

April 2011

### Announcements

- **Recent Wood Additions**

Some of the most recent woods we've cut and put up for sale have included: [black willow](#), [Bradford pear](#), [cherry](#), [curly cherry](#), [mimosa](#), [pecan](#), [rainbow poplar](#), [red gum](#), [silver poplar](#) and [tulip poplar](#).

- **Upcoming Woods**

We are expecting a shipment of redwood burl very soon. We will be cutting more hickory, ash, black walnut, silver poplar and cherry burl within the next few weeks.

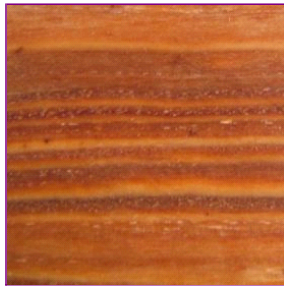
- **Kiln Dried Woods**

Last month we announced that we would be resuming kiln drying operations within the next month. We will be loading the kiln with 2" thick cherry within the next two weeks, as time allows, and should have stock available before the next newsletter is sent out. As the weather continues to warm up, we will begin drying 3" thick stock within the next few months as well.

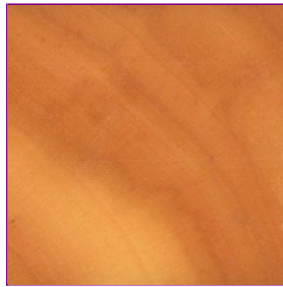
### Focus on Wood - Silver Poplar



Flat Sawn Grain



Quartersawn Grain



End Grain

- **General Information:** Silver poplar trees are non-native to the United States. The trees were originally imported from European nations into the United States as ornamental trees, and have since spread beyond the landscapes for which they were originally intended. Silver poplars can now occasionally be found scattered through some forests in the Eastern US.
- **Common Names:** Silver poplar, white poplar, white aspen, silver-leaf poplar, abele
- **Color:** Sapwood is typically a white or light tan color. Heartwood is a dark orange to orange-brown color, with streaks of dark brown and white occurring very frequently throughout the heartwood.
- **Density:** 28 lbs/ft<sup>3</sup> - Not dense. Relatively lightweight once dried
- **Hardness:** 420 lbf - Moderately soft
- **Specific Gravity:** ~0.45
- **Drying:** Contains a moderately high moisture content, much like native poplar trees, requiring slightly longer drying times than other woods with lower initial moisture contents. Some moderate warping typically occurs, but checking and cracking are not frequent except in areas which may contain heavy figure (crotchwood sections, burls, etc.)
- **Turning:** Turns very easily, with moderate tearout occurring along end grain sections. Small areas of curl, quilting and birdseyes occur frequently in this wood, but do not typically affect turning.
- **Sanding:** Sands very well. For removing tool marks, 120 grit sandpaper is recommended. Will sand to a medium high luster, usually requiring grits no higher than 600 to achieve good results.
- **Finishing:** Readily accepts most stains and finishes without need for any special pre-treatment of the wood surface.

### Photo of the Month Contest



Natural Edge Staghorn Sumac by Larry Clinton

Each month, we will select a "Photo of the Month" for our newsletter. The customer whose photo is selected will receive a \$25 prize, good for anything sold on our web site.

Monthly entries will be accepted from the time the current newsletter is sent out through the 10th of the following month, just prior to the next edition of the newsletter being published. To enter, please see the note posted below.

Interested in making a submission...or even several? All you need to do is [e-mail](#) your photo(s) to us, or upload directly through our [Facebook page](#) to be eligible. Please include your name in any emails, and let us know the size and type of wood in each picture that you submit.

### Myth of the Month

**"Hardwoods are hard woods. Softwoods are soft woods."**

While hardwoods are generally harder and denser than softwoods, this generalization is far from true.

The term "hardwood" usually refers to the group of trees which are angiosperms, meaning that their seeds have a hard, protective covering. Most hardwood trees are deciduous (meaning they lose their leaves each year), but there are some that are evergreen, such as certain magnolias and holly trees. Some hardwoods, such as poplar, are actually much softer than most softwoods.

