

# The New York Forest Owner

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

May/June 2004



**Ask a Professional –  
Marking Property Boundaries**

*Volume 42 Number 3*



**THE NEW YORK  
FOREST OWNERS  
ASSOCIATION**

Volume 42, Number 3

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**The New York  
Forest Owner**

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**Please address all membership fees and change of address requests to P.O. Box 1055, Penfield, N.Y. 14526. 1-800-836-3566. Cost of family membership/subscription is \$30.**

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**COVER:** An example of how posted signs should be attached to trees. See page 8 for full article from the Ask the Professional column. Photo courtesy of Peter Smallidge.

# From The President

## More Members Needed

For NYFOA to be a success we must reach out to more and more private woodland owners. This outreach takes many forms. Landowner workshops and seminars are put on throughout the state by several chapters and some are routinely attended by as many as 400 interested people. These are a great way to get our message of *Sustainable Woodland Practices* out to non-members, and also a rich source of new members!

This year we will undertake a mass mailing to some 9,000 member prospects. This effort, which includes the redesign of our brochure, is funded in large part by Home Depot to whom we are most grateful. We expect hundreds of new members from this effort.



Our recent involvement with the FLEP program (see the last issue of the *Forest Owner*) has given NYFOA exposure to hundreds more landowners, some of whom undoubtedly will become new members. The NYFOA board recently approved additional dollars to increase our sponsorship of the Master Forest Owners program. NYFOA will be even more prominently visible when an MFO makes a property visit, again a natural source for future NYFOA members.

A major success in the past couple of years has been the outreach at the New York State Farm Show held at the State Fair Grounds in Syracuse at the end of February. On February 26-28, NYFOA in partnership with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, and Cornell Cooperative Extension, sponsored an information booth as well as 12 individual forest stewardship educational seminars, each an hour long. The primary objective was to provide forest stewardship

information to the agricultural community that owns 25% of the land in New York. The seminars included topics from "how to develop a forest management plan" to "deer management." Over 400 people took advantage of these free sessions and 15 requested a visit from an MFO or a DEC forester. The informational booth was staffed by 2 to 3 volunteers for all three days and a total of 635 people signed in — hundreds of others just browsed. One hundred seventeen of these potential stewards requested follow up visits by an MFO or a DEC forester. These numbers reflect a growing interest in what we do! Total numbers reflected a 35% increase over last year's numbers.

We now have a wonderful challenge before us. First, we must coordinate and execute 132 visits. Since virtually all MFOs are NYFOA members, the responsibility rests in large part with NYFOA. This follow-up will provide the opportunity to move forward the concept of forest stewardship and the NYFOA mission.

The second challenge is for chapters to contact individuals from their chapter area who provided contact information at the booth. An invitation to join a chapter event should provide positive results. These landowners are prime candidates to join your chapter and gain motivation through association with current NYFOA members.

A very special thanks to John Druke and the Central New York chapter for their wonderful efforts in organizing the events, also to our partners, and to all the presenters. They have helped to stimulate interest in our organization, now we must capitalize! As both a NYFOA and an MFO, I look forward to making landowner visits this spring and summer. I know I can count on you, my fellow NYFOA members, to do your part to grow our membership!

Have a **great** summer in your woods!  
—Geff Yancey  
President

## Join!

NYFOA is a not-for-profit group of NY State landowners promoting

stewardship of private forests for the benefit of current and future generations. Through local chapters and statewide activities, NYFOA helps woodland owners to become responsible stewards and interested publics to appreciate the importance of New York's forests.

Join NYFOA today and begin to receive its many benefits including: six issues of *The New York Forest Owner*, woodwalks, chapter meetings, and two statewide meetings. Complete and mail this form:

I/We would like to support good forestry and stewardship of New York's forest lands

I/We own \_\_\_\_\_ acres of woodland.

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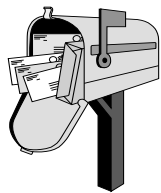
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# In The MAIL



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134 Lincklaen Street, Cazenovia, NY 13035  
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via e-mail at [mmalmshe@syr.edu](mailto:mmalmshe@syr.edu)

## NY's RPTL 480-a

I would like to add a gripe to David J. Colligan's list about NY's RPTL 480-a. The management plan obliges the landowner to carry out practices like T.S.I. regardless, whether he or she can get state aid, and in the year it is stated in the plan. We all know the frustration of not knowing whether state aid will be available, but the inflexibility of the 480-a make it particularly difficult for the landowner.

Suggested reform: Give the landowner a period of five years to do the practice.

—Jim Martin  
Muenster, Germany

Thank you for publishing an excellent article regarding our 480-a law here in New York. It seems that for years, it has been almost un-heard of to speak unfavorably about the "incentive plan." While it was developed by well intended individuals, the results speak for themselves. I've characterized the plan as the most stringent lien on your property that an individual can possibly have, with the worst possible lien holder imaginable.

Forest owners need help, and this is not it. Can there ever be anything that will provide us with true help? And, will it come in time? Thank you.

—Tom Graber  
Auburn, NY

## Job Well Done

At nearly 94 years of age I'm not very active but greatly appreciate the *Forest Owner* and the valuable information in it. Thanks much, M.F.

—Maurice Fitzgerald  
Syracuse, NY

Just a note commending you and your staff on an outstanding issue of the *Forest Owner*. Especially liked the

articles by Dave Colligan and Doug Allen. Keep up the good work!!

—Bob Preston  
Niagara Frontier Chapter

## Heartfelt Thank you

I want to thank all of NYFOA who thought of me for the Heiberg Award. When I think of the many really wonderful, dedicated people who have received this award in the past I truly feel highly honored!

Thanks again NYFOA, you have many hardworking, dedicated and active members.

—Jack McShane  
Andes, NY

## Sudden Oak Death

New York forest owners may soon be faced with a new disease that appears to be as virulent as the American chestnut blight or the Dutch elm disease. It is called sudden oak death (SOD) and is caused by a fungus (*Phytophthora ramorum*). This newly discovered fungus attaches to the bark of oaks and gives access to the trunk for insects and other fungi. Death follows in one to two years. It is particularly lethal to the oaks but affects redwood and Douglas fir as well as many shrubs such as rhododendron and camellia.

Thus far this disease has been confined to the west coast, but the threat to NY forests is great. Fortunately state and federal funds have been made available to study SOD and to develop controls. Currently our Plant Protection and Quarantine section of the U.S. Department of Agriculture has initiated inspection and quarantine programs to slow the spread of SOD. It is easily spread by host plants, bark, wind, rain, tires and feet. No practical method of inoculation against the disease has been developed.

However, we need to be informed and to support programs for its control. Maps of its distribution can be found on the Web along with excellent material from papers and conferences. That a very serious effort is being made to understand and control this disease is apparent in the Sudden Oak Death Online Symposium held in April and May 2003. It is available on CD from the North Central Research Station, USDA Forest Service, 1992 Flowell Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108 or via the internet at [www.ncrs.fs.fed.us](http://www.ncrs.fs.fed.us).

Should I continue to plant my oak seedlings?

—Ed Gasteiger  
Ithaca, NY

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# HOW TO: *Stake Newly Planted Trees*

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Should newly planted trees be staked? In most cases the answer is no, says William R. Chaney, professor of tree physiology at Purdue University. It's important for trees to experience movement caused by the wind so they can develop properly. Movement by wind causes shortened stems, increased trunk diameter, and enhanced root development, all of which result in a tree that has a better balance of canopy size, trunk caliper, and root system.

Chaney adds, however, that in a few situations, it is essential to hold trees upright with stakes until adequate root growth has occurred to anchor them in the soil. If staking is necessary, he says, it is important that the stakes be installed properly to prevent tree damage.

## When to Stake Trees

Chaney says staking newly planted trees is warranted in very open sites that are exposed to strong winds, such as new housing developments, or on sites with sandy soils. Tall trees with small root balls also may need to be staked. Without support in these situations, trees may become tilted and movement of the root ball in the planting hole may damage the tree's fine, absorbing roots. If a tree is supported, says Chaney, the ties and guys should be removed as soon as feasible—usually no later than after one growing season. Trees that are prevented from moving for longer periods usually grow taller than trees that are free to move in the wind, but they grow less in diameter, have smaller root systems, and often break easily in the wind after the supports are removed.

Perhaps the greatest advantage of supporting trees against the wind, says Chaney, is that the staking materials provide barriers to physical damage of tree trunks by lawnmowers and other landscaping equipment. Leaving the stakes as trunk guards after the support-

ing guys are removed from a tree may be useful as long as they don't pose a hazard.

