



Southern Finger Lakes Chapter
Tompkins - Tioga - Schuyler - Chemung

Southern Finger Lakes Chapter Forest Owners Association Newsletter

January 2013

Chairman's Message

It is a nominal snowfall "winter," despite climate change impacts. This year we have "normal" snows for this time of year. The deer might have more trouble finding seedlings to eat, and maybe our forest can have more normal regeneration. The days also grow longer, so we don't have to sleep as much!

It's good to reflect on your forest. This newsletter will have a roster of local events that might help your reflections. Southern Finger Lakes chapter is offering some of these events as part of the 50th NYFOA anniversary happenings, with the theme of Restore NY Woodlands. Also, the NYS Farm Show is 21-23 Feb, and NYFOA will be there with a number of interesting topics for forest owners, large and small. A list is available at www.NYFOA.org.

Future newsletters will offer you a variety of topics of interest to you and your forest interactions. We are interested in owners with smaller forests, because there are more of you! Smaller forest owners often do more of the actual forest management actions than larger forest owners, simply because these actions are more achievable. Chapter thinking then will focus on these actions. The theme of the Winter Seminar is an example.

As an encouragement, if you receive this newsletter by email, you might know someone who would appreciate a copy; so, email that person with a copy. That way, the outreach of forest information is heightened.

Fifth Annual Peter Levatic Memorial Seminar

Sponsored by

**New York Forest Owners Association
Southern Finger Lakes Chapter**

**Saturday, February 9, 2013 9:00 - 12:30 pm
Spencer-VanEtten High School
16 Darts Rd., Spencer, NY**

Do It Yourself Woodlots

- 9:00 **Welcome by Bob Barton**
Chair of SFLC Steering Committee
- 9:10 **The Hobnob Forest**
Tim Levatic
- 9:50 **Working Safely and Efficiently in the Woods**
Dr. Peter Smallidge
State Extension Forester
Cornell University Cooperative Extension
- 10:30 **Break**
Light refreshments compliments of NYFOA SFL
Support our youth education and buy raffle tickets
- 10:45 **Adding Value to Your Timber With Portable Mills**
Dave Scott
Wood-Mizer – Hannibal, NY
- 11:30 **Woodlot Management and Utilizing Low-Quality Timber**
Brett Chedzoy
Sr. Resource Educator, Natural Resources
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Schuyler Co.
- 12:15 **Raffle Drawing**
Chainsaw and other prizes

UPCOMING SPRING SFLC EVENTS

As part of the Restore New York Woodlands and the 50th anniversary of NYFOA the following woodswalks/work shops are being offered by the Southern Finger Lakes Chapter of NYFOA. More details will be coming forth in the Spring newsletter.

Saturday, May 11, at Arnot Forest, 9 – 12:30 pm and 1 – 4:00 pm sessions.

Meet at the Arnot Lodge. Bring your own lunch. Water provided.

Shiatake Mushroom Log Inoculation from 9 – 12:30pm

presented by Dr. Ken Mudge, Cornell University Horticulture.

Workshop will cover some basics as to wood and tools needed, how to inoculate the logs by going through the stages. You take your inoculated log home.

Fee: \$30 Limited to 30 people.

Contact: Schuyler County Cooperative Extension, Attn: Brett Chedzoy
607-535-7161 or e-mail at bjc226@cornell.edu for registration.

Forest Health/Mushroom Walk from 1 – 4:00pm

presented by Dr. George Hudler, Cornell University Plant Pathology

A walk through the forest to identify common edible mushrooms and to understand the basics of Forest health and disease. *This workshop is free. Bring hiking shoes and tick spray.*

Thursday, May 16th, at Carantouan Greenway Wildwood Reserve (on the web) in Barton, NY at 5 – 7 pm.

Marty Borko will lead a woodswalk that will demonstrate the invasion of our woods by exotic species that dominate the herbaceous and shrub layers in the understory, namely garlic mustard and Japanese honeysuckle. Advice will be sought as to how to best restore it to native species and where to best set up an exclosure (sic) to protect new growth from deer.

Sunday, May 19 at Peter Levatich's "Hobnob" forest

A woodswalk through Hobnob Forest by Tim Levatich. Started in 1975 by Tim's father the 130 acre forest began in 1975 with road building, timber stand improvement, and firewood production. The property was growing a mixed hardwood forest of pole-sized trees – there were very few sawtimber-sized trees at that time. Recreation was an early and constant focus, along with growing prime sawtimber and firewood. Management planning, NYDEC service foresters, the American Tree Farm System, boundary line maintenance, regeneration work, repeated pre-commercial thinnings, and extensive road building were all part of its development.

