

Along Azalea Row

By Mrs. E. F. Rapraeger

Every winter strong winds do considerable damage to forests by uprooting trees, blowing off tops and breaking branches. Less spectacular than the wind damage but certain to follow is the secondary damage done by fungi and insects which attack the injured trees and weaken them still further until they die. One of the most destructive insects is a tiny bark beetle which burrows under the bark where it makes galleries so numerous and extensive that the tree is finally girdled and succumbs. Normally, healthy living trees withstand their attacks but when the insects reach an epidemic status even the greatest monarch in the forest may die, and weakened trees are easy prey.

The high winds of last December 4 did considerable damage in the Chetco river watershed. The state forester reports that a serious blowdown occurred on the Alfred A. Loeb Memorial park and a subsequent infestation by the Douglas fir bark beetle may offer a serious threat to other timber on the park area. Approximately 80 per cent of the timber on a bench just above the river is down and most of the additional trees have either been broken off or damaged by the falling timber.

The State has completed a sur-

vey of the down timber and will offer it for sale in the very near future. It is hoped that it can be logged before the bark beetles emerge next spring and attack living trees.

The park was acquired about three years ago by the State Forestry department and "Save the Myrtlewoods, Inc.", the latter organization contributing the major portion of the purchase price. Officials of the organization have been consulted over the proposed logging.

The Alfred A. Loeb park was established because it contains a fine grove of Myrtlewood trees. The Myrtlewood is typically a tree of southwestern Oregon and northern California. The family name of the Myrtlewood is Umbellularia and consists of only one species commonly known as Ore-

gon Myrtlewood, California Laurel or Spice-tree. The Myrtlewood is a pungent aromatic tree which with the Broadleaved Maple forms a considerable part of the forest growth in the rich bottomlands along running streams.

The wood of the tree is heavy, hard, strong, close-grained and quite variable in color though the general tone is a light rich brown. It is used considerably for wood turning and is the most valuable wood produced in the forests of Pacific North America.

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