## Proper Methods of Staking and Guying


Chaney says that as many as four stakes may be used to support a tree. A single stake should be placed on the windward side of the tree. The tree should be tied with a figure eight loop between the tree and the stake to minimize the extent to which the stake rubs against the tree stem. The material used to attach the tree to the stake should be broad, smooth, and somewhat elastic. Cord or wire inside a section of rubber hose or other flexible tubing can be used as well. The tree should be attached to the stake at several points along the trunk. Never use bare wire or cord as a tie material because it is likely to cut into the bark and damage the essential food- and water-conducting tissues beneath.

If two support stakes are used, they should be placed on opposite sides of the tree and outside the planting hole for maximum support and to avoid damaging the root ball. A guy attached to the tops of the stakes will be sufficient for support. Chaney recommends that the stakes should be tall enough to keep the tree upright but not so high that the top of the tree bends above the tie point. The guys should be taut but not so tight that the tree is inhibited from moving. It is best to use a flexible material such as half-inch concrete reinforcing rod, for stakes that support the top but also allow some natural movement of the stem.

Chaney says that when three or four stakes are used, the guys should slope from about halfway up the trunk to the ground at an angle of about 45 degrees. Stakes should be driven deep into the soil in line with the guy, pointing toward the tree. Stakes that are driven perpendicular to the guy tend to loosen.

Chaney also recommends that trees larger than four inches in diameter be secured with three or four guys attached

to the trees with eye screws, even though the screws may damage part of the tree stem. Compared to the rubbing-girdling effect of tie material looped around the stem, which can damage 60 percent or more of the bark at that point, damage caused by the eye screws is "minimal," he says.

Despite the benefits staking may provide to newly planted trees, Chaney reiterates that staking should be done only when soil conditions and exposure to the wind make it necessary to help a tree remain standing. In such situations, the supports should be installed properly to prevent rubbing and bark damage, and the supporting material should be removed as soon as possible—usually after one growing season. Trees that are free to sway in the wind usually are shorter in height but greater in diameter than trees held rigidly by supports. 

*Adapted from "Should Newly Planted Trees Be Staked and Tied?" by William R. Chaney, a publication of Purdue University Extension. For more information, contact William R. Chaney, Department of Forestry & Natural Resources, Purdue University, Forestry Building, 195 Marsteller Street, West Lafayette, IN 47907-2033; (765) 494-3576; [bchaney@fnr.purdue.edu](mailto:bchaney@fnr.purdue.edu).*

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# Further Thoughts Regarding 480-a

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MICHAEL GREASON

**D**ave Colligan's article, "Why New York's RPTL, Section 480-a Does Not Encourage Forest Stewardship" inspired me to share some thoughts on the subject.

A study by the New York Society of American Foresters during the last decade showed that 80% of harvests in the state are not done according to sustainable forest silvicultural practices. Most harvests are either diameter limit or high-grade cuts. New York is blessed with one of the finest, renewable, resilient forest resources in the world as evidenced by the export market demand for our wood. Yet good forest management is not being adequately implemented across the state.

I agree with Mr. Colligan that 480-a has not become effective in serving as an incentive to private forest owners in encouraging forest management. There are many reasons for this.

The forest tax law has always been an unfunded state mandate. The Department of Environmental Conservation is charged with administering 480-a, but there have never been dedicated funds allocated to support this responsibility. I was hired by the Department in 1969 and saw a constant decline in staffing for private forestry assistance through my career, and since I retired, to a level of seventeen work years statewide this year. DEC staffing sets priorities on work and

assigns effort in terms of "full time work-year equivalents" and the seventeen work-years may be carried out by fifty foresters working part time on private forestry. How can DEC be expected to effectively administer or encourage enrollment in 480-a when they have not had enough staff to oversee their responsibilities?

480-a is narrow in focus. Historically the forest tax law, since its inception in 1912, has been focused on stabilizing forest industry. It is a timber production law where as several national Forest Service private forest landowner studies have shown that timber production is a low priority. The mandated work schedule forcing intensive forest management is a disincentive to enroll. Jack Mc Shane was the forest owner who convinced me that a mandated work schedule is a poor public policy. For those of you who do not know Jack, he is a retired NYC policeman who has been recognized as a State Outstanding Tree Farmer, is a Master Forest Owner, and has taught me a lot about serving private forest owners. Other incentives programs, such as FLEP, can offer the encouragement to improve young stands. Through a well thought out revision, 480-a could serve to protect the forest when it is most vulnerable by retaining DEC oversight at the time of harvest to assure that cutting is done in accordance with

accepted silvicultural principles.

The stumpage or yield tax of 6% has always been a political issue showing that the forest pays its fair share at the time of income when the owner can best afford the tax. Yet forest land does not demand many services. You never see a maple sapling in the classroom. Perhaps road maintenance helps forest industry get wood products to market, but the woods don't require landfills or other government services. At Forestry Awareness Day, I heard one legislator state that forest land doesn't pay its fair share and consequently homeowners pay too much. Politically he would have more support in a state with a population of 17 million and only 250,000 forest owners of more than ten acres...especially considering only owners of 50 or more acres currently qualify for 480-a.

New York forest land is charged roughly twice as much in real property taxes in comparison to most states in the northeast, thus placing us at a competitive disadvantage in the world timber market. Perhaps that legislator doesn't fully appreciate all the benefits our forests are providing society. All New Yorkers should appreciate the forests' contribution to our air and water quality, viewsheds, outdoor recreational opportunities, wildlife and fisheries habitats, and to our upstate economy.

Having been involved in administering 480-a, I know first hand the difficulties in writing public policy governing forest management. Forests are so variable, it is difficult to write standards for DEC to follow in administering the program. Yet forest research is the best tool to assure credible oversight. I have yet to see a local timber harvesting ordinance that I feel has led to better forest management. At least in having DEC administer the forest tax law, foresters are in a position of guiding acceptable forestry practices. However, to do this, DEC needs adequate staffing.

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So where is this leading me? In 1993, I co-authored a proposed revision to 480-a as a part of the 1993 Bottle Bill. That revision called for state reimbursement to localities suffering more than a 1% tax shift, a broadening of acceptable landowner goals and qualifying acreage focused on "forest stewardship" rather than "timber production," removal of the mandated work schedule, retention of DEC oversight in regard to a written forest management plan and approval of silvicultural prescriptions at the time of harvest, and retention of the stumpage tax and penalties for conversion or breach. The state reimbursement addresses the problems arising when large forest owners seriously impact local rural taxing jurisdictions and the myriad of problems revolving around that issue. Once timber is cut it quickly disperses worldwide contributing to the overall state economy, therefore it is appropriate for society as a whole to contribute to supporting retention of forests and good forest stewardship. It reduces the problem of assessors playing games that reduce the actual tax break received by the enrolled participant. It

allows rock outcrops, swamps, ponds and non-agricultural openings that are part of the forest and wildlife habitat to be part of the enrollment, better serving the public interest in open space protection and better fitting a wider array of landowner goals. It does not commit an owner to a work schedule that may become prohibitive if economic or health issues arise. An owner may be willing to do forest improvement, with or without cost share assistance, but not willing to commit heirs to future work. The stumpage tax issue doesn't seem very important because it does come at the time of income, so it may be politically correct. And, if a landowner is going to gain an 80% reduction in assessment, perhaps the penalties for breach or conversion should be strong enough to strongly discourage removing the commitment to long range forest use.

I would also like to see the qualifying acreage reduced to 25 acres so the average forest parcel could be allowed to enroll. That would reduce the perception that 480-a is only a benefit to large, wealthy land barons. I know many forest

owners who own much more than fifty acres who I would not consider wealthy land barons. The benefits we receive from our forests are not tied to who owns them, wealthy or not, but they are linked to parcel size. Therefore it is important for New York's future that we undertake a resource policy that protects against the current trend of parcelization. Let's focus on an open space policy that also enhances stabilization of our forest industry.

From Forestry Awareness Day, there appears to be a serious interest in revising 480-a this year. Perhaps it is time for NYFOA members to contact their state legislators encouraging them to do the whole job and make good forest management policy. It is my understanding that a personal letter is weighed in as representing 125 votes while signing a petition is counted as one. Maybe we can make a difference—Ron Pedersen certainly can be credited for motivating the recent improvements in regard to timber theft laws. ▲

*Michael Greason is a Consulting Forester in Catskill, NY, a long term member of NYFOA and a member of the Capital District Chapter.*



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# Ask A Professional

*Landowner questions are addressed by foresters and other natural resources professionals. Landowners should be careful when interpreting answers and applying this general advice to their property because landowner objectives and property conditions will affect specific management options. When in doubt check with your regional DEC office or other service providers. Landowners are also encouraged to be active participants in Cornell Cooperative Extension and NYFOA programs to gain additional, often site-specific, answers to questions. To submit a question, email to Peter Smallidge at [pjs23@cornell.edu](mailto:pjs23@cornell.edu) with an explicit mention of "Ask a Professional." Additional reading on various topics is available at [www.dnr.cornell.edu/ext/forestry](http://www.dnr.cornell.edu/ext/forestry)*

## **QUESTION:**

**How can I find a consulting forester who will work on an hourly basis, rather than on commission?**

## **ANSWER:**

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has a publication, New York State Cooperating Forester Program. Foresters listed in this publication have entered an agreement with the DEC to abide by a code of ethics and follow other terms. This is one good source for forest owners to find a professional forester to work with.