The term "softwood" typically refers to the group of trees which are gymnosperms, meaning that their seeds lack a hard, protective covering. Most softwoods have needles rather than leaves, are non-deciduous (do not lose their leaves/needles), and produce seed-bearing cones or berries. Some softwoods, such as hemlock and larch, can be much harder than a wide variety of hardwoods.

### Turning Tutorials - Food Safe Finishes, Part 3

This will be the final part of a three part series regarding food safe finishes. In this article, we will be covering the different types of blended food safe finishes which are currently available on the market today.

#### Blended Finishes

- **Oil Blends**

*Multiple Oil Blends* - The oil based finishes which we covered two months ago in our newsletter can be blended in various ways to produce different effects. For example: more durable oils (such as tung oil) can be blended with somewhat darker-colored oils (such as walnut oil) to achieve different effects than what could be produced from either in its pure form. A variety of companies produce these blends, but they can be easily blended in your own shop.

*Single Oil Blends* - Other oil based finishes contain only a single type of oil, which has been blended with additives which alter their application, durability, color and/or drying rates. One of the most widely used examples of this product is Behlen Salad Bowl Finish, which is a blend of tung oil and Behlen's proprietary mix of FDA-approved additives.

- **Wax blends**

*Multiple Wax Blends* - The wax based finishes covered in last month's newsletter can also be blended in a variety of ways to produce different effects. For example: more durable waxes (such as carnauba wax) can be blended with waxes that produce lower sheens (such as beeswax) to achieve different results than what could be produced by either in its pure form. There are a wide variety of commercially available blends, but again, you can easily blend these in your own shop.

*Single Wax Blends* - As with single oil blends, there are single wax blends which contain additives which alter the application, durability, color and/or drying rates of waxes. A popular single wax blend is Renaissance Wax, which is a semi-synthetic wax popular for preservation of fine antiques due to its low odor and color preservation properties.

- **Oil and Wax Blends** - There are many, many types of oil and wax blends available on the market. All are created in attempts to combine the best qualities of different oils and waxes to the best possible effect. Sometimes fragrant oils (such as lemon oil) may be added to provide odor for the finish, or vitamin E oils are added for additional antibacterial protection. Other times carnauba wax may be added to increase surface hardness, or beeswax might be added to lessen the gloss of the final finish. There are literally thousands of potential combinations which can be created. Like other oil blends or wax blends, these can be bought commercially, or you can use your imagination and come up with your own by combining other food safe oil and/or wax based finishes.

- **Urethane Blends** - There finishes typically contain some sort of urethane which has been thinned with a variety of oils and additives to make the product easier to apply. These finishes are typically some of the hardest, most durable food safe finishes available today, which require less coating (and re-coating) to produce a sufficiently durable layer of protection for your wood. One of the most widely available examples of this product is General Finishes Salad Bowl Finish.

In conclusion to this series about food safe finishes, there are a few other important facts you should understand concerning food safe finishing. First, and most importantly, one must realize that there is much debate over the thought that all finishes are food safe once they have fully cured. [This article](#) from Popular Woodworking Magazine goes into great detail concerning this issue, and is definitely worth reading. Perhaps all finishes may be safe once fully cured, but if one wants to take caution and make absolutely sure, they can rest assured that using the information we've provided in the last three newsletter articles about food safe finishing will allow them to know that they've got things done properly. Just remember one thing for certain: never use plant oils (vegetable oil, peanut oil, etc.) which can turn rancid. This is definitely one mistake which will make your finish unsafe as the oil deteriorates and bacteria begin to form within the wood.

We hope you've enjoyed our three part series of food safe finishes. Next month we will begin again with some new topics!

I believe that is all we have for now, folks! As always...we want to hear your feedback, comments, complaints and concerns...anything to help us make our services better for you. Drop us a line anytime!

Regards,  
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