

Into the Woods

Some Notes on New England Trees and Forests

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Into the Woods

- Introduction
- Rant: Counting Rivets, Windows and Rings
- Tree Note #1: Pointy Trees
- Tree Note #2: Edges
- Tree Note #3: Tree Heights

Note: Trees are illiterate and may ignore what books say about them. Some grow where they shouldn't and some won't grow where they should.





Introduction

- BSF and PhD in Forest Economics
 - Dendrology class in first semester
 - Field forester in 1978
 - Driving a desk since then
- Sensitive to tree portrayals
 - *April Morning*, 1988: Lexington & Concord
 - Battle was April 19—no leaves on trees (see above)
 - Trees in movie were aspen, already in leaf (filmed in QC)—aspen stands are not common in New England
 - *Drums along the Mohawk*, 1939: Upstate NY
 - Filmed in PA and UT (mostly), western pine forest





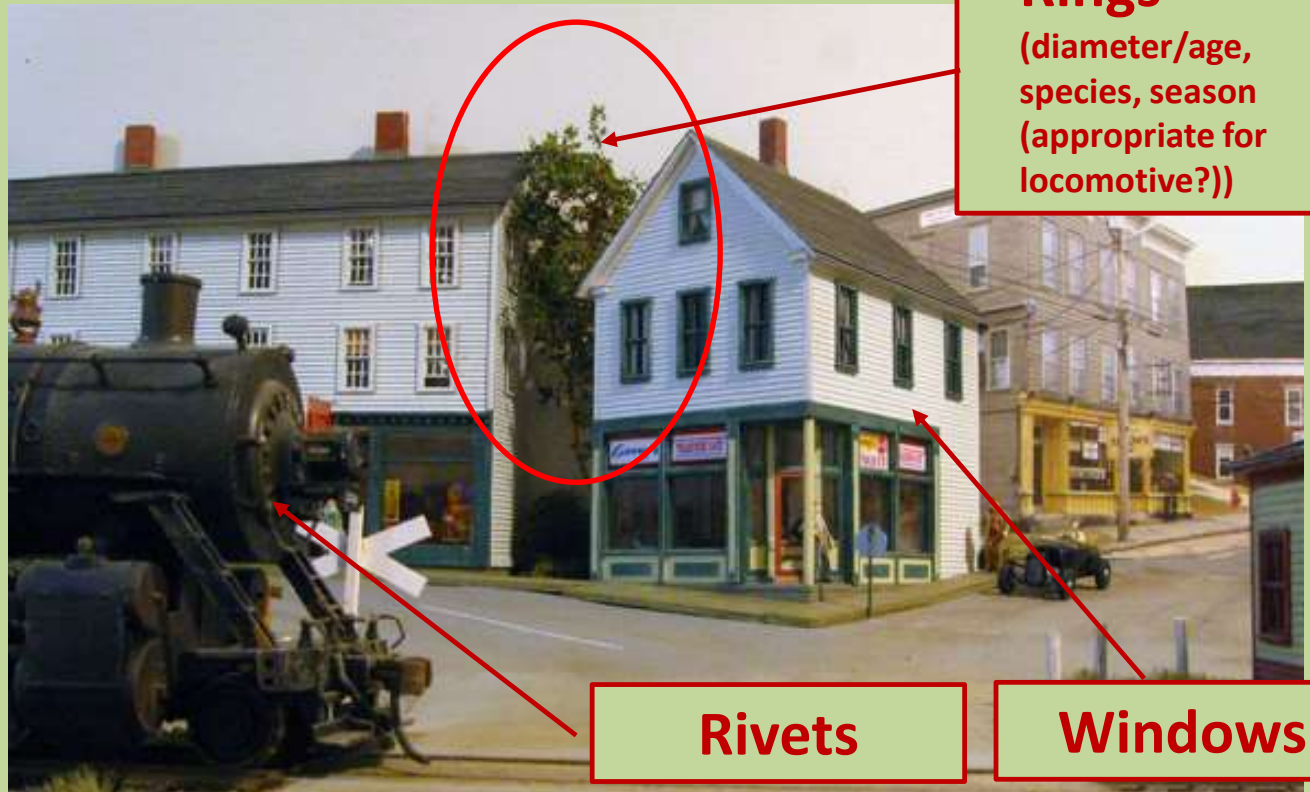
Rant: Counting Rivets, Windows & Rings

- As we move away from the track, concern for accuracy and precision decreases
 - Locomotives and rolling stock:
 - Rivet counters—32” wheels instead of 33”!
 - Buildings:
 - Window counters—selective compression is acceptable
 - Trees:
 - Ring counters—nobody mentions the trees!!!





