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SONG NEWS

The Newsletter of the Society of Ontario Nut Growers and
The Eastern Chapter of the Society of Ontario Nut Growers

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NUTS ABOUT HEARTNUT COOKING
This unique cookbook is the only book dedicated solely to the heartnut. The book is priced at $12. Please add $3.50 for mailing. For special quantity price, contact: Gordon Chinnick, Treasurer, 722 6th Concession Rd, Walsingham, ON N0E 1X0

Inside This Issue

Library Corner - Gord Wilkinson
This part of the page is now open to members who would like reference information or articles written by NNGA or SONG/ECSONG members. Gordon has a nearly complete set of NNGA Annual Reports and a complete set of SONG News issues to research.

SONG/ECSONG Archive
Have you visited ECSONG? Click the tab at the bottom of the SONG website to see the work that was done there? If you click on the SONGNEWS tab, you will be impressed to find all SONGNEWS issues from the beginning of SONG in 1972. Enthusiastic members of ECSONG did this for all members and visitors alike. There is plenty of reading there for the new as well as old members. Enjoy!

SONG Website: www.songonline.ca
Be sure to check it for updates on meetings, read about nut farming, post your nuts or nut products to sell online.
Send your free posting to: Ernie Grimo, President,
979 Lakeshore Rd, RR3, Niagara/Lake, On L0S 1J0
or: nut.trees@grimonut.com

Have you renewed for 2021?
It's time for your annual membership. Check your envelope for the year you are paid up.
You can renew for 2021 now! Please renew now!

COMING EVENTS

SONG FALL MEETING 2021: Due to the chance of a 4th wave of the covid pandemic, the Aug/Sept meeting was cancelled.
ECSONG WINTER MEETING: Check the winter newsletter or the SONG website for details when available.
SONG WINTER MEETING: Check the winter newsletter or the SONG website for details when available.
SONG AUCTION MEETING: Tentative date for our annual auction is Sunday May 1, 2022. Details to follow.
NORTHERN NUT GROWERS' ASSOCIATION MEETING: Summer of 2022. Details to follow.
SONG FALL MEETING 2022: We have been invited by long time member Simon de Boer to visit for a tour of his farm.

News from the Ontario Hazelnut Association (OHA)

Over the course of the last 18 months, the Ontario Hazelnut Association (OHA) Board of Directors has been extremely focused on providing value to their members, both current and future. Part of the strategy of the OHA is the creation of opportunities to connect and learn from each other through agricultural and nut industry experts.

Despite the challenges of COVID-19, the OHA was able to provide a series of short educational webinar opportunities for its members and those interested in the hazelnut industry. Webinar topics ranged from financial assistance, understanding crop insurance, to pest management and other orchard related challenges growers face. This series took place over a course of a few weeks from late December 2020 into the 2021 calendar year. Each webinar was under 1 hour in length and had 1-4 experts present providing advice and information. The series was such a great success that the OHA is planning another series in the winter of 2021 to the early 2022 calendar year. The OHA was also able to hold their annual Symposium on March 17, 2021. The Symposium this year had to take place via Zoom due to restrictions on gathering sizes. Despite this, we had a number of great speakers. They included Tyler Whale from Ontario Agri-Food Technologies (https://www.oaft.org/), as well as a representative from Oregon Hazelnuts (https://oregonhazelnuts.org/) and Melanie Filotas from OMAFRA (http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/CropOp/en/spec_fruit/nuts/haze.html). This annual showcase event has always been an opportunity for growers and potential growers to connect and to understand the successes and challenges of the hazelnut industry in Ontario.

Of particular importance is the opportunity to connect with the OHA sponsors and vendors. The OHA has been fortunate to have the continued support of the amazing Platinum, Gold and Silver sponsors, who are listed below.