Contacting a forester should be an effort worth investing time in. An interview should work out terms of employment, a review of work history, checking references, and perhaps going to look at some of the other clients' jobs.

Personally, I have always felt that a forester should be paid for work performed, not on the basis of a commission on a product sold. Most foresters work by the hour or by the

acre for services not related to timber sales, so why shift to commission for timber harvests? There is at least a perception of a potential conflict of interest if a timber sale is marked on a commission on the sale price of the timber to be sold. The work effort involved in marking timber has little relationship to quality or species of the wood to be sold.

In interviewing a forester, determine if he or she will work for an hourly fee. Check references to find out how other clients have fared. Again, in my opinion, there should be no vested interest in the product being sold. The timber should be marked, scaled, and sold through competitive bid, where the forest owner knows how many potential bidders will be contacted. The owner should also know if the long term forest management goals are being applied. Diameter limit cuts, that is cutting all trees above a certain diameter, are seldom in the best interest of the forest owner. High grade cuts where all the good trees are sold and the poor trees remain for the future are an even worse approach to forest management.

It can take a century to grow a forest crop; therefore a forest owner should



Effective communication between the forest owner and forester will help ensure a healthy and productive forest and a strong client-forester relationship.



invest some time in making an informed decision about the best forester to represent that owner's interests.

*Michael C. Greason, 5476 Cauterskill Road, Catskill, NY 12414, (518)943-9230 or email: greason@francomm.com*

### QUESTION:

**What is the best way to mark property boundaries? Should nails be driven all the way in? Is it better to blaze and paint or use plastic or metal signs? How often should my property be surveyed?**

### ANSWER:

The best way to mark a boundary line is—accurately! What is the best way? There is no best way. There are many good ways. Let's back up a bit. Why is it so important to identify our property? It is impossible to manage our forest if we don't know where it is. Appropriately marked lines are the best prevention against trespass and timber theft. Good lines also makes for good relations with our neighbors by reducing boundary disputes.

As a professional forester, I prefer a painted boundary line that is highly visible. Painted marks are difficult to vandalize and fairly long lasting. Painting with boundary marking paint doesn't injure the tree stem. I also believe boundary paint is the cheapest method.

If you chose to paint your lines, use a good oil-based paint similar to machinery enamel. Orange, blue or lime green work well. Red is not a preferred color. As it fades, it is difficult to see. Also, red is difficult to most people who are color blind. The placement of the paint mark is important. It should be approximately 4-6 feet above ground, i.e. eye level. If a tree is located exactly on line, two marks should be placed on opposite sides of the tree corresponding to the boundary line. If the tree is slightly off the line, place one paint mark facing the line. When corners are located, three (3) horizontal marks are placed on corner trees with the paint mark facing the corner.



*Posted signs on backing boards should use aluminum nails. Select trees of low value because nails will sometimes cause splits in the tree.*


Only a licensed land surveyor can legally blaze a property line. I do not like this method because it places a lasting injury on the trees. It is by far the most durable marking. Posted signs are a preferred method to designate boundaries by many landowners. They not only identify the boundaries, but also state the rules of occupation. These normally forbid trespass for certain or all purposes. I prefer plastic signs and aluminum nails. The plastic signs, I think, are more durable. The aluminum nails will cause less damage to machinery if the tree is ever sawn. Nails should not be driven enough to secure the sign – not all the way into the tree. I personally prefer the use of backing boards to the sign. I believe this increases the visibility of the sign.

One of the most novel approaches I've seen to boundary identification, was on property in Penn Yan, NY. The owner placed steel rods at about 100 foot intervals and placed inverted bleach jugs over the stake. He painted the jugs a fluorescent orange color. This was done in conjunction with posted signs.

Place boundary marks close enough together so you can see from one to the next. The New York Environmental Conservation Law only requires posted

signs at 10 chain intervals, i.e. 660 feet. I do not think this adequate for good visibility.

A property survey is needed only once to certify the legal boundaries. If the evidence is preserved and maintained, it should never be needed again. If the need for a survey is required, I suggest you solicit quotes from a number of area surveyors for their services. Keep in mind that a survey does not normally include marking or identifying the property lines. It only involves locating and identifying the corners. Surveyors will flag the lines for a fee. I suggest to you it is well worth the money. What good are corners hundreds of feet apart when it comes to finding the exact line?

Regardless of what method or combination you use, you must maintain the signage on an annual basis. Identifying your boundaries should be the first step in a management plan of your forest. 

*Billy Morris, Private Consulting Forester, Bath, NY. Phone: 607-776-4992, email: blmorris98@yahoo.com*

Coordinated by Peter J. Smallidge, NYS Extension Forester, Cornell University-Cornell Cooperative Extension, Ithaca, NY 14853.

# Conservation versus preservation:

*Is there any middle ground where each may win?*

BOB PATTERSON

**I**t is very early on a Saturday morning, with the dew still clinging tightly to each blade of grass and the fog just thinking of lifting out of the valley, as I gaze out on the ridge line some four-plus miles away, with its summit fully another thousand feet above my porch chair. This has all the earmarks of one of those rare Appalachian summer days when nearly every tree on the ridge will be fully visible and not muted by the normal haze that August brings.

The ridge is covered for as far as the eye can see by trees, and I think about what the preservationists' view of this scene would be when they hear the word clear-cut. For those who don't know (and the preservationists and even some conservationists fall into this category), clearcutting is a forest management technique where all — or nearly all — of the trees are cut in a given area. Having said that, it is then not too surprising that most people would not take kindly to having the scene I am presently viewing completely denuded of vegetation — nor would I.

On the other hand, that is not the current practice of clearcutting. Preservationists are quick to cite such wanton destruction as was practiced by western loggers in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Current practices of clearcutting not only include leaving border areas to protect flows of running water from possible sedimentation but also are not extensive in their scope, and are utilized to provide small openings

and patches of young trees within more mature stands, in an effort to provide more age and class diversification.

More basic to the whole issue, is the argument of cut versus don't cut. Years ago, I happened to notice a plaque on a post. The post was made from a tree trunk and was used as a building support. The plaque read:

## **Friend of Man The Tree Speaks**

*Ye who pass by and would raise your hand against me hearken ere you harm me.*

*I am the heat of your hearth on the cold winter nights, the friendly shade screening you from the summer sun and my fruits are refreshing draughts quenching your thirst as you journey on.*

*I am the beam that holds your house, the board of your table, the bed on which you lie and the timber that builds your boat.*

*I am the handle of your hoe, the door of your homestead, the wood of your cradle and the shell of your coffin.*

*I am the gift of God. I am the friend of man.*

*Ye who pass by, listen to my prayer.  
Harm me not.*

The author of the above remains unknown but the message contained within is clear, or is it?

First, all the uses mentioned for wood products can't be enjoyed if the tree isn't harvested. Is this the chicken and/or egg issue, or what is the real message? I think, as they say, we need to take a philosophical step back

and look at all the trees, and then, and only then, can we see the entire picture for what it is.

The forest is first and foremost a living organism, and as such it is constantly in a state of change. Like anything else, it ages and then it dies. When trees die, others spring forth to take their place, and so over time there are trees and plants in varying stages of development — each having its own unique needs and providing its own benefits for the good of the whole forest. Having said this, then if it is so, why do we need to interfere with the process — isn't nature doing its job well enough?

Now comes the part we learned by looking at the entire forest, before leaping to any knee-jerk conclusion about forest management. When nature alone "managed" the forest, that management was accomplished by natural means — fire, flood, ice storms, etc., but then man and his desire for development entered the equation and the ability of nature to continue its previous methods was both controlled and in fact aborted by man. Fire is the foremost tool that man has removed from nature's quiver of management arrows. The reason here is obvious, fire has the ability to destroy the development built by man — homes, businesses — within and around the forest. If then, we curtail the ability of nature to perform its traditional management role, by extinguishing fire, building dams to control flooding and such, how is it that we expect our forest assets will be managed?

The Federal Healthy Forests


Initiative seeks to provide the means to manage these assets while at the same time providing for their continued health. If we have removed from nature its ability to manage the forest in the traditional (albeit in a non-scientific and no-site-specific manner) that task and that responsibility must then fall to us. To the tree farmer, wood is a crop, and the tree farmer must therefore continuously provide trees in every stage of development so that there will always be some that are ready for harvest.

I am not suggesting wholesale harvesting of this nation's forest assets, rather what I am suggesting and indeed promoting, is the scientific management of our forest resources in a manner that promotes the overall health of the forest and of those who dwell therein.

