

New York Forest Owners Association Capital District Chapter Newsletter

Volume 22, Issue 1

January 2012

Happy New Year!

Message from the Chair



Most of my thoughts for this letter came to me as I hunted deer this season. Spending many hours in my woodlots, I observed many things not usually seen during normal walks in the woods. Twice, I saw fishers, both within 15 yards. I saw three coyotes together, hunting under and through some deadfalls. Pileated woodpeckers seemed to favor dead pines, pecking the bark a little, and then prying the bark off with their beaks. Sharpshinned hawks glide through the woods very fast, one missing my head by 4 or 5 feet. There are kinglets, chickadees and tufted titmice that noisily feed together through the dense foliage, not staying put long enough for me to glass them with my binoculars. Even seeing deer in their own habitat is something special that people who only see them from the roads could not appreciate.



I see some changes in the woods since last deer season. An ancient white oak has fallen, after serving perhaps 150 years as a corner boundary marker. A few more elms and red cedars are dead and leaning against crop trees, or fallen across trails and woods roads. Although I did a harvest (a pre-emptive tree removal) of my ash trees that were 12 inches DBH or larger, there are still a lot more young ash that are doomed by the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB), which is infesting an area

only a few miles from my wood lots. The EAB will surely infest all of our woodlots, but if we can slow its progression, we will have more time to act. Some forest owners will want to harvest their ash for timber or firewood. Municipalities and utility companies will have to plan for the removal of ash trees before the trees die and become dangerous.

The EAB is only one of the invasive species we have to deal with. As I hunt through my woods, I see Barberry, Japanese Stiltgrass, Oriental Bittersweet, Buckthorn, Garlic Mustard, Honeysuckle, Autumn Olive and Ailanthus. While some of these invasives are not so threatening, Japanese Stiltgrass and Oriental Bittersweet are very aggressive, with no economical means of stopping it once it takes over.

It is time for all of us to learn as much as we can about these invasives. Inspect your woods, and if you are fortunate enough, you can take measures to contain the invasives before they take over. Also, talk to your neighbors and let them know about the invasives problem. I wish I knew more about it before they infested my woods.

Jim Bulich

Chapter Service Award

The 2011 Chapter Award goes to Bob Sheedy who has served as a member of the steering committee for many years and most recently has coordinated staffing for the Capital District Chapter display at the Schaghticoke Fair in Rensselaer County. Congratulations Bob!

Welcome New Members!

| | |
|------------------|-------------------|
| Randall W. Adams | Annapolis, Md. |
| Daniel Bulich | Catskill, N.Y. |
| Lloyd E. Miller | Wynantskill, N.Y. |

Holiday Gathering Just Three Weeks Away!

Please join us! Chapter members, family, and friends are invited to attend the annual Holiday Gathering covered dish supper. If you have never participated before – bring a dish to pass and find out what you have been missing. This is a friendly, informal group of chapter members from across the region. Usually about 20-30 people participate. The event will be held on **Saturday, January 21, 2011** at the Bethany Presbyterian Church in Menands starting at 4:00 p.m.

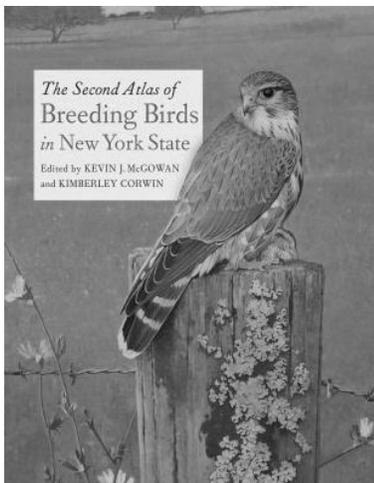


Kimberly Corwin

Our special guest speaker this year is Kimberly Corwin. Kimberley is an ecologist with a specialty in birds and a scientific editor. She currently works for the NY Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit overseeing the revision of the New York State endangered species list and the Species of Greatest Conservation Need list.

Kimberley was the Project Coordinator of the NYS Breeding Bird Atlas Project and Co-Editor of the resulting publication, *The Second Atlas of Breeding Birds in New York State* published in 2008. Most recently, she spent a year working in Louisiana monitoring compliance for the protection of natural resources during the emergency oil spill response that followed the explosion of the Deepwater Horizon.

