

## Tyler County Tree Farmers Share Tree Management Practices



**Leafcutter ant leaf trail on log**



**Tim Parker (center) demonstrates leafcutter ant colony insecticide application**

Fred and Sarah Reinemeyer are Tyler County tree farmers and active participants in the Tyler County Forest Landowner Association. On Saturday, August 20, the association's board met in the Reinemeyer's home near Colmesneil.

Prior to the business meeting, while the temperature was still warm but not yet hot, attendees walked outside for a tour of the Reinemeyer's twenty-six acre tree farm. They acquired their initial acreage in 2007, just two years after Hurricane Rita downed many of the trees and before Hurricane Ike damaged even more.

As the participants walked through the forest, Tim Parker sprayed Pine Tip Moth insecticide into the mound entrances of Texas leafcutter ant colonies, also known as town ants.

The farm is a natural forest of predominantly hardwood trees bordered by Hooker Branch. During the drought of 2011, the branch is atypically dry. In 2009, the Reinemeyer's hired the Texas Forest Service to cut fire breaks around the perimeter of the farm. These breaks are particularly valued during dry, wild-fire prone years.

The Reinemeyer's, with the assistance of an initial plan from the Texas Forest Service and a more detailed plan from foresters Tim and Keelin Parker, are protecting the banks along the branch to prevent destructive erosion. They are also changing the composition of their tree farm.

Trees topped, leaning, and otherwise damaged by the hurricanes were reducing sunlight and soil resources needed by healthy, marketable trees. To enhance the overall health of the forest, Parker Forestry Consultants injected herbicide into select damaged trees. The injected herbicide does not damage the soil or the surrounding vegetation. With the downed and injected trees' deterioration, young pine saplings are emerging in the open spaces. In only four years, the young pines are over five feet tall. The composition of the tree farm is changing from hardwood trees to mixed trees – both hardwood and pines.

After the business meeting, several of the participants journeyed to The Texas Star Cafe in Colmesneil for further discussion and networking over lunch.

The Tyler County Forest Landowner Association is a non profit organization whose objectives include educating landowners about good forest management and harvesting practices, and keeping landowners up to date on matters affecting timberland operations, taxes and legislative actions. To join and receive mailings relative to tree farm management in Tyler County, send your name, address, phone number and email address (optional) along with \$10 membership dues to Bill Tetley, Treasurer TCFLOA; 3607 Gary Ave.; Nederland, TX 77627-7145 or visit the website at <http://tcforest.org/>.