

# The New York Forest Owner

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

March/April 2007



*Member Profile: Eric Rasmussen*

*Volume 45 Number 2*



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**The New York  
Forest Owner**

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 45, NUMBER 2

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Please address all membership fees and change of address requests to P.O. Box 541, Lima, N.Y. 14485. 1-800-836-3566. Cost of family membership/subscription is \$35.

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[www.nyfoa.org](http://www.nyfoa.org)

**COVER:** Photo shows Eric Rasmussen (second from right), pictured at the Agroforestry Center with his grandson, Karl, his eldest daughter, Laurie, and his wife, Liz. For complete member profile, turn to page 21. Photo courtesy of Eric Rasmussen.



# From The Executive Director

It was great to see so many NYFOA members at our 45<sup>th</sup> Annual Membership Meeting in February. The meeting took place in conjunction with the New York Farm Show at the State Fairgrounds in Syracuse. Three great days of forestry workshops, offered by NYFOA and NYS DEC as part of the Farm Show, were also well-attended. See photos on page 5.

2007 Forestry Awareness Day will be held at the State Capitol on March 19. This year's format will allow more time for legislative visits by forest landowners and still include the popular morning issues briefing. Please



consider attending this important event to discuss forestry concerns with your local senators and assembly

people. I have registration information – just call (607 535 9790) to request it. NYFOA has assembled and trained a volunteer Legislative Affairs Team made up of nominees from the chapters and members of the NYFOA Board and Policy Committee. The Team is planning to play an active role not only in the March 19 visits, but also in doing follow-up throughout the spring in Albany and attending in-district meetings with legislators.

Members tell me that they love the information they get about NYFOA activities and other topics of interest to forest owners via this magazine and NYFOA's website ([www.nyfoa.org](http://www.nyfoa.org)),

but they want more! So if you are one of those people who would like to receive more frequent communication, then send me an email ([mjpacker@nyfoa.org](mailto:mjpacker@nyfoa.org)) and I will add you to an email list to get updates. In return, from time to time, I intend to ask the list about their opinions on a variety of topics. For example, the first question posed to the list is, "Would you like to see the Fall Membership Walk, Tour and Banquet brought back?"

Please share this magazine with a neighbor and urge them to join NYFOA. By gaining more members, NYFOA's voice will become stronger!

On page 19 of this edition of *The Forest Owner*, a list of over 100 NYFOA members who made a donation to NYFOA during 2006 appears. The donations for the year totaled nearly \$6,000! The NYFOA board has doubled this amount for the 2007 fund-raising goal. In the next few weeks, you will be receiving a fund appeal letter in the mail. I hope you will consider making a contribution to support NYFOA's important educational initiatives and help us reach our goal. 🌲

–Mary Jeanne Packer  
Executive Director

The mission of the New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) is to promote sustainable forestry practices and improved stewardship on privately owned woodlands in New York State. NYFOA is a not-for-profit group of landowners and others interested in the thoughtful management of private forests for the benefit of current and future generations.

## 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 statewide meetings.

( ) I/We own \_\_\_\_\_ acres of woodland.  
 ( ) I/We do not own woodland but support the Association's objectives.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 City: \_\_\_\_\_  
 State/ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 County of Residence: \_\_\_\_\_  
 County of Woodlot: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Referred by: \_\_\_\_\_

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# 2007 Annual NYFOA Meeting



The May/June edition of the *Forest Owner* will feature full details on the NYFOA Awards made at the annual meeting. Also, please note that new board members and officers were elected and their names appear on the inside front cover of this edition.

Hugh Canham speaking at the 2007 NYFOA Annual Membership Meeting on February 24 in Syracuse about the severity of the timber theft issue in NYS and what forest owners can do about it. About 60 members attended the meeting.