Kimberley will talk about her experience working on the Gulf after the most extensive man-made disaster in the country's history. With her own pictures, she will illustrate how the oil accumulated on Louisiana's coastline and how it was cleaned up, and will discuss some of the implications to wildlife and sensitive habitats. On a more local level, Kimberley will share information about forest birds and how responsible forest management can benefit bird populations.



The chapter will provide tableware, plates, cups, napkins, condiments, and beverages. Attendees are asked to bring a dish to pass. Bring your favorite! This event is always an opportunity to enjoy some great food and fellowship.

One of the traditions of the evening will be the chance to participate in a "silent auction" of gifts and treasures organized by Jim and Phyllis House. Attendees are encouraged (but not required) to bring as many as five (5) new or nearly new items that you are donating to the auction*. Tickets will be sold at three (3) for \$1.00 or 20 for \$5. Profits from the auction go to support chapter activities.

Pot Luck Dinner!



(Bring a Dish to Pass)

Directions: From the north – take 787 south to exit 7W (rte 378) and bear right on the ramp to route 32. Turn left onto rte 32 (Broadway). At the first traffic light turn right onto Menands Road. The church is on the left on the first corner after you cross the railroad tracks. From the south – Take 787 north from Albany to exit 6. At the end of the exit ramp turn right onto rte 32 (Broadway). At the first traffic light turn left onto Brookside Ave. Take Brookside to the end and turn right on Lyon Ave. The church is on the right after two blocks.

****Phyllis's Rule – any gift or treasure that receives no bids goes home with the donor.***

DEC Leaflets E-Newsletter

Chapter members who have a computer and access to the Internet may be interested in subscribing to a new electronic newsletter. *Leaflets* is a bi-monthly online newsletter produced by the Division of Lands and Forests that provides subscribers with updates on programs, activities and recreation opportunities associated with Division responsibilities.

Some examples of topics covered include:

- Regulation changes and updates on State Forests and Forest Preserve lands
- Recreation updates on State Forests, Forest Preserve Lands and DEC owned conservation easements
- The State Tree Nursery - Seedling sales and free school seedling program
- Forest health updates
- Funding opportunities and grant announcements
- Educational programs and workshops for forest landowners, local governments and urban residents
- Sustainable forestry
- Smart growth
- Open space conservation
- Carbon sequestration and climate change
- Forest tax law
- Green infrastructure

To subscribe go to the following address:

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/74205.html>

Follow the instructions provided. Make sure to read and respond to the confirmation e-mail in order to ensure your subscription is complete. If you did not receive a confirmation e-mail, check your spam or bulk mail in-box. If there are any issues with subscribing to this e-mail list feel free to contact us (contact information provided in the right hand column). Remember, there is always an option to unsubscribe (sent in every e-mail), so please subscribe and give it a try.

DEC says; "You will only receive information from NYSDEC. Your email address will NOT be shared with anyone outside of NYSDEC because we respect your privacy".

Review of 2011 Chapter Activities

The mission of the New York Forest Owners Association, which is a not for profit organization, is to promote sustainable forestry practices and improved stewardship on privately owned woodlands in New York State. The Capital District Chapter steering committee met four times during the year to plan and coordinate activities.

The following accomplishments in 2011 are noteworthy:

Category - Membership Services

Holiday Gathering was held last January
Chapter Picnic was held at Thacher Park
Chapter Newsletter published quarterly

Category - Public Outreach

Altamont Fair Display
Schaghticoke Fair Display
Woodworkers Show in Saratoga

Category - Woodswalks & Workshops

Christman Preserve - Duanesburg
Gibbs Woodlot - Wynantskill
Brearton Woodlot - Altamont

None of the accomplishments listed above could have been achieved without your support, participation and membership. Thank you!



Stegemann Appointed DEC Regional Director

One year ago Bob Stegemann spoke to the Capital District Chapter at the Holiday Gathering about his experiences as a smoke jumper in Alaska. Three weeks ago he joined the Department of Environmental Conservation as Region 5 Director in Ray Brook.



In his new role, Stegemann will manage and oversee the day-to-day functions of DEC's Region 5 office and work with local officials and regional stakeholders.

Stegemann said "From storm recovery and trail maintenance to land acquisitions and wildlife conservation, the eastern Adirondacks and the North Country face many opportunities and challenges. I look forward to guiding the region and working with the area's local governments and our state agency partners on these and other important matters."