In an excerpt from an article in the June 2003 edition of *Science Update* the Pacific Northwest Research Station of the U.S. Forest Service has published its findings relative to old growth policies. The article states (in pertinent part) the following extracts: "...old growth forests are not places undisturbed by nature..." "...old growth forests will change even with protection status..." and "...no large landscape was ever all old growth forest..." The article further states that "small openings and patches of young trees make critical contributions to old growth forests..." and "...old growth forests are not permanent, active management can create age-class diversity to ensure a continuous supply of future old growth.

Thus a reasoned approach to the management of our forest assets yields an ability to provide all the components each of us seeks from the forest — wood products, recreation, food and cover for wildlife, scenic beauty and healthier old growth stands — but this can't be accomplished selectively by stressing one area of interest over that of another. It is a continuum, which, in benefiting the

entire forest, benefits all who would use the forest resources, and those who call the forest home.

In the final analysis, the science of Active Forest Management benefits everyone. 

*Bob Patterson is Executive Director of the Ruffed Grouse Society. This article originally appeared in the October, November, December 2003 issue of Ruffed Grouse Society Magazine.*

## Common Ground: Ruffed Grouse Society and NYFOA

Both the Ruffed Grouse Society and NYFOA support active forest management to achieve the goals of the landowner. In the Society's case the focus of that management is on providing early successional forest to provide habitat for ruffed grouse, woodcock and other wildlife. For NYFOA members there are a variety of management objectives, one of which for most owners is the provision of wildlife habitat.

Both organizations focus upon education of their members and others. Both believe information leads to proper stewardship. Both organizations are strong sponsors of the Master Forest Owners (MFO) program in New York State.

Bob Patterson, Executive Director of the Society, has offered a reduced membership in the Society to NYFOA members to learn more about management for early successional forest and provision of habitat for the ruffed grouse and woodcock. To join, forward payment of \$20 to the Ruffed Grouse Society, 451 McCormick Road, Coraopolis, PA 15108 and reference membership code 266.

Through our collective efforts of undertaking proper forest stewardship we can ensure both habitat for the ruffed grouse, woodcock and other species as well as achieving other landowner goals.

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# A NYFOA AWARDS

*During the annual Spring Meeting Jack McShane and Hugh and Janet Canham were presented with awards from NYFOA. The articles here contain a portion of the award speech to the individuals. The 2004 NYFOA Awards Committee was chaired by Ron Pederson.*

## Heiberg Memorial Award Presented to Jack McShane

Each year the New York Forest Owners Association presents the Heiberg Memorial Award to recognize outstanding contributions to forestry and conservation in New York State. The award memorializes Svend O. Heiberg, a renowned Professor of Silviculture at the NYS College of Forestry (now the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry), who was responsible for proposing the establishment of a forest landowner association in New York State over 40 years ago. With Hardy Shirley, Dean of Forestry, Professor Heiberg began the meetings that eventually organized NYFOA.

This year at the Annual Spring Meeting, which was a part of the New York Farm Show, NYFOA honored Jack McShane of Andes, Delaware County, NY, with the 38<sup>th</sup> Heiberg Memorial Award.

“Jack’s energy and enthusiasm are well known and his efforts have had an important positive impact on forestry in NY and beyond,” said Geff Yancey, in presenting the award. “He continues to set a very high standard of volunteerism and we are delighted to be able to salute him today.”

Jack was raised on Long Island and after graduation from the New York Ranger School in Wanakena and completion of military service, had a



*Geff Yancey (left) presents the Heiberg Award to Jack McShane*

long career in law enforcement in New York City. In 1986, he and his wife Nancy purchased 235 acres in Andes, and since, Jack’s interest and activity in natural resources and stewardship have known no boundaries.

Education has always been a priority for Jack. He understood the benefits of professional forestry advice and has urged other landowners to use natural resource experts, and has helped policy makers appreciate sound woodland management. Because many landowners do not live on their properties, he took his message to each borough of New York City, alongside professionals from the Department of Environmental Conservation and the US Forest Service.

Professional forest managers have also learned from Jack, as he gave a

presentation to the chief foresters from 20 northeast states at West Point. At that meeting, as at many others, his thoughtful participation guided program direction. Similarly, in working with the State’s Forest Stewardship Committee, sensible woodland management practices were defined so owners across the state could benefit from the federal Stewardship Incentive Program. Thousands of plans for private woodlands have resulted from the program.

In the early 1990s, as New York City began tackling its critical watershed challenges, Jack became a leader in the ad-hoc forestry committee, later to become part of the NYC Watershed Agricultural Council. He was instrumental in development of workable non-point source practices for forestry which were recognized by the US Forest Service and widely adopted by others as written “Best Management Practices” (BMPs) became the norm.

In 1996, Jack and Nancy were named New York’s Outstanding Tree Farmers in recognition of the management of their woodlands and educational outreach activities on their property. Jack’s closer-to-home energies have also included Presidency of the Catskill Forest Association with its mission of landowner education, and more recently of the Catskills Landowners Association.

NYFOA applauds the accomplishments of Jack McShane, a dedicated individual, and presents this award for his exceptional volunteer leadership and dedication to excellence on behalf of the NYFOA membership. ▲

### NYFOA Scholarship Fund

As of April 1, 2004, the NYFOA Endowed Scholarship Fund that is administered by the SUNY ESF College Foundation, Inc. has a fund balance of \$24,358.79.

# Outstanding Service Award Presented to Hugh and Janet Canham

The twenty-eighth New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) Outstanding Service Award was presented to Hugh and Janet Canham of Syracuse at the 2004 Annual Spring Meeting. The award, which recognizes outstanding service to the NYFOA membership, acknowledges the Canhams' involvement, concern, support and significant contribution of time and talent that has benefited numerous members.

"NYFOA's mission is to promote sustainable woodland practices and improved stewardship of privately owned woodlands. That mission also accurately describes Hugh Canham's vocation and avocation," said Geff Yancey. "We are delighted to present this richly deserved special recognition to Hugh and Janet."

Last year, Hugh completed his terms as a director of NYFOA. Before, during and since, he has put in many, many hours of extra effort to help the Association with its organization and programs. In addition he has served as an invaluable liaison to the College of Environmental Science and Forestry, which continues its strong support of the Association.

"We thank and honor Janet Canham as well," Yancey added. "Her support and encouragement of the many evenings and weekends Hugh has devoted to NYFOA would be enough, but, Janet is also recognized for her excellent lunch catering for the regular NYFOA board meetings. Directors sometimes may have been bored with the agenda, but never with the wonderful lunches."

Hugh started life on Staten Island in NYC, later moved to Otsego



Janet and Hugh Canham receive the Outstanding Service Award from NYFOA president Geff Yancey

County and has spent much of his life in central New York. Following forestry degrees from SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry and a stint in the Army, he went on to serve as a forester with the State Department of Environmental Conservation. He later joined the research staff at ESF, which led to further graduate work and a faculty appointment. Hugh retired last year as Professor of Forest Economics.

Working with private landowners was a job responsibility while employed by DEC, but his extensive participation in support of the New York Forest Owners Association's mission has been a matter of choice. In addition, clearly his teaching and other College roles through the years most certainly have positively influenced many landowners and landowners to be.

It is with sincere appreciation for the many contributions of talent, time and energy by Hugh and Janet Canham that NYFOA presents the 2004 Outstanding Service Award. Congratulations to you both! 🌲

## Heiberg Award Recipients

1967	David B. Cook
1968	Floyd Carlson
1969	Mike Demeree
1970	No Award
1971	Fred Winch, Jr.
1972	John Stock
1973	Robert M. Ford
1974	C. Eugene Farnsworth
1975	Alex Dickson
1976	Edward W. Littlefield
1977	Maurine Postley
1978	Ralph Nyland
1979	Fred C. Simmons
1980	Dr. William Harlow
1981	Curtis H. Bauer
1982	Neil B. Gutchess
1983	David W. Taber
1984	John W. Kelley
1985	Robert G. Potter
1986	Karen B. Richards
1987	Henry G. Williams
1988	Robert M. Sand
1989	Willard G. Ives
1990	Ross S. Whaley
1991	Robert S. Stegemann
1992	Bonnie & Don Colton
1993	Michael C. Greason
1994	Douglas C. Allen
1995	John C. Marchant
1996	Harriet & John Hamilton
1997	Vernon C. Hudson
1998	Peter S. Levatich
1999	James E. Coufal
2000	James P. Lassoie
2001	John T. Hastings
2002	Albert W. Brown
2003	David J. Colligan
2004	Jack McShane

## Outstanding Service Award Recipients

1978	Emiel Palmer
1979	Ken Eberly
1980	Helen Varian
1981	J. Lewis Dumond
1982	Lloyd Strombeck
1983	Evelyn Stock
1984	Dorothy Wertheimer
1985	David H. Hanaburgh
1986	A. W. Roberts, Jr.
1987	Howard O. Ward
1988	Mary & Stuart McCarty
1989	Alan R. Knight
1990	Earl Pfarnar
1991	Helen & John Marchant
1992	Richard J. Fox
1993	Wesley E. Suhr
1994	Alfred B. Signor
1995	Betty & Don Wagner
1996	Betty Densmore
1997	Norman Richards
1998	Charles P. Mowatt
1999	Eileen and Dale Schaefer
2000	Erwin and Polly Fullerton
2001	Billy Morris
2002	Donald G. Brown
2003	Henry S. Kernan
2004	Hugh & Janet Canham

# Chapters Recognize One of Their Own

**A**t the annual NYFOA meeting special recognition awards were presented to individuals from nine of the state chapters. Each of the individuals was recognized for their untiring efforts on behalf of private forest owners across New York State.