Members of NYFOA's Southern Finger Lakes (SFL) Chapter, Kelly Smallidge acting chair (with plaque) and NYFOA President Alan White (second from left), at the NYFOA Annual Meeting in Syracuse. The SFL Chapter was recognized with the NYFOA Chapter Growth award again for 2006. The Chapter grew 5% from 2005 to reach a total of 132 members. Five other NYFOA Chapters (Allegheny Foothills, Central NY, Western Finger Lakes, Northern Adirondack, and Southern Tier) also saw a positive percentage increase in membership for 2006.



Several hundred forest owners and others took advantage of the educational programming offered during the three-day 2007 Farm Show in February in Syracuse sponsored by NYFOA and NYS DEC. Shown here is Dave Skeval, consulting forester from Acer Forestry in Fabius speaking on the topic "Selling Your Timber: Getting it Right the First Time."



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**Attention forest landowners  
in the following counties:**

Clinton	Fulton	Jefferson	Oswego
Essex	Hamilton	Lewis	St. Lawrence
Franklin	Herkimer	Oneida	Warren

A new on-line database and website for linking forest products sellers and buyers in northern New York is now being developed. This is a project of NYFOA in cooperation with NYS-DEC and Cornell Cooperative Extension funded by a grant from the Northern Forest Partnership Program of the North East State Foresters Association.

If you would like to list products available (timber, firewood, or non-timber such as mushrooms or boughs/cones) for sale on your land, please go on-line and complete a simple listing form or request a hardcopy from the NYFOA office (PO Box 541, Lima, NY 14485). [www.nyforestlink.org](http://www.nyforestlink.org)

## New York State Maple

- The production of maple syrup, and associated value-added products, is an important agricultural industry in New York State.
- Maple production contributes to local rural economies and provides supplemental income to farmers and forest land owners. In 2005, there were 1,485 producers with 100 or more taps.
- New York State maple production, valued at nearly \$7.2 million in 2004, represents about one-sixth of the total production in the U.S.
- New York is the third largest maple producer in the nation behind Vermont and Maine.

**The mission of the New York State Maple Producers Association is to support the maple products industry in New York State and promote its long-term viability.**

*Do you own a sugarbush? Join NYSMPA today. Working together we can make things happen.*



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Would you like to receive updates via email on emerging forestry issues and opportunities for forest owners? If so, please make sure we have your current email address. Contact Liana in the NYFOA office: [lgooding@nyfoa.org](mailto:lgooding@nyfoa.org)

# Ask A Professional

PETER SMALLIDGE



Peter Smallidge

*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.forestconnect.info](http://www.forestconnect.info)*

## Question:

I know there are different ways to measure the volume of a tree, but I don't know how to use that information. Also, the volume of wood each year is the growth of a tree, but how fast should my trees be growing?

## Answer:

Forest owners, foresters, and loggers use tree volume to describe the quantity of wood in a tree, on an acre, or in a section of forest. Just as you buy apples by the peck and milk by the gallon, wood is usually bought and sold by one of two volume measures. The two measures are "board feet" and "cords" or weight depending on the products intended from the trees.

If you sell trees for use as lumber or veneer, you will sell the trees based on the board feet they contain. A board foot is 1" x 12" x 12" or 144 cubic inches. When a tree is standing, the board feet estimate uses tree diameter, normally measured at 4.5' above ground, and the length of the stem to a major defect. The diameter and stem length measurement can be either entered into a formula or compared to a table that estimates the tree volume. There are a few common tree scales, or methods to estimate

volume, such as International ¼ inch, Doyle, and Scribner, but dozens of others are used throughout the region. Different formulas provide different estimates of volume because of the way they were developed and the assumptions they make. The actual formula or table used does not matter that much; it is more important that

you know which scale you use and make comparisons to other estimates using the same scale. Volume estimation of a tree cut into logs uses the small-end inside bark diameter and log length. Again, a table or formula estimates the log volume.