Platinum: Ferrero
Gold: Grimo Nut Nursery, Upper Canada Growers, Gintec Shade Solutions, University of Guelph Department of Plant Ag, Vandenbussche Irrigation, Growers Minerals Solutions, The Ontario Federation of Agriculture
Silver: Farm Credit Canada, Conestoga College, A.M.A. Horticulture, Heartnut Grove, A&L Laboratories and Norfolk Farms

OHA was once again able to plan and sponsor a series of in person farm visits and tours. Members and interested parties could see first-hand the growth of the hazelnut industry in Ontario and connect with individual host farmers. Attendees were also able to connect with experts such as Jenny Liu, the Maple, Tree Nut and Agroforestry Specialist from OMAFRA, and Linda and Ernie Grimo, from Grimo Nut Nurseries, who were present at the farm tours. Jenny stressed to all attendees the importance of pruning, including a demonstration of pruning techniques and covered some other key components to keep a healthy hazelnut tree and orchard. These events were well attended and a number of great connections and opportunities were made for all who attended. The first farm tour that took place on July 24th, 2021 was in Uxbridge, Ontario and there was great support from the Region of Durham, Economic Development department who recognized the value and opportunity of Ontario hazelnut growth as a viable agricultural commodity in Ontario. The same can be said for the tour that took place in Huron County, on August 7th, 2021 whose Economic Development department also greatly supported the event.

If you missed any of these events, there is still an opportunity to connect this year. There is an upcoming farm tour on September 18th, 2021 that spans across the County of Brant, visiting 3 farms along the way. This farm tour will also allow connections for those considering growing hazelnuts, or those who are already currently growing hazelnuts. Each host farm for this tour will have different topics, orchard layouts and cultivars. This will create great opportunity for all to learn from more established farmers and their experiences.

These events are part of the OHA's commitment to provide opportunities to connect members with sponsors who play a key role in agricultural production as well as providing value to membership which is of utmost importance and part of the OHA's strategic plan moving forward into the next 5 years. If you are interested in attending future events or webinars please check out our social media, Facebook: @Ontariohazelnuts, Twitter: @HazelnutsON, and our website: www.ontariohazelnuts.com. You can also contact the Ontario Hazelnut administrative office, via email at contact@ontariohazelnuts.com. Watch for the launch of our new website in the next coming weeks!

Librarian's Corner

By Gordon Wilkinson

I noticed Japanese beetles devouring the leaves on my hazelnut trees this past summer. A rough visual inspection suggested that leaf surface damage ranged from 2 to 8 per cent among my hazels. This damage helped me recall a conversation I had with a couple from Ontario on a 7-day Caribbean cruise in early April 2018. I discovered that they were also SONG members and they recounted their terrible experience with Japanese beetles skeletonizing most of the leaves of their young hazelnut trees.

I was unable to find any references to controlling Japanese beetles in any of my books on nut tree growing - Davidson & Reed (1958), Jaynes (1979), Fulbright (2003) and Crawford (2016). The few references in the NNGA annual reports on Japanese beetles are from a long time ago. Suggested controls ranged from Muscovy ducks (vol.30, pg. 46) to DDT spraying (vol. 38, pg. 81, vol. 39, pg. 113). The most comprehensive of these old NNGA articles on Japanese beetles was by J.A.Adams in vol. 41,(1950) pp. 92-99. There was in the same volume an accompanying article on insecticides for nut insects including Japanese beetles by E. H. Seigler, pp. 100 -109.The suggested chemical controls were DDT, which has been banned for decades, and rotenone.

With less than a dozen affected hazelnut trees and a minor infestation on each tree I used on two occasions a safe mechanical control – brushing the beetles into a jar of water in the early morning or late evening when they are less active and then flushing them down the toilet!

The following website offers excellent information on controlling Japanese beetles including two chemical controls – neem oil and pyrethrin: https://www.gardeners.com/how-to/control-japanese-beetles/5163.html. An academic paper on managing Japanese beetles in corn and soybean crops also recommends neem oil and pyrethrin as chemical controls: https://academic.oup.com/jipm/article/10/1/9/5454734. Presumably these chemicals could be used on nut trees if warranted by the severity of the infestation.

Hello SONG members!
My name is Jenny Liu and I'm the new Maple, Tree Nut, and Agroforestry Specialist at OMAFRA.

As many of you know, Todd Leuty retired in September last year after over two decades of dedicated public service. His positive influence and deep knowledge of the Ontario tree nut industry cannot be understated. He certainly left behind some enormous shoes to fill!