"Bob's impressive record in working to create a sustainable society and to preserve New York's resources make him a natural fit for DEC," Commissioner Joe Martens said. "In both professional and volunteer capacities, Bob has proven to be an exceptional environmental steward. Bob will be a valuable asset to DEC and the eastern Adirondacks community."

2012 Seedling Sales Begin

The NYS Tree Nursery at Saratoga offers more than 50 different trees and shrubs for your needs: stream buffers, hedges, windbreaks, wildlife food and habitat, attracting pollinators, Christmas trees and more. Bare root seedlings are lightweight and easy to plant. The sale begins January 3, 2012 and runs through mid May.

Softwoods including:

Red Pine: Three-year seedling. New York source. Avg. hgt. 6"-10" \$20/25, \$42/100, \$56/250 unit

Scotch Pine: Two-year seedling. New York orchard; Boonville or Danish strain.

Avg. hgt. 4"-8" \$20/25, \$42/100, \$56/250 unit

White Pine: Three-year seedling. New York source. Avg. hgt. 6"-10" \$20/25, \$42/100, \$56/250 unit

Balsam Fir: Three-year seedling. New York source. Avg. hgt. 6"-10" \$42/100

Norway Spruce: Two or three-year seedling. New York source. Avg. hgt. 6"-12" \$20/25, \$42/100, \$62/250 unit

White Spruce: Two-year seedling. New York source. Avg. hgt. 6"-12" \$20/25, \$42/100, \$62/250 unit

Douglas Fir: Two or Three-year seedling. Lincoln source. Avg. hgt. 6"-10" \$20/25, \$42/100, \$66/250 unit

European Larch: Two-year seedling. New York orchard. Avg. hgt. 6"-12" \$20/25, \$42/100, \$62/250 unit

Hardwoods including:

Black Cherry: \$30/25 unit, \$66/100 unit

Black Walnut: \$30/25 unit, \$66/100 unit

Black Locust: \$30/25 unit

Butternut: \$30/25 unit

Flowering Dogwood: \$30/25 unit, \$66/100 unit

Hybrid Poplar: \$30/25 unit, \$56/100 unit

Silver Maple: \$30/25 unit, \$66/100 unit

Sugar Maple: \$30/25 unit, \$66/100 unit

Red Maple: \$30/25 unit, \$66/100 unit

Red Oak: \$30/25 unit, \$66/100 unit

White Oak: \$30/25 unit, \$66/100 unit

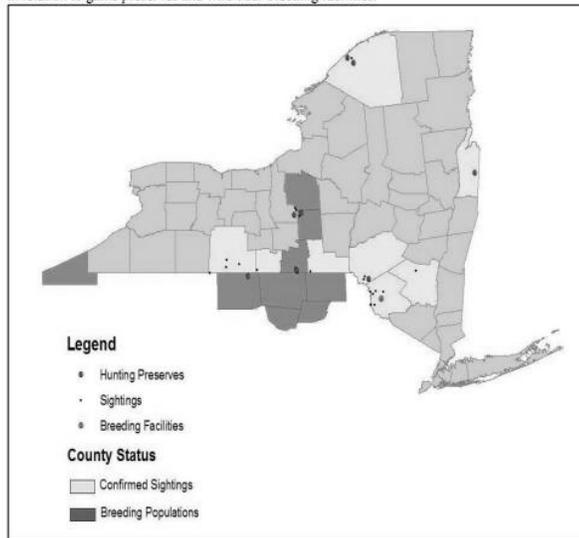
Wild Apple: \$30/25 unit, \$66/100 unit

Shipments are made from mid-April through early May. Seedlings should be planted as soon as possible to take advantage of cool temperatures and good soil moisture from snow melt and spring rains.

Another Invasive Species – Wild Pigs!

Wild pigs (feral swine) have joined the list of invasive species in New York State. These destructive animals are already established in central New York and have also been spotted in the southern Catskills and Washington County.

Figure 3. The current status of feral swine in New York State and select Pennsylvania counties in relation to game preserves and wild boar breeding facilities.



According to the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) feral swine includes both domestic pigs, wild boar that escaped from licensed shooting preserves, or a hybrid cross between domestic pigs and wild boar. These animals are highly adaptable and prolific. If weather is good and food is plentiful, feral swine can breed as early as 6 months of age. Their litter size usually ranges from 2-8. A feral swine population can triple in one year.