If you sell trees that are of low value (for example small diameter or



A scale stick can be used to measure both tree diameter and merchantable height of a tree. The scale stick also has a volume table that helps estimate the number of board feet.



undesired species) or “low-grade” the common measure is cords or perhaps weight. A “standard cord” is a stack of wood measuring 4' x 8' x 8' and contains 128 cubic feet. Solid wood occupies approximately 80- 85% of the volume of a cord, the remainder is air space and bark. Cords describe wood sold for pulp, firewood, or chips. A “face cord” or “rick” is a common measure for selling firewood and measures 4' x 8' on the face, but the length of the sticks will vary, for example from 12" to 18" in length. NYS Ag and Markets regulates the sale of firewood in New York. Weight is an easy measure if you have access to scales.

Because wood is bought by volume, knowing the volume of wood in the trees in your forest will help you make management decisions. Tree measurements of diameter and height can be compared to tables that identify board feet or cord volumes. Computer savvy forest owners can use mathematical formulas to estimate volume. Your local Cornell Cooperative Extension or NYS Department of Environmental Conservation office may have publications on how to measure individual trees to estimate its volume. A thorough publication on the subject is available from Purdue University Cooperative Extension at <http://www.ces.purdue.edu/extmedia/FNR/FNR-191.pdf> Your service forester or a local trained volunteer can help you get started on this process. There are also private consulting foresters with extensive experience who are trained to develop volume estimates of woodlands. Although you will pay for this service, you will have a reliable estimate not only of volume, but also the market value. Foresters also have tools and techniques that can reasonably estimate future growth of timber volume.

The growth rate of trees varies considerably across a state and even on a single property. The variables that most affect tree growth include differences among tree species, competition for sunlight, tree age, and



If you cut trees, be sure to inspect each stump to understand how fast that tree was growing. Trees in the upper canopy will often grow more quickly than trees in the lower canopy.

soil conditions. Unlike animals that stop growing at maturity, trees need to continue to grow to maintain vigor and health. For many tree species, when growth slows or stops a tree will soon die. At a young age, typically trees up to about 10 inches in diameter, will grow both in diameter and height. As trees get older and larger, their annual height growth decreases but their diameter growth increment will continue. The width of the annual ring will decline as the same amount of wood is spread around an increasingly longer circumference of tree stem. Trees in a closed canopy forest may grow slowly at approximately 1 inch of diameter per decade. Trees in a managed forest with appropriate tree species for the area and on good soils might grow up to 3 or 4 inches of diameter in 10 years. On a cut stump, this represents 5 growth rings in the outer inch of wood. Slower growth might be 10 to 30 rings per outer inch of wood on a cut stump. Growth rate often has a strong positive influence on tree health. In addition, they may also increase in quality as they add more volume.

Anyone interested in tree volumes and utilization should contact their

local NYFOA chapter, DEC office or Cornell Cooperative Extension office to see about a group tour of a local sawmill. Each year, many NYFOA chapters will visit a local sawmill or other wood utilizing facility. Understanding how mills use logs of different qualities will help forest owners grow better trees. 🌲

*This response was adapted from a FAQ developed for the USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry web page. Peter J. Smallidge, NYS Extension Forester and Director, Arnot Teaching and Research Forest, Cornell University Cooperative Extension, Ithaca, NY. [pjs23@cornell.edu](mailto:pjs23@cornell.edu); 116 Fernow Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853. To learn about other frequently asked questions visit <http://www.na.fs.fed.us/stewardship/faq/index.html>*

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# ForestConnect 2007 Educational Letter Series

Would you like to receive unbiased, non-commercial and accurate information about how to manage your forest for wildlife habitat, firewood, timber, recreation, and more? Want to learn strategies to reduce your tax liability? You need the **ForestConnect 2007 Letter Series**.