The following individuals were recognized:

**Harry Dieter** (*Western Finger Lakes Chapter*) – “Harry’s commitment to helping landowners take better care of their woodlots is unmatched and sets a high standard for all of us,” said Dale Schaefer, chair of the WFL chapter. “We are delighted that Harry has received this recognition.” Harry puts enormous effort into program planning for chapter activities in the Rochester area, all of which are designed to help landowners achieve personal objectives for their land — be they improved wildlife habitat, recreational pursuits, timber production, or simply peace, quiet, and esthetics. He frequently is working behind the scenes developing leads for future events, while keeping all other members of the chapter steering committee well informed.

**Richard Molyneux** (*Southern Tier Chapter*) – “Dick’s passion and enthusiasm for sharing the benefits he has known from his forest land over the years has touched the lives of many in our area,” said Larry Lepak, chair of the Southern Tier Chapter. “Dick is a full-time supporter of sound forest and wildlife management and we are delighted that he has received this recognition.” Dick has always found time to help with chapter programs and events, and has provided an important link to the Southern Tier Christmas Tree Growers Association. His efforts also embrace wildlife habitat enhancement, including construction of ponds and wetlands for migratory waterfowl.

**Deb Wentorf** (*Southeastern Adirondack Chapter*) – “Deb freely gives of her time and energy to help landowners learn more about their woods,” said Roy Esiason, chair of the Southeast Adirondack chapter. In addition to volunteering her time as secretary of SAC, Deb also works full-time as a technical writer at RPI in Troy, NY. She and her husband, Rolf, also carry out all management activities on their 250 acres of woodland in accordance with a plan drawn up by a professional forester. “I actually feel that my contribution to the Chapter is minimal, but I’m glad to help in any way I can,” Deb said. “I’m touched and honored to be recognized for my work.”

**Rich Tabor** (*Central New York Chapter*) – “Rich’s commitment to helping landowners take better care of their woodlots sets a high standard for all of us,” said Jamie Christensen, chair of the Central New York chapter. Rich serves as the chapter’s vice president and newsletter editor. “His innumerable volunteer hours are vital to the success of our program, and he sets a standard of volunteerism that is hard to beat,” stated Christensen. “Simply put, he makes time in his life to use his training and experience to benefit others.”

**Cindy King** (*Capital District Chapter*) – “Cindy is an enthusiastic supporter of all opportunities to help landowners better understand their woodlands and the plants and wildlife that live there,” said Mike Birmingham, chair of the Capital District chapter, “and this recognition is well deserved.” Cindy exemplifies the personal commitment so essential to NYFOA’s mission. Her passion to help others achieve their personal objectives for land ownership can be seen as she hosts a woodswalk on her property, utilizes her training from Cornell Cooperative Extension in visiting and advising other land owners, or edits the Chapter newsletter.

**Jim Ochterski** (*Southern Finger Lakes Chapter*) – “Jim’s remarkable leadership skills have dramatically improved the efficiency, marketing, and delivery of programs to help landowners better understand options and opportunities for their property,” reported Kelly Smallidge, Vice President of the Southern Finger Lakes Chapter. Jim has made NYFOA’s mission to promote sustainable woodland practices and improve stewardship on privately owned woodlands his personal mission as



*Richard Molyneux, Geff Yancey, Harry Dieter, Rich Tabor, Deb Wentorf, Cindy King and Doris and Bill LaPoint accept chapter recognition awards.*

well. He repeatedly demonstrates the ability to bring others along with him.

**Marie and Bud Larson** (*Allegheny Foothills Chapter*) – “Marie and Bud Larson have enthusiastically supported all our outreach activities for years,” declared Dan Anderson, Chair of the Allegheny Foothills Chapter. “We are very pleased to see the Larsons’ efforts applauded.” The Larsons exemplify the personal commitment so essential to the success of NYFOA. Marie serves as Chapter Treasurer, and Bud has taken the lead on numerous chapter events. Both have been active in the fall nut collection, faithful supporters of Chapter activities, and hosted a woods walk on their own property.

**Bill and Dorris LaPoint** (*Northern Adirondack Chapter*) – “Bill and Dorris have an unmatched passion and enthusiasm for reaching out to help private land owners and well deserve this special recognition,” said Steve Graham, chair of the Northern Adirondack Chapter. “The support of forestry student programs at Wanakena Ranger School and Paul Smiths College have been possible through the fund raising efforts of the LaPoints,” Graham added. Bill has been an active and invaluable member of the Board of Directors — always with a wealth of great ideas and always with a positive can-do attitude.

**Elizabeth Nichols** (*Lower Hudson Chapter*) – “Elizabeth’s commitment to natural resources, the environment and helping landowners take better care of their woodlots is unmatched and sets a high standard for all of us,” said Anne Osborn, chair of the Lower Hudson chapter. Many have benefited from Elizabeth’s keen interest in plants and animals and her special talent for sharing through articles in the Lower Hudson chapter newsletter, which she has faithfully edited for years, even while serving as chair of the chapter. Her critical observations and her commitment to all things natural make a lasting impact on all her readers. 🌲

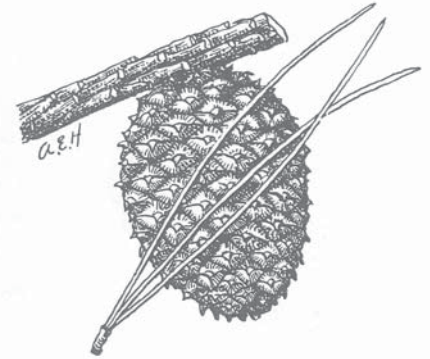
# Know Your Trees



## PITCH PINE

### HARD PINE, YELLOW PINE (*Pinus rigida*)

Pitch Pine is to be found on dry ridges and slopes in the northeastern section of the state and on Long Island and infrequently elsewhere in NY. The wood is coarse-grained and brownish red in color. The tree seldom reaches a large size and the timber is generally knotty. Its chief uses are for rough framing lumber, ties, mine props and crates.



PITCH PINE  
Cone and needles, natural size

**Bark**—early becomes very rough and is of a reddish brown to a very dark brown color, with age becoming deeply furrowed into broad, flat-topped ridges separating on the surface into loose, dark reddish brown scales. The unusual thickness of the bark makes it the most fire-resistant tree in the state. Clusters of needles are very commonly found on the main trunk.

**Twigs**—coarse, brittle, golden brown in color.

**Winter buds**—conspicuous, pointed, reddish brown in color, resin coated.

**Leaves**—needle-like, in clusters of 3, from 3 to 5 inches long, yellowish green in color, very stiff, staying on twigs from two to three years.

**Fruit**—a cone, from 2 to 3 inches long, somewhat egg-shaped, without stem, requiring two years to mature; persists on tree for many years. Cone scales—each carries a stiff recurved prickle. Seeds—2 under each scale, dark brown in color, ripening in September.

**Outstanding features**—needles in three’s; sharp prickles on tip of cone scale. 🌲

*Information originally appears in “Know Your Trees” by J.A. Cope and Fred E. Winch, Jr. and is distributed through Cornell Cooperative Extension.*



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# Sugar Maple Petiole Borer and a Stem Borer of Black Cherry

DOUGLAS C. ALLEN

In the course of their very ancient history, insects have adapted to every type of habitat imaginable. They are abundant in soils, litter, aquatic systems, and every part of a tree serves as habitat for one form or another. They occur in roots, wood or bark of tree trunks and branches, foliage, buds, flowers, and seeds. Similarly, trees in various stages of health or decay prove suitable living conditions for different types of insects. Many thrive only on very healthy plants, others appear only during the late stages of decay. In addition to occupying diverse habitats, many peculiarities in behavior have arisen in the insect world as different species adjusted to very narrow environmental conditions in forest communities or, in many cases, adapted to very specific feeding niches. The two insects described below are examples of the latter.

## Maple petiole borer

Adults of this insect are very small, wasp-like creatures called sawflies.