A bit about me – I completed my forestry undergraduate degree at the University of British Columbia, where I worked in forest management, dendroecology, and forest pest research. I then set my sights on agriculture, earning my Master's in agricultural entomology at the University of Guelph. I am also a Certified Crop Advisor Candidate with agronomy experience in both Ontario's field and horticultural crop sectors. My hobbies include hiking, mooning over houseplants, and designing ambitious crochet/knitting projects that I slowly follow through with. It is really a dream role for me to learn about how trees grow and to share that knowledge.

In this role, I will continue communicating new research, funding opportunities, emerging issues, and in-season tree nut crop updates on the blog onspecialtycrops.ca. Let me know if there is something you'd like to see covered in a blog post!
Please feel free to get in touch –
Phone: 519-835-5872
Email: jenny.liu2@ontario.ca
Under non-COVID circumstances: 1 Stone Road West, Guelph, ON N1G 4Y2

Nice to meet you, and talk to you soon!

Planting Walnuts and Acorns

-By David F. Olson Wild Life in North Carolina 1958, Page10-11

ALMOST every woodland owner has access to a supply of nuts from walnut trees and acorns from several kinds of good oak, such as white, northern red, black, and cherry-bark. And there is hardly a farm woodland so fully stocked with trees that it would not benefit from planting these fine hardwoods in natural forest openings and other clearings on suitably fertile land. Seedlings established in existing stands should receive sunlight at least part of the day.
Walnuts and acorns must be gathered in autumn soon after they fall, so that insects and small animals don't eat most of the crop. Only fully developed and apparently sound seed should be collected.

White oak has the peculiar habit of germinating soon after hitting the soil in the fall and should be collected before the new root penetrates the ground. But no matter what the species, once the seeds are gathered, prompt and careful storage is the only thing that will keep them sound and capable of growing. Temporary storage in a cool, dark basement or pit will prevent the walnuts and acorns from drying out and losing their ability to sprout. Before storage, acorns should be treated to prevent insect damage. Such treatment is not necessary for walnuts.

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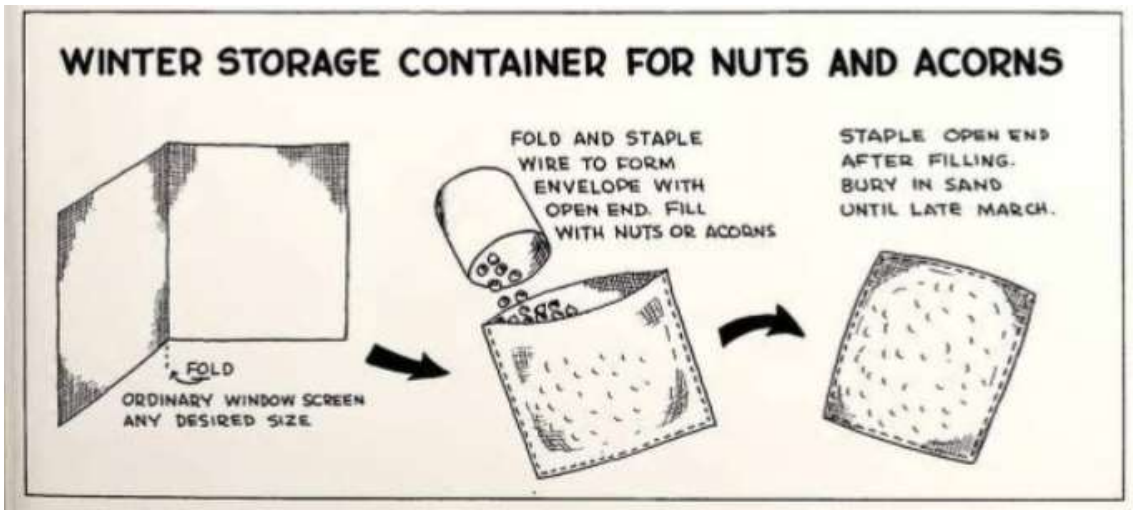
All acorns are subject to heavy infestation of nut weevil. This weevil lays eggs in the green acorn on the tree, and when the eggs hatch, the weevil larvae eat out the meat of the acorn. Acorns that are apparently sound often contain these weevil eggs, which hatch during the winter and destroy the seed before spring. Fortunately, a simple hot-water treatment will kill the weevil larvae but not harm the acorn.

