



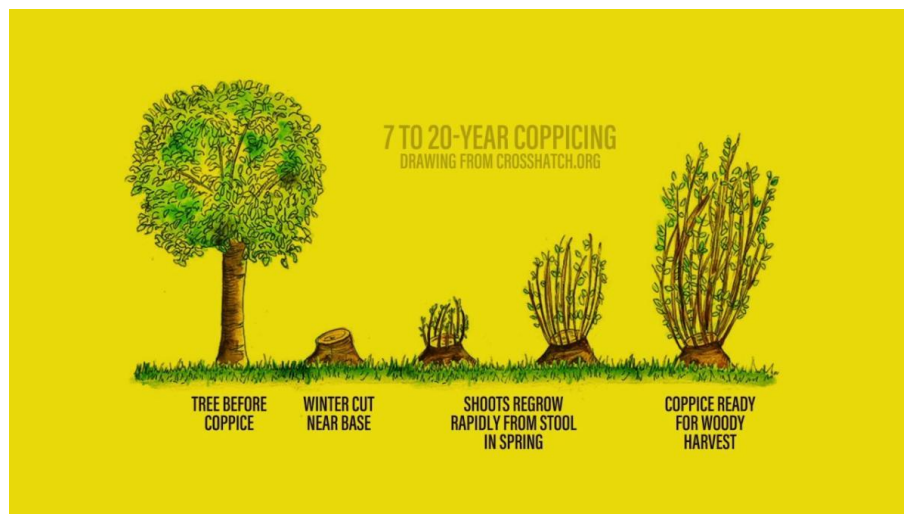
Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association

Creating tomorrow's woodlands today

Kick Off Your Week by Learning Something New: Coppicing for Woodland Management

Historically, pre-industrial Europeans thought it to be a waste of human energy to grow a tree to mature size just to kill it, split it, and then replant and play the waiting game again. Coppicing was widely practiced in ancient civilizations dating back as far as the Stone Age, popular among Romans and Celts, and during the Anglo-Saxon times in the UK. In 1544 Henry VIII issued a statute that coppiced woodlands be fenced in due to their value. [Coppicing - Wikipedia](#) Today, it remains a popular management system in France, as well as in Belgium, and has been revived in the UK for ecological purpose.

There are a few timber harvest methods that are commonplace in the United States today: clearcutting, shelterwood, and selection systems. However, this overseas application of woodland management is becoming a topic of interest that is now being explored in North America due to its recognition as a sustainable forestry practice, both in Canada, and in a handful of states here in the U.S. In our neck of the woods, so to speak, coppicing has been used by Wisconsin DNR on aspens, and in Minnesota on hazels.



So, what is it? It is a process of heavy cutting once the tree has gone dormant for the year. The tree is cut low to the ground, creating what is called a "stool". This cut promotes rapid shoot growth, producing many stems that can then be harvested 7-20 years after the initial cut.

Many Great Lakes species are receptive to coppicing; hophornbeam, willow, oak, elderberry, elm, poplar, beech, alder, hazelnut, mountain ash, catalpa, and black locust. [The Best Species for Coppice Forestry - The Permaculture Research Institute \(permaculturenews.org\)](#)

The benefits of coppicing are incredibly numerous; both environmentally and economically [Coppicing: A Detailed Outline - Piney River Homestead](#)

It increases the longevity of trees, as a single stool can produce for decades, if not hundreds of years. This allows for a renewable source that doesn't require replanting. Timber from coppiced trees, called underwood, can be harvested at different sizes, making it suitable for many products, which supports a variety of industries and can lead to local job creation.

Biodiversity is a result of coppicing as well. Sunlight can better infiltrate to the forest floor, allowing ground cover vegetation and woodland flowers such as wood anemone and marsh marigold to come up. This attracts butterflies, birds, other insects, and wildlife (ruffed grouse is one Wisconsin native that benefits from this) [Coppicing/Pollarding | Midwest Permaculture](#). Increased diversity can bring in ecotourism as well, which becomes an added income source and promotes local economy.

In addition to these, carbon sequestration (potential for carbon credits) and improved tree health are possible benefits [AWES-Coppicing-Factsheet-1.pdf \(awes-ab.ca\)](#).



Amid emerging trends and advancements in sustainable forestry, coppicing seems to have a very promising outlook. Mark Krawczyk, an ecologist, educator, and grower, is actively advocating for this management practice to be utilized here in North America [The Book \(coppiceagroforestry.com\)](http://coppiceagroforestry.com).

Click the [green text](#) to learn more information

Questions? Contact the office at 715-346-4798 or wwoa@uwsp.edu

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