They are not flies at all but closely related to bees and wasps. Though it has been reported in Norway maple and sycamore, most commonly it is associated with sugar maple.

The damage caused by petiole borer for many years was attributed to the larval stage of a small moth. Around 1900, however, W. E. Britton, the state entomologist of Connecticut, began studying the problem in some detail and discovered that this leaf damage to sugar maple was, in fact, due to the activities of a sawfly. The principle leaf parts mentioned in the discussions that follow are diagrammed in Figure 1.

Winter is spent as a mature caterpillar in the soil beneath infested trees. Adults emerge in late April to early May and deposit each egg near the end of a petiole where the latter attaches to the leaf blade (Fig. 2). The caterpillar chews its way into the petiole and hollows out this structure as it feeds away from the blade (Fig. 3). The petiole usually darkens and

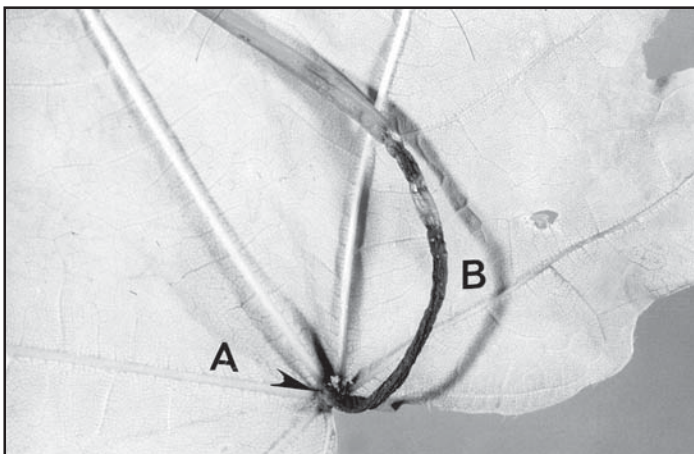


Figure 2. Damage caused by the maple petiole borer. A = general area where egg is laid, B = darkened area of petiole where the larva has fed.

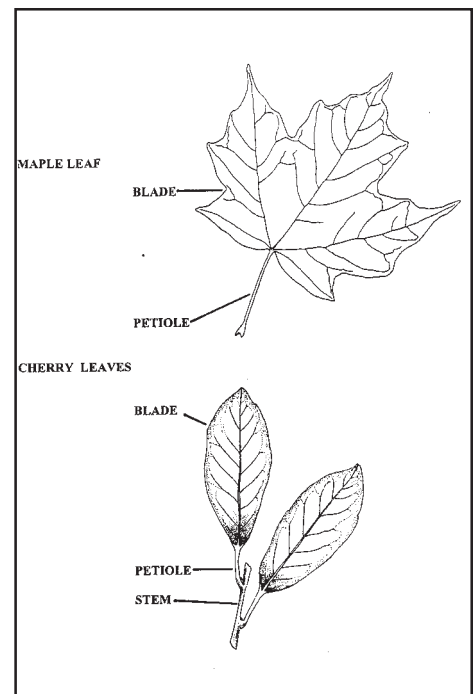


Figure 1. Diagram of a maple and black cherry leaf showing the major structures affected by the maple petiole borer and the cherry stem borer.

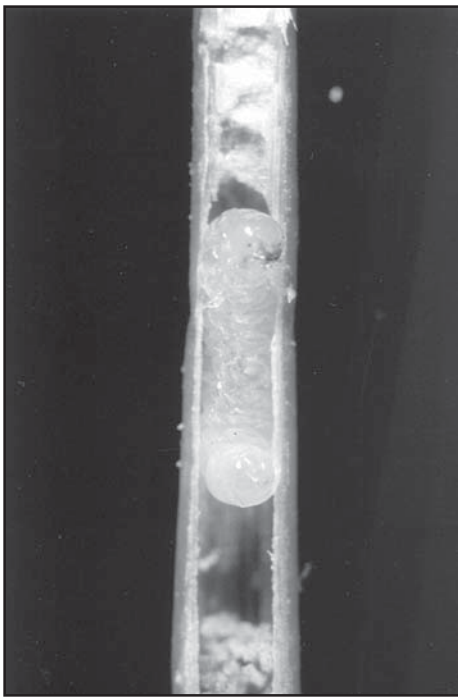
shrivels shortly after the internal tissue is eaten (Fig. 2). By late May or early June the blade detaches and falls to the ground. This is the first sign of an infestation. Infested petioles remain attached to the twig until feeding is completed. At this time a section of the petiole, with a larva safely tucked away inside, also drops to the forest floor. The insect soon leaves its piece of petiole and buries into the soil where it will eventually spend the winter.

When a population builds up on a tree, the infestation is usually restricted to the lower crown. Rarely, if ever, is defoliation significant, but the obvious appearance of green, stemless leaves laying on the ground in early summer arouses interest.

## Stem borer of black cherry

My students and I have been looking pretty intensely at black cherry over the last several years as a result of our work with peach bark beetle. Several minor, but interesting, insects have caught our attention. One of these is a little known moth whose larva bores in newly developing (still soft and green)





**Figure 3.** Larva of the maple petiole borer inside petiole of sugar maple leaf.

stems. Though technically not a “petiole” borer, its damage and the end result are very similar.

We know little about its biology. The adult is a very small moth. It has no common name but belongs to the

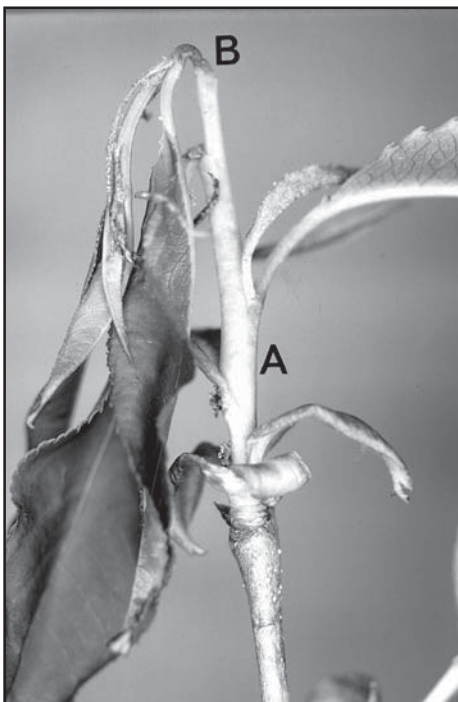
genus *Archips* (are-kip-s), a group that contains a number of leaf-tiers associated with oak and apple. The moth deposits eggs in early spring on young, newly expanding twigs throughout the crowns of both over-story and under-story cherry. Following egg hatch, each caterpillar quickly bores into the young shoot, which is still green and soft, and tunnels through it as it feeds (Fig. 4). The clusters of leaves attached to the shoot start to develop normally but eventually wilt and may turn brown (Fig. 5). At some point, the young, greenish twig with its complement of partially developed leaves falls to the ground. So instead of just affecting a single leaf like the maple petiole borer, the *Archips* caterpillar destroys all the leaves destined for that shoot.

As with the maple petiole borer, significant damage is not known to occur. Here again, however, evidence of defoliation early in the growing season (i.e., thin cherry crowns and the presence of many aborted leaf-clusters on the ground) may concern a forest owner (Fig. 6). To the best of my knowledge there is no evidence this damage adversely affects black cherry. 🌲

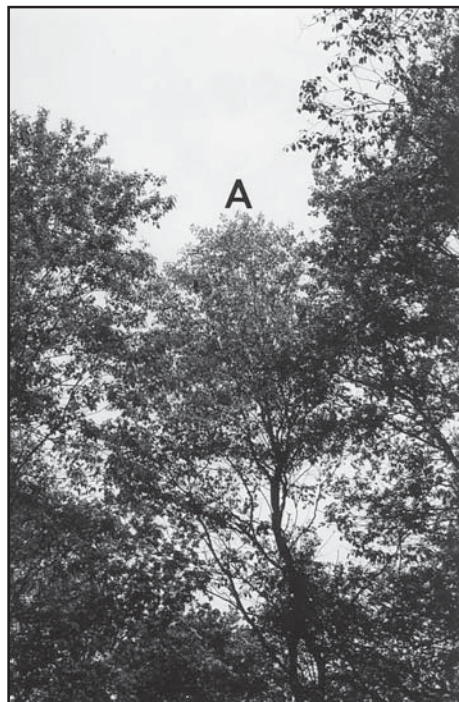


**Figure 4.** Caterpillar of the cherry stem borer.

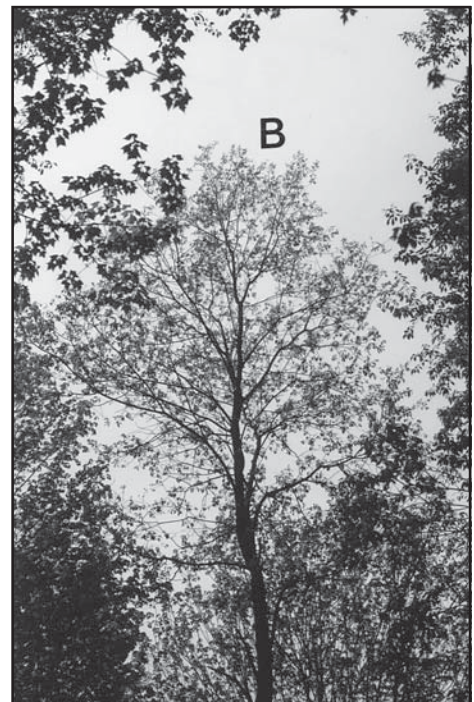
*This is the 74th in the series of articles contributed by Dr. Allen, Professor of Entomology at SUNY-ESF. It is possible to download this collection from the NYS DEC Web page at: <http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/df/privland/forprot/health/nyfo/index.html>.*



**Figure 5.** Wilted cherry leaves. A = stem where caterpillar feeds, B = dead stem tissue where feeding damage caused leaves to wilt



**Figure 6.** Undamaged crown of black cherry (A) compared to a crown that has been “thinned” due to the stem borer feeding (B).