All acorns should be treated as follows soon after collection and before storage: Place acorns in a vessel of water at exactly 120°F. A candy or jelly thermometer can be used to check the temperature. The addition of the acorns will cause the water to cool down; raise the temperature back up to 120°F. and hold it constant for 40 minutes. While the acorns are over the heat stir constantly to prevent heat damage to those at the bottom of the vessel. Placing the acorns in water will also serve to separate the bad ones from the apparently good ones. All acorns that float in water should be discarded. Of those that sink, about 75 percent will be sound, usable acorns. After weevil treatment, white oak acorns should be planted directly in the woods or fields, but the other oaks need some over-winter conditioning.

Walnuts do not need any special handling before storage. It is not even necessary to remove the hulls. Nuts of black walnuts and acorns of northern red, black, and cherry-bark oak all lie dormant over winter and begin growth the following spring. They can be planted in the fall, but the long winter in the soil gives mice and squirrels ample time to find them. A better practice is to bury them outdoors over the winter between layers of moist sand, and plant in the spring when germination has begun. This cuts down the time when rodent damage is possible and increases the odds of getting a crop of seedlings.

A simple way to store nuts and acorns is to put them in a screen wire container so that the seed will form a layer about 2 inches thick, and then bury the entire unit about 12 inches deep in a pit of moist sand. In this way the seeds are neatly packaged for handling, and animals cannot dig them up. If a pit is dug in clay soil, provision should be made for drainage of excess rainwater. The accompanying drawings illustrate the way to make and fill the screen containers easily and cheaply.



The nuts and acorns should be left under-ground until late March. When removed, many of them will have cracked their shells or sprouted. Soon after being taken up, these tree seed should be put in a bucket of wet sawdust or moss and planted out.

In planting, the nut is placed about 2 inches deep in a small hole made with a shovel or trowel, then covered and lightly packed. The young forest of hardwoods will begin to show in about three weeks, and the owner can take pride in his role as seed collector, nurseryman, and tree planter.

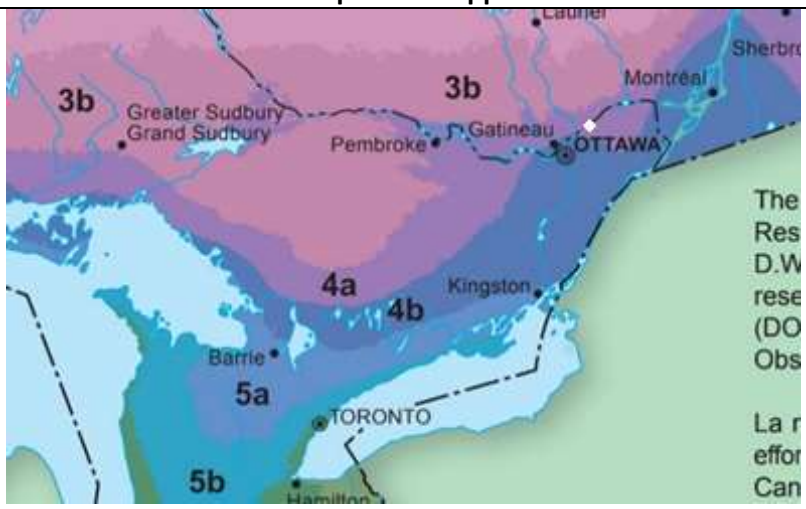
Nut Trees that Can Survive in Eastern Ontario By: Gordon Wilkinson

This is a summary of a presentation I gave at our re-scheduled ECSONG Winter Meeting on March 14th, 2020. It describes what nut tree species can tolerate the low winter temperatures of Eastern Ontario.
Low temperatures are one of the most important environmental constraints limiting the distribution of plants on the earth (Sakai & Larcher, 1987).

The fact that banana, orange, and palm trees cannot be grown in the open in Ontario is illustrative of the primary importance of low temperatures on the survival of trees generally. There is an extensive scientific literature that estimates the low temperatures at which nut trees are likely to be killed. Nut trees recommended for planting in Eastern Ontario were based upon these estimated low temperature thresholds as well as maps showing the natural range of native nut trees published in handbooks written by tree authorities.