The TSI worked. The Forest has seen six sawlog sales and one timber sale, plus many cords of firewood produced. The hilltop site has provided challenges through drought, insect infestation, disease vectors and weather damage. In spite of these events, Peter Levatich got to see his work of over 30 years come to fruition. There are many things to see and topics to discuss!

Producing Craft Lumber on a Budget

One of the problems facing small woodlot owners who work in woodcrafts is that of obtaining quality wood at an affordable price, and in sizes not available in the lumber trade. For example, purchasing blocks of apple, plum and pear for carving blanks is almost out of the question unless you have an arrangement with an orchard, arborist, or specialty sawyer. This article explains other strategies to obtain useful craft wood.

For anyone who doesn't mind putting in some time and effort, one of the best (and cheapest) ways to obtain unique wood is to fell and mill it yourself. If you choose that route, the way you break down the log depends upon the species, size of log and what your end use is. First you must understand just what the wood you have is good for and whether it suits your intended purpose. One of my favorite works on uses of wood and dendrology is [A Natural History of Trees](#) by Donald Culross Peattie. I work in sculpture or woodcarving, and have worked with a variety of woods. If I am working a cleavable wood (one that can be split along its length), I work it *green*, or unseasoned. I cleave it and then use a drawshave and shaving horse to obtain "dimensional" stock. This type of woodworking is preindustrial and needs a separate article. The two best writers on the subject are Drew Langsner

(www.countryworkshops.org) and Mike Abbott (www.living-wood.co.uk).

I would love to own a bandsaw mill, and small tractor to skid the timber and lumber, but can't figure it into the monthly budget. I do own an 18" industrial bandsaw that I use for resawing and other bandsaw work. I've used this saw to "box out" logs up to 5' long and 16" diameter. However, that's a lot of mass to control while being only

inches from a 1-1/4" blades powered by a 3 hp motor. In order to control the log I really should build a rack/jig to guide the wood through the saw.

Several years before I obtained a bandsaw I split the wood with a maul or cut the wood up with a chainsaw. This method is slow, and often produces irregular wood of questionable value. I asked the owner of the local chainsaw shop how to effectively rip a small log to obtain carving blanks with a chainsaw. He recommended using a skip-toothed chain, but it was double the price of a normal chain. He also mentioned the alternative of grinding every other tooth off the chain. I tried this with my Stihl 026, and it greatly improved cutting speed, but caused the chips to come out as long strings that clog the chip exit. I recently contacted another saw shop about the long stringy chips and they recommended a square cut chip tooth chain, but this has been discontinued in .067 gauge, which my saw requires. With some practice I learned to control the cutting plane and to cut slower which reduced the clogging problem. I did manage to cut nice 3-6" thick X 12" wide X 4' long slabs for bowl blanks and carvings. I eventually learned to support the log with two parallel logs, and with care this method works quite well.

After all of my trial and error, I found a book that was of much value in offering easily understood instruction for processing craft woods: [Wood for Wood-Carvers and Craftsmen](#) by Robert L. Butler.



Fig 1

The following photographs show how to block out the wood to remove the unusable bark slabs and the heart, which has very unstable wood because of the tight concentric growth rings and obtain fine woods for your projects.

The accompanying photographs show: 1) How to layout the log so you get two large billets, two radial sawn flitches, the waste wood



Fig 2

consisting of the boxed out heart/pith and other smaller billets. 2) A "Wainscot" billet or carving block.

These slabs can be trimmed up on the bandsaw, or, as I've done with several projects, by first using a scrub plane and then a jointer plane. While certainly not achieving the precision one needs for cabinetwork, this process has served my woodcarving needs. – Lewis Ward, Newfield NY

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Ed Neuhauser Tree Farm Tour in Groton on Sept. 22nd



Tour of New
England Wood
Pellet factory in
Deposit on Sept.
27th

Come and join our group of New York Forest Owners, a not-for-profit organization which supports sustainable forestry practices and improved stewardship on privately owned woodlands. Regular annual dues are just \$30.00 for an individual or \$35.00 for a family.

Contact: NYFOA, P.O. Box 541, Lima, New York 14485 1-800-836-3566 www.nyfoa.org

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