Rant: Counting Rivets, Windows & Rings



Rings

(diameter/age, species, season (appropriate for locomotive?))

Rivets

Windows

- Tom Oxnard's Ashland
- <http://whiteriverdivision.blogspot.com/2016/12/tom-oxnard-b-layout.html>
- Set in 1953





Tree Note #1: Pointy Trees in New England

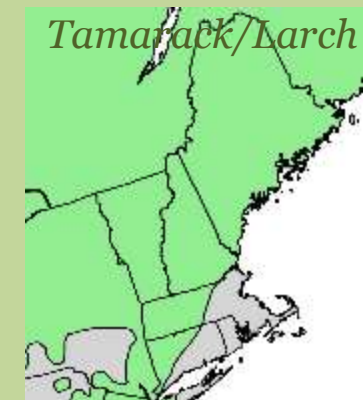
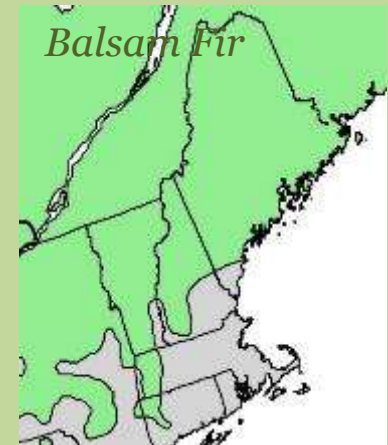
- Spruce/fir prototype and model
 - Many bottlebrush trees available commercially





Tree Note #1: Pointy Trees in New England

- Few pointy trees *in the woods* in southern New England



Found in swamps/bogs





Tree Note #1: Pointy Trees in New England

- Few pointy trees *in the woods* in southern New England
 - Remember that picture of the Battle of Lexington reenactment?



The pointy tree in the background was planted there—may not even be a Northeast species





Tree Note #1: Pointy Trees in New England

- Summary
- There are five pointy tree species in New England
 - Black spruce grows in wet areas down to the CT border
 - Tamarack grows in wet areas down to the MA border
 - Red spruce and balsam fir grow in the Berkshires
 - But not south and east of Concord, NH
- None of this applies to western forests





Tree Note #2: Edges

- You won't usually see tree trunks when driving through New England forests
- Trees grow leaves to the ground along the edge of the forest





Tree Note #2: Edges

- Trees fight for light (and nutrients and water)
 - Leaves need light
 - Some species need more light, some need less
- Trees in the open will have leaves all the way to the ground
- Trees in the forests will have leaves in the canopy
- Trees on the edge of a forest will have leaves to the ground on the open side and fewer/no leaves on the forest side





Tree Note #2: Edges

- Trees in the open have leaves to the ground (unless pruned)
- Trees in the forest have leaves in the canopy

Red Spruce

Gray Rest Area, Maine Turnpike



Maine Wildlife Park, Gray, ME





Tree Note #2: Edges

- Leaves down to the river
 - NH side of Salmon Falls River from Vaughn Woods State Park, South Berwick, ME
 - Picture taken from a spot cleared for the view





Tree Note #2: Edges

- Leaves down to the ground/river
 - ME side of Salmon Falls River
 - No view clearing





Tree Note #2: Edges

- Turned 180 degrees
 - Hemlock forest, very dark
 - Only understory is hemlock (some beech near the river's edge)





Tree Note #2: Edges

- Northeast forest grow fast
- Can't see into the woods
- Unless roadside/trackside has been cleared *recently*





Tree Note #2: Edges

I-95 near Millinocket



Cleared ~5 years ago



Recently cleared



Leaves to ground





Tree Note #2: Edges

- Browse lines
 - An exception not common to northern New England
- Areas with HEAVY deer population (e.g., PA, MI) get browse lines, 6-7' high





Tree Note #2 Edges

- Summary
- Don't model tree trunks along your right-of-way in New England
 - Unless your maintenance crew has just cleared the edges
- If the right-of-way was cleared a (very) few years ago, shrubs and young trees will be growing back
- None of this applies to western forests