Chart 1: Plant Hardiness Zones Based on USDA Extreme Minimum Temperature Approach

Zone	Temperature / Température (°C)
4a	-34.4 to / à -31.7
4b	-31.7 to / à -28.9
5a	-28.9 to / à -26.1
5b	-26.1 to / à -23.3



SOURCE: Natural Resources Canada http://www.planthardiness.gc.ca/?m=1

How cold does it get in Eastern Ontario? Chart 1 shows that minimum temperatures vary by latitude and proximity to large bodies of water, specifically, Lake Ontario. The more northerly parts of Eastern Ontario, which, unfortunately, happens to be where my nut orchard is located (on the map, white dot over the "OT" of "Ottawa"), are largely in USDA Hardiness Zone 4a, which is defined as having winter temperature lows averaging from -31.7 ^{O}C. to -34.4 ^{O}C.

The City of Ottawa, which is slightly more than 30 kilometres west of my site is in USDA Zone 4b. The more southerly parts of Eastern Ontario such as Prince Edward County and the Kingston area, are in more temperate hardiness zones where the lowest winter temperatures do not fall below -28.9 ^{O}C. on average. Clearly, nut trees with borderline hardiness or not hardy at all in USDA Zone 4a would have a higher probability of surviving in those parts of Eastern Ontario in USDA Zones 5a and 5b where winter low temperatures are on average less severe. Range maps show that butternut, shagbark hickory and bur oak trees are native to much of Eastern Ontario (Charts 2, 3 and 4).

Given that they are "native", these nut tree species will not likely be harmed by the lower winter temperatures of Eastern Ontario. Possible exceptions might be some shagbark hickory cultivars originating from more southerly locations. It is most unfortunate that the lifespan of the extremely hardy native butternut is now greatly shortened by the presence of the butternut canker, *Ophiognomonia clavigignenti-juglandacearum.*

Orchard plantings of the butternut will likely end in heartbreak. Of course, experimentation to discover resistant individuals is to be commended and the Ontario Butternut Recovery Program provides free DNA tested butternut seedlings that are considered to be potentially tolerant to the canker (https://www.rvca.ca/stewardship-grants/butternut-recovery).

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Chart 2: Range Map – Butternut

