinate during the winter. Juniper trees are the exception.

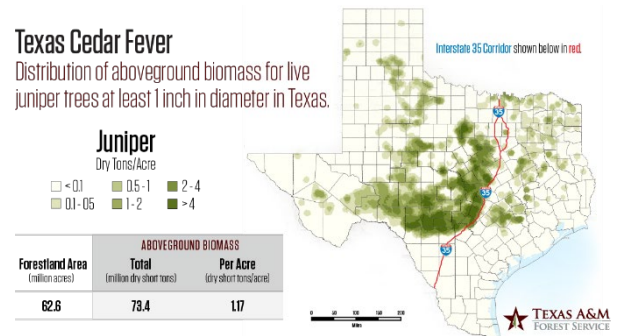
These trees typically begin producing pollen in mid-December, often triggered by colder weather or the passage of a Texas cold front. Pollen production reaches its peak in mid-January, before slowly tapering off toward the beginning of March, just in time for oak pollen and other spring allergens to start up.

“Immediately before and after a cold front it gets very dry and windy and the pressure changes very rapidly,” said Flocke. “This triggers the opening of pollen cones and the release of the pollen grains. When you see the pollen billowing off a tree that has just ‘popped,’ or opened its cones, it looks very similar to smoke coming from a wildfire.”

While this creates for some fascinating imagery, it can also lead to some serious misery. For people new to the central Texas region, or unfamiliar with cedar fever as a whole, it can also lead to confusion since the pollination period of mountain cedar trees is smack dab in the middle of cold and flu season – or a global pandemic. It's not uncommon for people experiencing cedar fever to mistake their symptoms as a cold or the seasonal flu, especially given the variety of symptoms triggered by cedar fever. These include fatigue, sore throat, runny nose, partial loss of smell and – believe it or not – some people actually do run a slight fever. However, if your fever is higher than 101.5°F, then pollen likely isn't the cause.

There are a few symptoms of cedar fever that are not linked to coronavirus or the flu though, like itchy, watery eyes, blocked nasal passages and sneezing. But there is one symptom that, according to Flocke, should steer you clear.

“Typically, mucous from allergies is clear and runny while other infections lead to thicker colored mucous,” Flocke said.



Cedar Fever Season Continued

Websites of Interest

TexasForestInfo.tamu.edu

Check out these FREE landowner tools that can assist you in making land management decisions on your property.

www.TexasForestry.org

Lobbying on various forestry and environmental issues that directly affect you, publishing and sponsoring educational events are just a few of many things that Texas Forestry Association does. Find out more about what Texas Forestry Association does for you and why you should be involved!

tfsweb.tamu.edu

Find a plethora of forest management resources and many people that can assist you in your forest management goals.

tpwd.texas.gov

Find out more information on wildlife management, hunting and fishing regulations and much more!

nrcs.usda.gov

Find out more information on natural resource conservation and federal programs in your area.

MyLandManagementConnector.com

Find and connect with service providers in your area to get assistance with land management practices on your property

You can treat cedar fever by taking allergy medications and antihistamines, but you should consult with your physician or health care professional before taking new medications. You can also try and anticipate the pollen by tuning in to your local news station, many of which will give you the pollen count and can predict when it's going to be a particular pollen heavy day. On those days, it's smart to keep windows and doors closed, to limit the amount of time you spend outdoors and to change air conditioning filters in your car and in your home.

Removing juniper trees from your property isn't recommended primarily because the pollen is airborne and—since they often wait to release their pollen until it's cold, dry and windy—that pollen can blow for miles. It's also important to note that only male juniper trees release pollen.

"The male trees have pollen cones, and the female trees have berry-like cones, which are very inconspicuous, but that's what is pollinated from the male trees," said Motsinger.

While junipers are notorious for releasing their fever-inducing allergens, they also have immense health benefits. Their berries, for instance, are used to make medicines and oils that can treat a variety of ailments, from an upset stomach to a snake bite. They are also high in nutrition and vitamins, providing a sustainable source of food for wildlife and soil enrichment, and they grow in a terrain that isn't particularly hospitable to other species of tree. Most importantly, though, they provide the mental, physical and environmental health benefits of trees and forests everywhere.

Ultimately, mountain cedars are really only singled out for the unusual time of year in which they pollinate.