DEC's goal is to eradicate feral swine from the state's landscape. "It's a growing problem, and we would like to eradicate them from New York," said Kelly Stang, a state Department of Environmental Conservation wildlife biologist.

A story by Adam Bosch in the Times Herald Record, Middletown, New York featured a farmer and maple producer from Long Eddy in Sullivan County.

"Peter Andersen's latest encounter with vicious pigs came early one September night when he pulled his truck into the driveway. In the woods across from his farmhouse, Andersen could see a 300-pound hog rooting for food. The third-generation farmer ran into his house, grabbed his German sniper rifle and fired one 8 mm round into the pig's side. The pig ran a short distance and dropped dead. Loud squeals echoed across the hills as roughly 30 other pigs sprinted away. Andersen shot again and again.



Peter Andersen

In two minutes, he fired nine shots and killed eight pigs. He also proved two points: "I'm a very good shot," Andersen said with a serious chuckle, "and these animals need to be destroyed."

Most of the wild hogs are Russian boars. The largest of them grow to be 400 pounds, with razor-sharp tusks that can measure 3 inches or longer. The fearless hogs have already killed one dog in New York and chased several hunters through the woods.

USDA biologist Justin Gansowski said a lack of funding was the biggest obstacle to preventing the population from exploding. The federal agency applied for new grant money to deal with feral swine, but has yet to receive an answer on the application. Traps used to capture the swine are expensive and costly to maintain.

"There needs to be more funding," he said. "That's currently why we only have one person, which is me. With the explosive nature of the feral swine population, our time frame to do something is now."

In New York, people with a small game license may shoot and keep feral swine at any time and in any number. All other hunting laws and firearms regulations are still in effect when shooting feral swine. If you do shoot or see feral swine please report it to the nearest DEC regional wildlife office. Please report the number of swine seen or killed, whether any of them were piglets, the date, and the exact location (county, town, distance and direction from an intersection, nearest landmark, etc.).



Feral Swine in NYS

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*State board of directors

Note: Any chapter member is welcome to join the steering committee. We need your ideas and extra help. Meetings are held every three months at the Colonie Town Library. The next meeting is scheduled Tuesday, January 10th at the Colonie Town library starting at 6:30 p.m.

2012 Events Calendar

At this time woodwalks and events are still tentative. The next issue of the newsletter will have more details.

CDC Steering Committee Meetings – 6:30 p.m.

January 10th

April 10th

July 10th

October 9th

Chapter Holiday Gathering

Saturday January 21st, 2012 4 - 7:00 p.m.

Bethany Presbyterian Church in Menands

Chapter Picnic

Thacher Park – date TBA

Albany County

Saturday June 2nd Five Rivers – Bethlehem
Explore various wildlife habitats and old growth woodlot with naturalist John Lawrence.



Collecting the Sap

Test Your Wildlife Knowledge ...

This most unusual reptile has pure white fur all along its back, with non-reflecting scales on its belly. It has ruby-red eyes and a small mouth that sports poisonous fangs. It reaches up to 2.5 meters in length. This critter hibernates during the summer months and emerges from its slumber in late December. For cross country ski enthusiasts, snowshoe aficionados, and especially snowmobilers, this should be an easy one.

The Mystery Critter

Clue #1

Found throughout the colder northern regions of North America. This critter has been spotted during the months of December through February. The best habitat in New York State is found in the Adirondack Mountains and the Tug Hill plateau. Wildlife biologists have proven that these reptiles have chosen this area due to the vast amount of small game that hibernates there during the winter. The most recent sighting was December 29th 2011 in a corner of Lewis County known as the Tug Hill.

Clue #2

Their diet consists of small mammals and reptiles that are inactive during cold weather. This critter is particularly adept at hunting hibernating mammals. During the summer months this mystery becomes torpid and is not seen until winter arrives. They are immune to the effects of cold, but quite vulnerable to fire.

These reptiles are venomous and can be dangerous to travelers over snowy areas.

Clue #3

It comes in only one color - all white with red eyes and a poisonous bite. Snowmobilers in areas of prime habitat will attest that the only effective antidote for the deadly bite is to carry a silver flask filled with brandy. One nip for every bite will usually fend off the worst effects.

According to those who have visited, one of these critters is stuffed and mounted on the wall behind the Redfield Square Hotel bar - for all you doubters.



Do You Recognize This Critter?

Answer:
THE SNOW SNAKE
Ophidia niphophila

*From Paranormal Animals of North America.



FOUNDED 1963