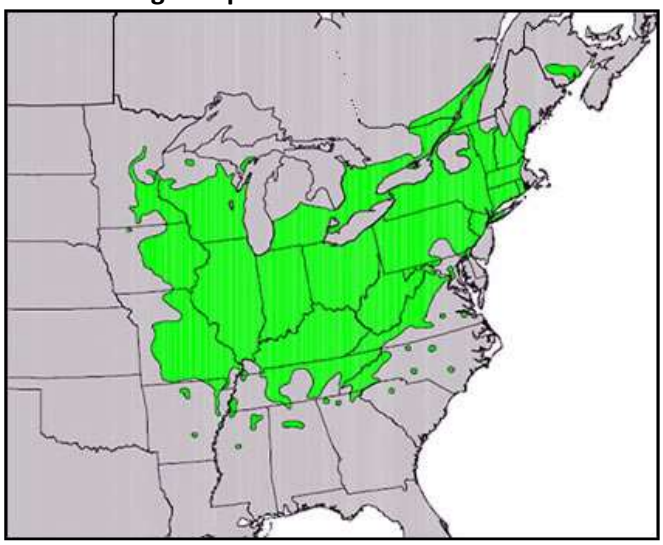


Chart 3: Range Map – Shagbark Hickory

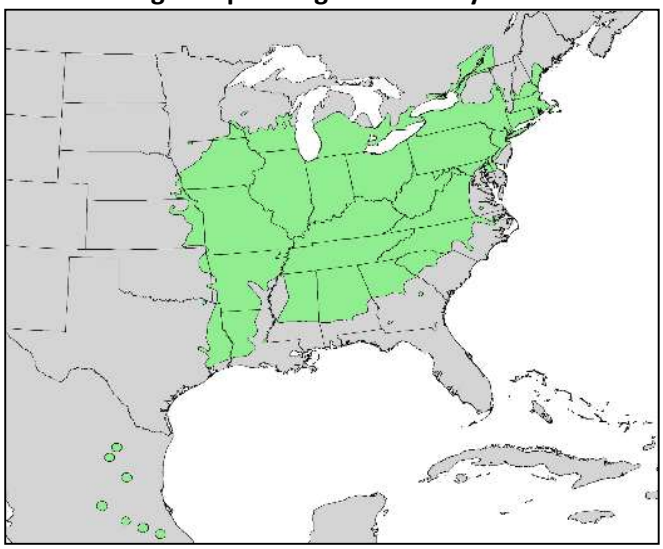
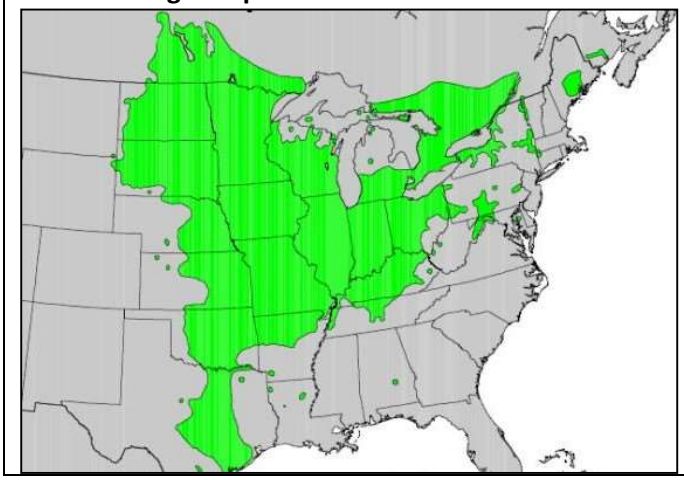


Chart 4: Range Map – Bur Oak



Black walnut has been planted so extensively in Eastern Ontario and has been self-generating for such a long time that many people consider it native. Range maps suggest that it is native to just a small patch around Morrisburg along the St; Lawrence River. Its success in Eastern Ontario shows that it is unaffected by the region's low winter temperatures.

The scientific literature on the cold hardiness of trees is a helpful guide for determining which non-native nut tree can possibly survive the low winter temperatures of Eastern Ontario. The results of these studies are summarized in Table 1. The second column shows the estimated temperature at which severe damage or mortality is likely to occur in a specific nut tree species. The third column cites the research paper where this estimate is published. Readers are encouraged to read the research papers to find out more about the methodology used to generate the estimates. Cold hardiness can vary by latitude of origin within a nut tree species. As well, nut tree cultivars may not have the same cold temperature hardiness as that of the species.

The estimated low temperature threshold values in Table 1 show why butternut, shagbark hickory and black walnut survive the low temperatures of Eastern Ontario year after year. For each of these nut tree species the low temperature threshold at which tree mortality is likely to occur is -43 degrees celcius or lower and the available historical temperature record shows that winter temperatures in Eastern Ontario have never dropped this low.

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These estimated low temperature thresholds also suggest that non-native nut trees such as Japanese walnut, some northern pecans such as Carlson #3, and Korean and Swiss Stone pine are genetically capable of withstanding the severest of winter temperatures in Eastern Ontario. It is important to mention that although heartnut is a sport of Japanese walnut, its various cultivars may not have the same cold hardiness as the species.

Table 1: Estimated Low Temperature Tolerance of Selected Nut Trees (in degrees C.)

Nut Tree Species or Cultivar	Estimated Low Tolerance Temperature (C.)	Source
Butternut	-51	George et al. (1974)
Black Walnut – Northern Origins	-43	George et al. (1974) George et al. (1977)
Japanese Walnut	-40	Sakai (1978)
Shagbark Hickory	-46	George et al. (1974)
Northern Pecan - Average	-35.4	Volk et al. (2009)
Northern Pecan – Carlson #3	-39	Volk et al. (2009)
Persian Walnut	-21	Charrier et al.. (2013)
Carpathian Walnut	ZONE 4 (?)	Barkley (2007)
Bur Oak	-46	George et al. (1974)
American Hazel	-54	George et al. (1974)
Korean Pine	-70	Sakai (1983)
Swiss Stone Pine	-70	Sakai (1983)

The Carpathian walnut is a more *cold-hardy* strain of Persian walnut (*Juglans Regia*). Unfortunately, I could not locate any temperature hardiness estimates for the Carpathian strain of Persian walnut. The hardiness estimate for more usual strains of Persian walnut shows what we all know - they would not survive winters anywhere in Eastern Ontario. The University of Idaho Extension claims that the Carpathian strain of Persian walnut could survive USDA Zone 4, but observations locally, such as in the Dominion Arboretum in Ottawa and at the Long Sault plantation along the St. Lawrence River, suggest that Zone 4 winters in Eastern Ontario are taxing for Carpathian walnuts and cause considerable winter kill to limbs.

