

American chestnut trees (*Castanea dentata*) were once so common in the Eastern United States that a count of trees would have turned up one chestnut for every four oaks, birches, maples and other hardwoods.

The wood is highly resistant to rot, straight-grained, strong and easy to saw and split. The tree was particularly valuable commercially since it would grow at a faster rate than oaks.

The nuts were once an important economic resource in the U.S., being sold on the streets of larger cities and used as feed for commercial livestock.

An "imported" fungus disease was discovered in New York City in 1904. The blight spread quickly and, within a few decades, our most important tree was wiped out.

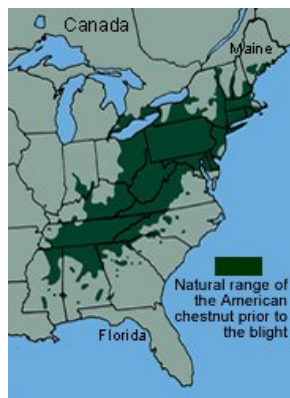
Many experts consider this the largest botanical disaster in history. By 1950 approximately 4 billion trees had disappeared from the eastern forests.

A few of the animals that relied on the American chestnut tree for food and shelter.



The American chestnut Tree of Life

The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) has been founded to restore the American chestnut tree to its native range within the woodlands of the eastern United States, using a scientific research and breeding program developed by its founders. A blight-resistant American chestnut tree is expected to be ready for forest test-planting in 2006 and for wider distribution within the next decade. The wide open landscape of mine reclamation projects is the ideal environment for reintroducing these trees to the region.



Thorpewood
American chestnut research nursery
Thurmont, MD



This fast growing and historically important tree can effectively be reintroduced to the Appalachian mountains in mining reclamation projects. Contact Saminco for additional information regarding the research being conducted by TACF, The University of Kentucky and others for opportunities to assist in this important reforestation program.