---

# Ten Environmental Benefits of Forestry

## **Forestry is bringing back forests.**

Until the 1920s, forests were often logged and abandoned. Now, across the country an average of 1.7 billion seedlings are planted annually. That translates into six seedlings planted for every tree harvested. In addition, billions of additional seedlings are regenerated naturally.

## **Forestry helps water quality.**

Foresters carefully manage areas called watersheds (areas where we collect our drinking water) and riparian zones (land bordering rivers, streams, and lakes). These are places where maintaining water quality is the primary concern for foresters. Forests actually help to clean water and get it ready for us to drink. The trees, the soil, and bacteria are all part of this process. Forest cover protects and nurtures the soils that are the key to water retention, filtering, and quality.

## **Forestry offsets air pollution.**

Foresters nurture forests, which are sometimes called “the gills of the planet.” One mature tree absorbs approximately 13 pounds of carbon dioxide a year. For every ton of wood a forest grows, it removes 1.47 tons of carbon dioxide and replaces it with 1.07 tons of oxygen.

## **Forestry helps reduce catastrophic wildfires.**

At the turn of the century, wildfires annually burned across 20 to 50 million acres of the country each year. Through education, prevention, and control, the amount of wildfires has been reduced to about two to five million acres a year—a reduction of 90%. By marking and removing excess fuels, such as underbrush and some trees, foresters can modify forests in order to make them more resilient to fire.

## **Forestry helps wildlife.**

Foresters employ a variety of management techniques to benefit wildlife, including numerous endangered species. For example, thinning and harvesting create conditions that stimulate the growth of food sources for wildlife. Openings created by harvesting provide habitat for deer and a variety of songbirds. Thinning can be used to accelerate growth and development of older trees that are favored by owls and other species. In order to enhance salmon habitat, foresters also carry out strategic tree plantings and monitor forest health along streams in order to keep the water cool and reduce sediments.

## **Forestry provides great places to recreate.**

Foresters manage forests that provide recreational benefits to communities. Forests are important areas for such recreationists as birdwatchers, hikers, nature photographers, horseback riders, skiers, snowmobilers, and campers. And because foresters put water values high on their list of priorities, the rivers and lakes in forested areas provide such recreational opportunities as fishing, canoeing, and rafting.

## **Forestry benefits urban environments.**

Urban foresters manage forests and trees to benefit communities in many ways. Forests in urban areas reduce stormwater runoffs, improve air quality, and reduce energy consumption. For example, three well-placed mature trees around a house can cut air-conditioning costs by 10-50 percent.

## **Forestry provides renewable and energy-efficient building products.**

Foresters manage some forests for timber and produce a renewable resource because trees can be replanted.

Other building materials, such as steel, iron, and copper, can be reused and recycled but not replaced. Wood is a renewable resource which, in addition to being recyclable, can be produced anew for generations to come on sustainable managed forestlands. Recycling and processing wood products also requires much less energy than does the processing of many other non-renewable materials.

## **Forestry helps family forests stay intact.**

Foresters help family forestland owners, who own 54 percent of all the forests in the US, understand the benefits of managing their forests in an environmentally friendly manner. Better management of private forests means that those forests will remain healthy and productive. Many endangered species spent at least part of their time on private land, more than 80 percent of our nation’s total precipitation falls first on private lands and 70 percent of eastern watersheds run through private lands.

## **Forestry is good for soils.**

Foresters and natural resource managers are dependent on forest soils for growing and managing forests and, to a large extent, forest soils are dependent on resource professionals and managers. Foresters’ success in growing forests and producing forest products is dependent on their ability to understand soil properties and to then match species with soils and to prescribe activities that not only promote forest growth but also enhance and protect soil productivity and prevent soil erosion. 🌲

*Information provided by the Society of American Foresters.*

# Commentary: The Catskills & The Nature Conservancy

HENRY S. KERNAN

**A**mong the world's largest human clusters only New York City and environs drink water from landscapes of semi-wilderness that start almost within sight of their tall buildings and continue north and west over the million acres of forested mountains, coves and narrow valleys which the Dutch named the Catskills — Cougar Creek. Since Hudson's Half Moon sailed up his river nearly four centuries ago the forests have moved up and down the mountainsides following demands for tannin, the chemicals of wood distillation, buildings and farms. The trend has now been so long in the wooded lands' favor that several Catskill counties are near 80 per cent under trees. Their presence ensures the Catskill's most noted function — the assured daily flow of 1.3 billion gallons of high-quality water to half the state's population.

Yet the Catskill forests do much more than assure the flow of water. They

justify the Forest Preserve and the State park. They account for the local sawmills and the piles of firewood by so many rural homes. They also justify the widespread sentiment that the wildness of the Catskills should be retained.

Several programs exist for that purpose. The latest and largest in the area is that of The Nature Conservancy.

The Nature Conservancy is a highly successful and prestigious international organization founded in 1951 to preserve and promote biological diversity. Using the appealing slogan Saving the Last Great Places, the Conservancy has established and maintains over 1,400 nature sanctuaries worldwide. Expanded goals are now whole landscapes whose biodiversities are to be preserved and promoted, 500 within the United States by 2010, with 100 more in 35 foreign

countries. The Catskills will be among them, with a planning area double the city's watersheds that includes Otsego County. The Catskill Mountain Program's first conservation target is the planning area's large blocks of uninterrupted woodland, of which seven are at least 20,000 acres each. Their northern hardwoods, their maple, oak, cherry, and ash are much sought for the qualities of their woods. Harvesting and processing their logs are important to many Catskill towns. Delaware County has more loggers than any county in New York. Such extensive blocks of intact woodland need to remain for more than their water and timber and wildness. Some kinds of

wildlife thrive only deep in the woods: martens, bobcats, some warblers and thrush. An example, and therefore a conservation target, is Bicknell's thrush, a spotted red-tailed rarity nesting up where the mountains-tops are highest among stands of spruce and fir.

The very esteem in which the forests are held causes their division into smaller ownerships, with the roads and buildings that result. To counter that trend the Conservancy's Catskill Program favors the purchase of forest property rights or those of development. In the latter cases, the transfer is usually irrevocable and perpetual, without provision for changing circumstances. Such transfers are not within the traditions of common law. They place the present in captive to the past, and divide responsibilities of ownership that are almost always strongest where undivided.

The next four conservation targets are the rivers and streams from where they start in swamps, springs and vernal pools to where they exit from the planning area. Hundreds of dams built for water power now serve only to hinder the passage of diadromous eels and shad. The Program is arranging for the removal of those barriers. The sixth target is the timber rattler, an endangered reptile in New York, whose haunts are the rocky debris of talus slopes and whose offspring are kidnapped for pets.

Among the Catskills' many rare and beautiful plants, that chosen for the Program's seventh target is the moschatel (*Adoxa moschatellina*), a delicate, clover-like native to the Catskills in Greene and Delaware Counties, but found nowhere else within a thousand miles.

The very esteem in which the Catskills are held account for several stresses and threats to their present condition of semi-wilderness. They are both accessible and livable; and hence the influx of visitors and new residents. The heavy traffic increased the threat of pathogens and

*continued on page 21*

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# We Are All A Part Of Nature

*It surrounds, permeates and includes us, says the author*

DIANE ACKERMAN

Close your eyes and picture “nature.” What do you see?

A film starts running across my mind’s eye, accompanied by the sound of heartbeats and birdsong. It contains my whole experience of Earth, including all the oceans I’ve floated on or swum under, the skies I’ve flown through, the lands I’ve walked upon, the humans and other animals I’ve known, lots of nature I’ve never witnessed firsthand but glimpsed in documentaries or read about, and the Earth seen from space.

