

Wilderness Climber

The Online Newsletter For Those Who Like To Climb Wild Trees
In Wild Places

November, 2005

The TreeClimber Coalition

From Out In The Woods

Joe Maher

As is usual at this time of year, the big news is that another successful gathering occurred at Bob Wray's place on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

The last one, in the Spring was great; this one was even better. More people, more food, better weather, more comradeship, more show-and-tell innovative techniques; just more and better everything!

Yes, the weather was cold and a lot of time was spent huddling around a blazing campfire. A lot of us were going to bed quite early, the better to get ourselves wrapped up snugly in our comfortable sleeping bags. But...unlike in the Spring, it wasn't snowing.

This was climbing in the woods at its best. Bob's property is a finite entity and there are only so many acres, but every time we come here we discover



BRP Climb-In participants pose in front of Bob's "Winter Home".

that he has gone out and found new and more wonderful trees, than we remembered from before. It would be interesting to know what newly discovered trees he will have to offer for our climbs next time.

Although there were new trees to be climbed, the best and most exciting new thing was Bob's teepee. Yes, teepee! Just like right out of a cowboys and indians movie. The real thing.

It stands tall above the campsite and offers refuge when the cold wind blows through the forest. It is so cozy, in fact, that Bob intends to spend his winter

living in it. My only recommendation is a rug; a nice piece of indoor/outdoor astroturf; something to keep the dirt off the feet. With a good fire in its center, one could easily hibernate there for the winter.

There is only one problem with the teepee. Now that we have all seen and experienced it, what will Bob do for his next trick? It isn't that far till Spring and some of us are already looking forward to it!

Thanks, Bob, for another truly unique and wonderful gathering!

Wilderness Climber

November, 2005

Page Two

In The News

From the internet

The British government plans to pay English woodland owners to replace foreign conifer forests with native trees.

Government environmental officials seek to reverse what they say is a "steep decline" in England's ancient forests by providing incentives to restore native woodlands.

Environmental leaders from Forests.com, Greenpeace, and other organizations said the summer announcement is "commendable" and is in line with previous recommendations from forest ecologists and conservationists.

"They are to be commended for realizing that all tree species are not of equal value, and that tree plantations do not a forest make," according to a

Forests.com statement. "(It) highlights the importance for global ecological sustainability of getting on with restoring plant communities and ecosystems across fragmented landscapes...."

California's oaks have been cut for fuel, cleared for vineyards and home subdivision, and forced to compete for shrinking forests with non-native species. Now there is a threat from climate change which is reducing the area where the oaks grow.

Researchers from the University of California, Santa Cruz, looked at the impact of climate change on blue oaks and valley oaks. The study will be published in the Nov. 8 issue of the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Researchers found that areas of California where the cli-

mate is suitable for the oaks will shift northwards and shrink to half as a result of warming.

"Species such as oaks that we think of as occurring throughout California and that are a recognizable part of the landscape are vulnerable to climate change. It's not just the rare and endangered species that will be affected," said Lara Kueppers, a post-doctoral researcher at UCSC.

The researchers used sophisticated climate models to project what California's climate may be like in the final decade of the 21st century. Based on those projections, they predicted the potential ranges for blue oak and valley oak under the new climatic conditions, and compared that with their ranges under current conditions. The results confirmed expectations of species range changes.

Wanna Write?

Are you tired of seeing the south get most of the tree climbing attention in the news? We agree that a more diverse input is necessary in order to display treeclimbing's true demographic spread around the world.

If you are one of those people out there who does not happen to be a southern climber, we want your input. Write up your climbs and send us your ideas. We will use them!

send to:

jmaher@treeclimbercoalition.org

About This Newsletter

The activity of recreational tree climbing has become more popular in the past few years. Within recreational climbing there is a growing number of participants who perceive climbing as a new venue for the experience of wilderness. Climbing in wilderness implies the necessity of climbing within the bounds of a strong foundation in wilderness ethics. Climbing in wilderness requires different techniques and a different approach than that necessary for climbing in metropolitan areas.

It is the intent of this newsletter to provide articles and information that will appeal to the climber who is interested in pursuing the activity of climbing in those places that exist beyond the impact of modern civilization. As the population of wilderness climbers grows it is hoped that a growing number of those climbers will contribute to this newsletter, making it more useful to those looking for ideas and techniques applicable to the wilderness experience.