I could not find any low temperature estimates for hazelnut hybrids nor American chestnut but northern hazelnut hybrids growing successfully in parts of Quebec and Eastern Ontario and a small grove of healthy America Chestnut trees growing in Eganville (lat. 45.54° N) suggests these nut tree species can successfully withstand the lowest winter temperatures in Eastern Ontario.

It is important to note that resistance to cold temperatures is just one aspect, although an extremely critical one, for growing nut trees successfully. Of course, there are other environmental aspects to consider. For example, insufficient late summer heat in much of Eastern Ontario would likely not enable pecan nuts to mature before the onset of winter, and plantings of American Chestnut trees would have to be sufficiently isolated to remain unaffected by chestnut blight. Thinking about the banana, orange and palm tree should make it easy to remember that the ability of a particular nut tree species to withstand winter cold needs to be considered before it is planted at one's site. Of course, if you are like me, then you may well try experimenting with marginally hardy nut trees just to see whether they can survive from year to year.

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Chart 5: Carpathian Seedling after two winters 2020 Sept 28
Chart 6: Carpathian Seedling wrapped for winter

Realistically, the outcome of such experiments is typically not good but one can hope for pleasant surprises. For example, at my very cold orchard site of USDA Zone 4a, I finally have achieved some success at raising a Carpathian walnut seedling that does not die back to the ground each winter and rebound from its roots in the spring like a garden perennial. This Carpathian walnut seedling has a trunk that has survived two winters.

I'm crossing my fingers that this seedling will continue to perform well, especially given that it has been dressed up for winter!

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I Need Your Nuts and Syrups

I gather, process, package, and market indigenous foods- everything from B.C. Red Huckleberries to Cloudberries from Labrador. Primarily I sell to restaurants and stores; however, I am now selling some products over the internet through my website: www.wildfoods.ca

Recently I have been able to find and market birch syrup, and despite it's price it has been selling. I now want to expand my range of products to include the various products that can be made from nut trees.

I would like to hear from any SONG members that can supply me with shelled nuts, nut oils, or nut tree syrups. In shelled nuts, I am particularly interested in beechnuts, butternuts, and hickory nuts but I am open to suggestions provided that the products are natural and unpolluted. I am also very interested in buying tree syrups from black walnut, butternut, and hickory trees.

At this point, I am interested even in small quantities so that I can test the market for future sales. If you think you can provide me with anything, call me toll-free at **1-877-354-WILD**

CLASSIFIEDS

...**MEMBERSHIP** benefits in the Society of Ontario Nut Growers (SONG) & ECSONG (Eastern Chapter of SONG) include three yearly newsletters, along with 3 annual meetings in two regions, set to satisfy the needs of both the commercial growers and the hobbyists. For an added bonus, **new members** will receive SONG'S own nut growing manual, ***Nut Tree Ontario, A Practical Guide,*** a $20 value, **free,** when you take out a new three-year, $45 membership. Simply ask for your free copy when joining SONG. For added information, view the ECSONG handbook at: http://www.songonline.ca/ecsong/ . Fill out the tear off below and send to: **SONG/ECSONG, Gordon Chinnick, Treasurer, 722 6th Concession Rd, Walsingham, ON N0E 1X0.** Your cancelled cheque is your receipt.

Dues can also be paid by e-transfer to: song.treasurer@yahoo.com

- -

Date: _____________ ☐ Renewal ☐ New membership

Name:____

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Prefer to receive newsletter by: ☐ Email ☐ Letter mail

Payment enclosed: ☐ 3 Years $45.00
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Nut Tree Ontario, A Practical Guide:

☐ Please send my free copy with **new 3yr membership.**
☐ I would like to purchase my copy for $26.00 ($29 US).