Naturally, that film would take lifetimes to explore, because nature means the full sum of creation, from the Big Bang to the whole shebang. It includes: spring moving north at about 13 miles a day; afternoon tea and

cookies; snow forts; pepper-pot stew; pink sand and confetti-colored cottages; moths with fake eyes on their hind wings; emotions both savage and blessed; tidal waves; pogo-hopping sparrows; blushing octopuses; scientists bloodhounding the truth; memory’s wobbling aspic; the harvest moon rising like slow thunder; fat rainbows beneath spongy clouds; tiny tassels of worry on a summer day; the night sky’s distant leak of suns; an aging father’s voice so husky it could pull a sled; the courtship pantomimes of cardinal whistling in the spring with “what cheer, what cheer, what cheer!”

Sometimes we forget that nature also means *us*. Termites build mounds; we build cities. All of our being - juices, flesh and spirit - is nature.


Nature surrounds, permeates, effervesces in and includes us. At the end of our days, it deranges and disassembles us like old toys banished to the basement. There, once living beings, we return to our nonliving elements, but we still and forever remain a part of nature. Not everyone agrees with me. Many people harbor an us-against-them mentality in which nature is the enemy and the kingdom of animals doesn’t really include us. Then we can attribute to animals all the things about ourselves that we can’t stand.

True, we build more elaborate habitats than other animals who, to the best of my knowledge, don’t require anything like electric cow-milk frothing machines, beeswax on a flaming string or vaporized flower essence mixed with musk from the anal sac of civets to encourage breeding. But I could be wrong. Maybe the wren’s liquid melody is equally fantastic. And I’m reluctant to hazard a guess about the necking and petting of alligators, whose cheeks are studded with exquisitely sensitive pleasure nodes. Even at our most domesticated and tame, we’re like pet zebras or grizzly bears - dangerous to anger, always flirting with a tantrum just under the well-behaved surface. We’re remarkable animals, erudite and loving, but, like circus lions, we will always be wild and fiercely unpredictable.


Each day, I wake startled to be alive on a planet packed with so much life. No gasp of sunlight goes unused. Life homesteads every pore and crevice, including deep dark ocean trenches. Life’s rule seems to be variations on every possible theme. And so we have tree frogs with sticky feet, marsupial frogs, poisonous frogs, toe-tapping frogs, frogs that go peep and many more.

The leafy green abundance we usually think of as nature began with Earth’s earliest life-forms, blue-green algae.

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Their gift was the cell, a microscopic circus that still is the basis of the cougar, bombardier beetle and one's nephew. Their genius was inventing photosynthesis. Around 2.4 billion years ago, they began building solar power plants under their walls, digesting their surroundings and, in the process, excreting oxygen, a poisonous gas.

Over time, the algae sheathed the planet, and oxygen fizzed through the oceans, saturating them. Then the bubbles rose, breathing life into a saggy sky, whose cloudbanks thinned as the blue appeared. Hydrogen ballooned away into space, while heavier oxygen stayed home. Earth became a planet rich in poisonous, flammable oxygen.

Meanwhile, evolution tinkered with creatures immune to oxygen, including some willing to pool their DNA. Complex animals evolved. And the rest is history. In every flake of skin, we still resemble those one-celled pioneers. If they didn't excrete oxygen, we wouldn't be here. So, no matter how politely one puts it, we owe our existence to the flatulence of blue-green algae. That should humble us and remind us that we share our origins and future with the rest of life on Earth. We need a healthy environment if we hope to stay healthy.

Most days, I make time to play outside, usually in the garden or on a bike or taking a walk. I live in the country, but nature also means the

manicured wilderness of a large city, where flimsy blades of grass crack through cement and fragile snowflakes halt traffic. What feats of strength! A city park lures countless animals from miles away to its bustling green oasis. Surrounded by trees and sky, it's easier to feel a powerful sense of belonging to the pervasive mystery of nature, of being molded by unseen forces older than our daily concerns. Without that, life would be flat as a postage stamp.

But nature also means comfort, heritage and seasoned home. Indoors, a sensuous activity I heartily recommend is what I think of as "spanieling." Find a shaft of sunlight pouring through a window on a cold day, curl up in the puddle of warmth it creates, relish the breath of sun on your skin and nap with doglike dereliction. If you have trouble turning off your mind-theater, picture yourself as a squirrel, bear or cocker spaniel enjoying a simple sunbath.

Steep yourself in nature. The world will wait. ▲

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## Commentary (continued)

invasive exotic species. The sale of forest property is an incentive to over-cutting of the timber before or after the event. Real property taxes often receive the blame for such procedure. They are the high because local services are expensive in a semi-wilderness and because the amenities attract non-profit organizations that do not pay real property taxes.

Other threats and stresses have less direct human cause. Deer are far more plentiful in the more nutritious vegetation here than in the Adirondacks. The Catskills do receive more acidic deposition than surrounding areas.

The world's wilderness areas continue largely because they are hard to reach and hard to live in; the Catskills are neither. They are accessible to millions, and yet retain a sense of wildness that is both benign and readily shared. ▲

*Henry Kernan is a consulting forester in world forestry, a Master Forest Owner and a regular contributor to the Forest Owner.*

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# Just the Facts

## Economic Impact of NY State

The forest products industry's economic contributions have steadily grown over the last several decades. Hardwood lumber production, in particular, has increased steadily in each of the last three decades. While employment is not at peak levels, the forest products industry represents a significantly larger percentage of the manufacturing work force today than it did 25 years ago.

- The forest products industry is among **New York's leading manufacturers.**
- **More than 53,000 New Yorkers** are employed in forest products manufacturing with a payroll of just under **\$2 billion.**
- The forest products industry contrib-

utes **\$3.7 billion** to the state gross product.

- Capital investment by the forest products industry in New York is currently averaging **\$430 million a year.**

• In 2001 the value of shipments of forest products from New York **totaled nearly \$8 billion.**

- New York is one of leading states in the production of hardwood lumber. Total hardwood lumber production in 2000 was **467 million board feet.**
- More than **7 percent** of all manufacturing jobs in NY are attributable to the forest products industry. This has increased by nearly **2 percent** over the last 25 years.

Information is provided from the publication *Just The Facts: An Overview of New York's Wood-Based Economy and Forest Resource*, published by the New York Center for Forestry Research & Development and the Empire State Forest Products Association. It is reprinted with their permission.

### 2002 Employment

Paper Manufacturing	23,239
Furniture & Related Products	19,588
Wood Product Manufacturing	9,823
Forestry	939

### 2002 Annual Payroll

Paper Manufacturing	\$1,030,387,000
Furniture & Related Products	\$623,717,000
Wood Product Manufacturing	\$310,531,000
Forestry	\$26,010,000

### 2001 Value of Shipments

2001 Value of Shipments	\$8,030,217,000
2001 Capital Expenditures	\$5,074,888,000

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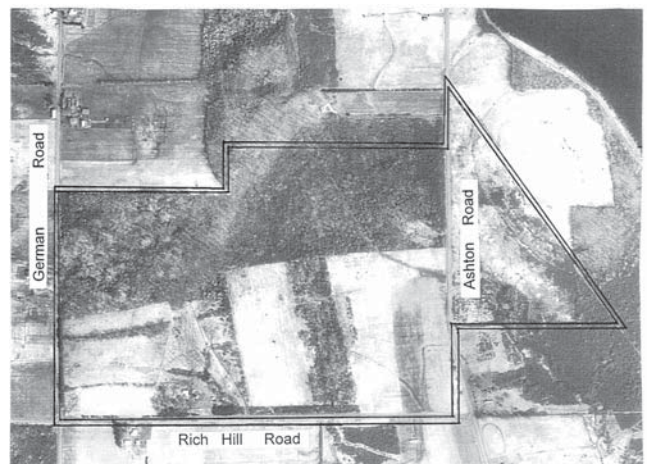
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Materials submitted for the July/August issue should be sent to Mary Beth Malmsheimer, Editor, *The New York Forest Owner*, 134 Lincklaen Street, Cazenovia, NY 13035, (315) 655-4110 or via e-mail at [mmalmshe@syr.edu](mailto:mmalmshe@syr.edu). Articles, artwork and photos are invited and if requested, are returned after use.

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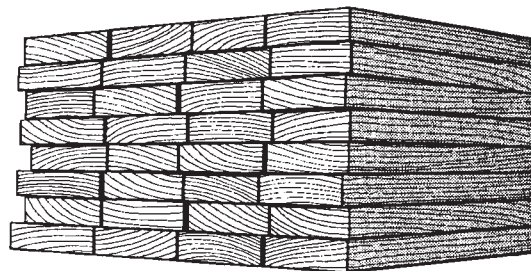
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