Tree Note #3: Tree Heights

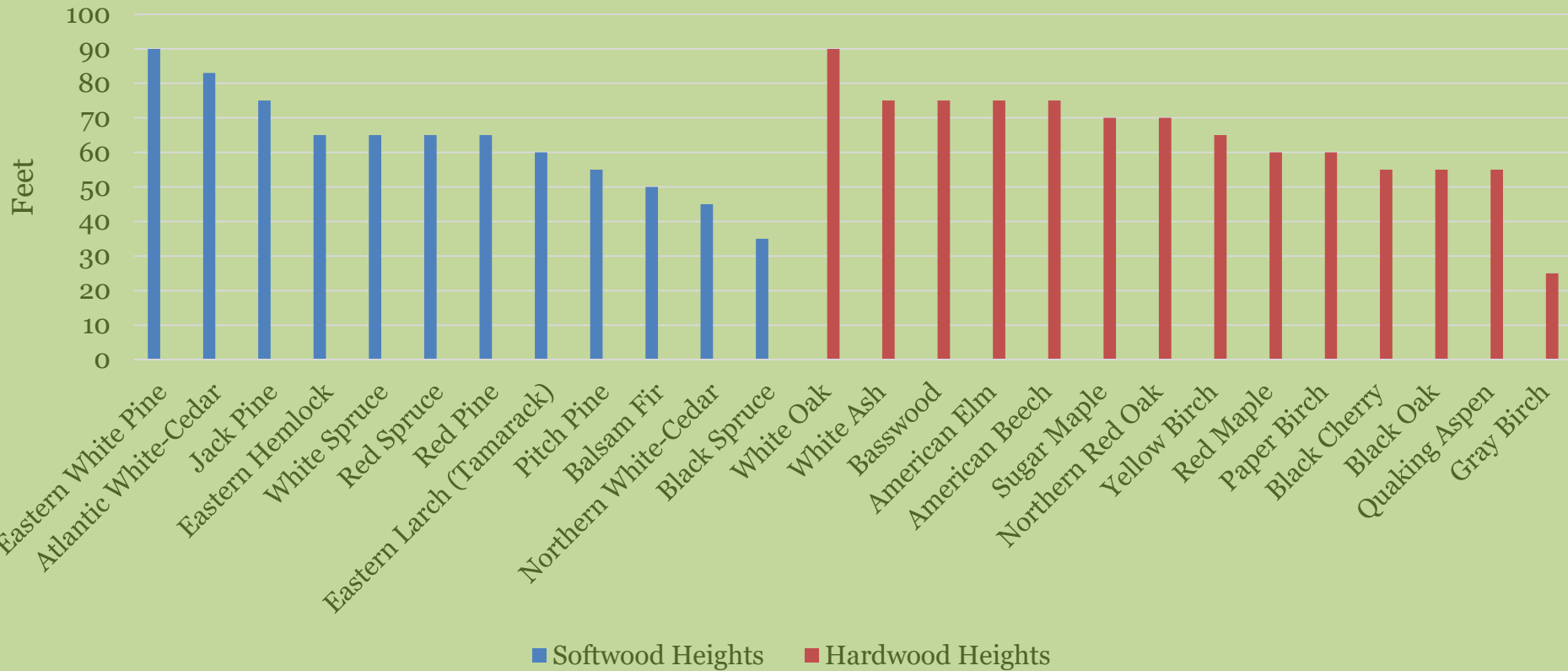
- Most hardwood trees in a timber stand grow to similar heights
 - Puff ball hillsides are OK
 - Pure puff ball hillsides are better for central Appalachian forests
- White pine often towers above the canopy in New England
- Technical data:





Tree Note #3: Tree Heights

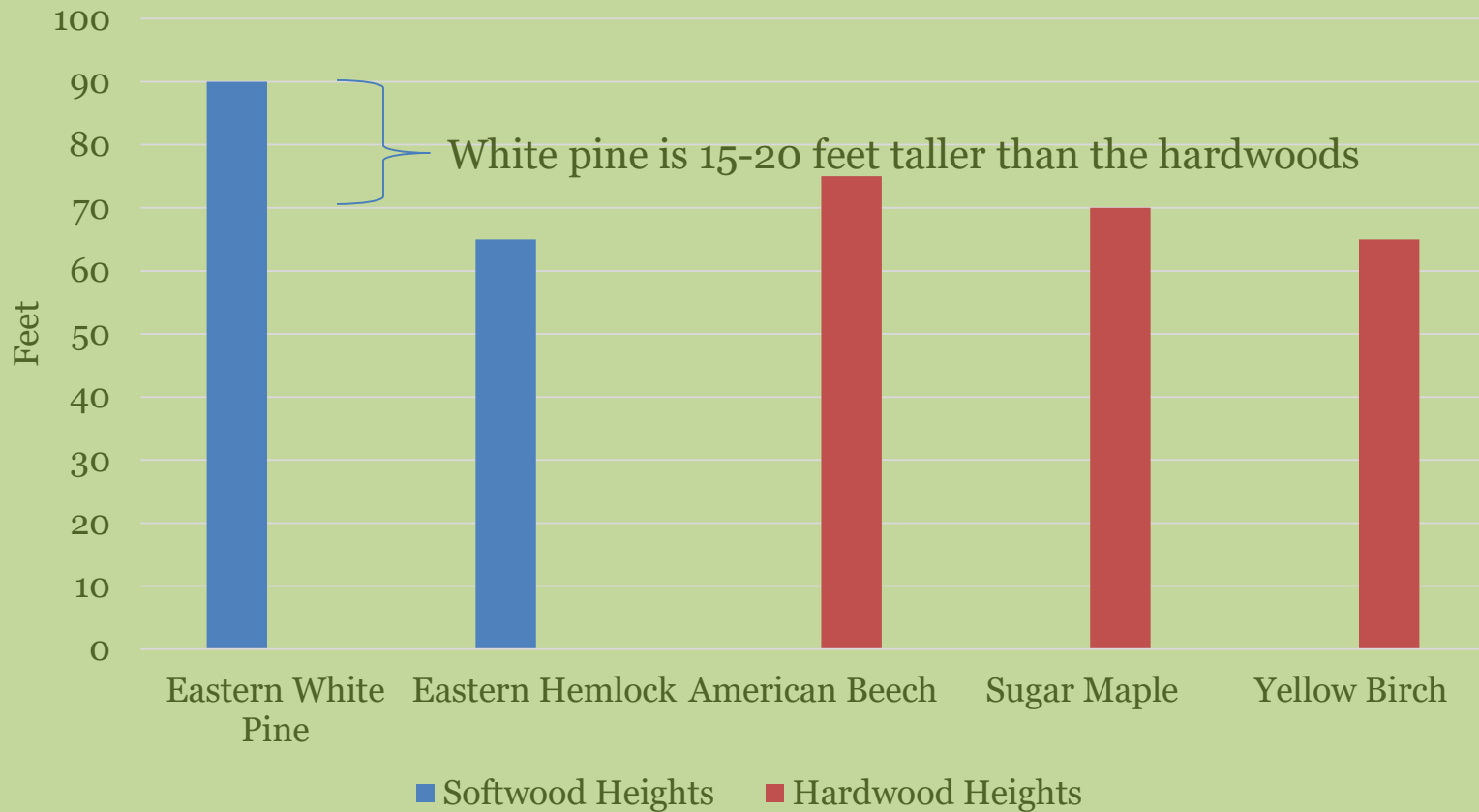
Average Northeast Tree Heights





Tree Note #3: Tree Heights

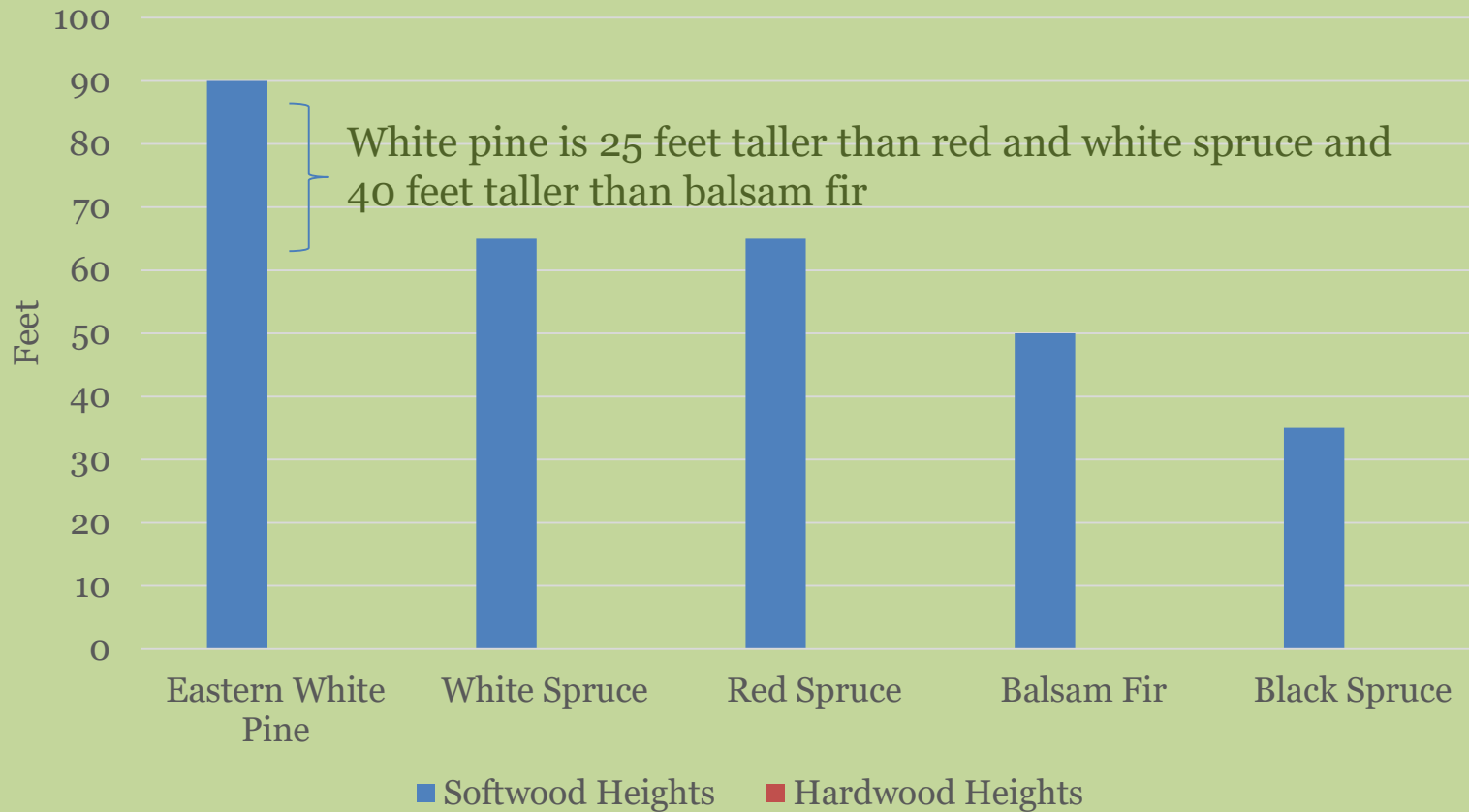
Beech-Birch-Maple (Hardwood) Forest





Tree Note #3: Tree Heights

Spruce/Fir Forest





Tree Note #3: Tree Heights

- White pine often towers above the canopy



Near Onawa Trestle



Tree Note #3: Tree Heights

- Not *every* white pine towers above the canopy





Tree Note #3: Tree Heights

- Modeling Eastern White Pine
 - A common tree in New England forests, but no good commercial models(?)
- NOT a white pine—too pointy!
 - <http://cs.trains.com/mrr/f/11/t/69465.aspx>
- Very good looking—except these are computer graphics models!!!
 - <https://store.speedtree.com/store/eastern-white-pine-ue4/>
- Decent looking scratch-built white pines
 - <http://algonquinrailway.blogspot.com/2014/09/eastern-white-pines.html>
 - <http://model-railroad-hobbyist.com/node/15501>



Tree Note #3: Tree Heights

- Summary
- Average mature hardwood forest is 60-75 feet tall
- Average eastern white pine is 90 feet tall
- None of this applies to western forests





Useful(?) Information

- Pointy Trees
 - Pointy trees (spruce and fir) are not commonly found in southern New England forests
 - Except in the mountains
 - People plant them in yards and parks
- Edges
 - You should see very few tree trunks along a forested right-of-way—leaves and branches to the ground
 - Unless the MOW crew has been by recently
 - “Super tree” models belong in developed areas (residential/commercial/industrial)
- Tree heights
 - Eastern white pines poke above the hardwood canopy
 - ~60-70 feet is a good average height for northeast trees
 - Unless the ground is wet or rocky or high elevation





Thanks for Watching