"Many trees rely on airborne pollination," explained Flocke. "In other parts of the country folks suffer from pine or elm allergies. Here in the springtime, there is so much oak pollen collecting on surfaces that I have to wash my car's windshield daily just to see out of it."

While cedar fever might sound and seem particularly hostile, Ashe junipers are really just a species like any other, feeling out the conditions and waiting for the perfect moment to release their pollen in order to set their offspring up for success come springtime.

For more information about how to identify Ashe junipers and/or eastern redcedars in your own backyard, check out the Texas A&M Forest Service's [Texas Tree ID](#) webpage or the [My Tree ID](#) mobile app. You can also see the distribution of junipers across the state via our [Forest Distribution App](#), which can identify the distribution of native tree species across the state of Texas.

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, February 8, 2022: Texas Virtual Timber Tax Workshop- The workshop will provide basic information about timber taxation and the latest changes to tax laws and rules for 2021 tax return preparations. Topics will focus on federal timber income tax issues for private forest owners with a refresher on local timberland property taxes. Participants will gain a clear understanding of commonly misunderstood timber tax issues. To learn more or register for the event visit: <https://bit.ly/TexasTimberTax> .

Friday, February 11, 2022: Annual Forest Pest Seminar at Lufkin Convention Center, 601 N 2nd St. Lufkin, TX 75901- The seminar will provide information on industry pesticide updates/trends, using herbicides in wildlife habitat improvement, insect and disease updates, and more. Cost \$60. To register for this event, visit <https://tamuagrillifeextension.wufoo.com/forms/q1xm3rau1r66bnm> .

Saturday March 5, 2022: NETFLA Meeting at Luigi's in Mount Pleasant at 10:30 am- The meeting will be an update of the proposed Marvin Nichols Reservoir on the Sulfur River in Titus and Franklin Counties, and an update of Carbon Sequestration and Carbon Credits which was addressed at the November 6, 2021 meeting.

NETFLA Officers

President:

Glenn Weiss

(903) 645-3782

gjweiss@windstream.net

Vice President:

Wayne Arnold

(903) 797-2345

Secretary-Treasurer:

Judy Weiss

(903) 645-3782

gjweiss@windstream.net

Director of Camp County:

Larry Shelton

(903) 767-3470

Director of Franklin County:

Harry Earl

(903) 860-3306

hsearl@suddenlink.net

Director of Morris County:

Director of Titus County:

Director of Upshur County:

Kenneth Stewart

(903) 843-2174

Director of Wood County:

Robert Emerick

(903) 975-4241

TFS Foresters for our area:

Kelby Wolf, Pittsburg Office

(903) 856-7181

Tandy Wheeler, Gilmer

(903) 734-7007

NETFLA WEB SITE

www.netxforest.org

Membership Meetings

As more and more of us have been vaccinated and the January virus surge is expected to decline, another membership meeting has been scheduled for **Saturday, March 5, 2022, at Luigi's in Mount Pleasant at 10:30 am.**

Two topics will be addressed at the meeting. The proposed Marvin Nichols Reservoir on the Sulfur River in Titus and Franklin Counties has received a lot of press the past few months. Bret McCoy will provide an update on the status of the reservoir and its potential impact on timber landowners in our counties.

Marty Walker Forester/Realtor will provide a follow-up on Carbon Credits, which were addressed in the November 6, 2021 meeting

Luigi's is located at 2213 West Ferguson (TX Hwy 49). It is on the south side of the street near the intersection of West Ferguson and the new US Hwy 271 by-pass around Mount Pleasant.

Lunch will be on your own if you elect to stay.

Mark your calendars for **March 5.**

Future Programs:

The Board is considering program topics for future meetings which include: pine seedling genetics and feral hogs. Please contact an Officer or your County Director if you have an issue that you would like addressed at a future meeting.

NETFLA Contact and Membership Dues Information

Thank you for your NETFLA membership in past years. We hope that Newsletters, Programs and Meetings have provided you with useful information that has helped you manage your timber property. We encourage you to continue your membership. Membership dues are \$15.00 per calendar year.

If you have not yet renewed your membership for 2022, you can renew at the March meeting or mail your check to: **NETFLA, P.O. Box 343, Daingerfield, TX 75638-0343.**

Contact: Judy Weiss (903) 645-3782, or e-mail gjweiss@windstream.net

Northeast Texas Forest Landowners Association
PO Box 343
Daingerfield, TX 75638