The ForestConnect Letter Series is a joint venture of Cornell University Cooperative Extension and the New York Forest Owners Association. The letter series provides six bulletins, delivered to your home or office (via mail or download), with fact-filled information on how to more fully enjoy the benefits that your forest land can provide. Enrollees in the letter series will receive one bulletin every three weeks during the spring and summer and will have the opportunity to participate in an educational walking tour led by one or more of the Letter Series' authors and other forestry experts through a demonstration woodlot in September. Registration is \$18 for members of the New York Forest Owners Association and \$25 for non-members. Deadline to register is April 30<sup>th</sup>.

The ForestConnect 2007 Letter Series is designed for private forest owners throughout New York State. This educational program is based on an award-winning project developed by Cornell University Cooperative Extension of Warren County and the Greater Adirondack Resource Conservation and Development Council. Funding is provided through the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and the USDA Forest Service State and Private Forestry. More information is available at:

Cornell University's website: [www.ForestConnect.info](http://www.ForestConnect.info)  
New York Forest Owners Association website: [www.NYFOA.org](http://www.NYFOA.org)  
Or call (800) 836-3566 with any questions.

## Registration for ForestConnect 2007 Letter Series

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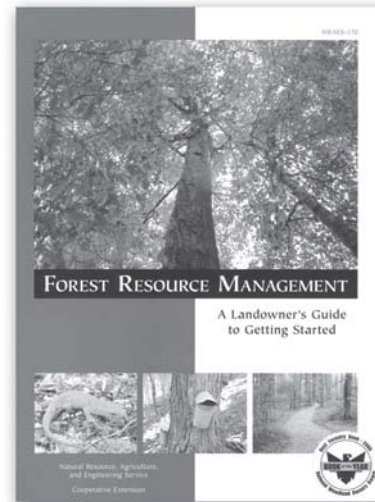
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Enclosed is my check, payable to "NYFOA" for \$\_\_\_\_\_ (\$18 for NYFOA members, \$25 for non-members). Mail to: NYFOA, PO Box 541, Lima, NY 14485.

# Book Information

A new book, *Forest Resource Management: A Landowner's Guide to Getting Started*, NRAES-170 (\$18.75 plus S&H/sales tax; 84 pages; May 2006) provides forestland owners the information they need to make sound management decisions and realize their full potential as stewards of their land. This book has been named the 2006 Book of the Year by the National Woodland Owners Association (NWOA).



*Forest Resource Management: A Landowner's Guide to Getting Started*, leads you through a series of considerations that will help you understand your forest and make informed decisions about its management.

This 84-page, coil-bound guide includes 36 color photographs and numerous diagrams to illustrate the text. Completing suggested activities and taking the quizzes will further help you develop a realistic plan to serve as a guide to achieving your objectives. Appendixes include a glossary; a description of web sites for forest owners; and sources of assistance, including land-grant university contacts, state forestry agencies, and forest owners associations. The guide will be useful to foresters, extension educators, and natural resources professionals, as well as to forest owners themselves.

*Forest Resource Management: A Landowner's Guide to Getting Started*, was published by NRAES, the Natural Resource, Agriculture, and Engineering Service. It was written by Kristi L. Sullivan, Extension Associate, Wildlife Conservation, Cornell University; Peter J. Smallidge, State Extension Forester, Cornell University; James C. Finley, State Extension Forester, Penn State University; and Michael G. Jacobson, Associate Professor of Forest Resources, Penn State University.

The book is available for \$18.75 per copy (plus shipping and handling) from NRAES, Cooperative Extension, PO Box 4557, Ithaca, NY 14852-4557. Shipping and handling for one copy is \$4.25 within the continental United States. For more information or a free book catalog, contact NRAES by phone at (607) 255-7654, by fax at (607) 254-8770, or by e-mail at [NRAES@CORNELL.EDU](mailto:NRAES@CORNELL.EDU)



# Kid's Corner

REBECCA HARGRAVE



Do you have a photo of you and your kids or grandkids in your forest? If so, *The New York Forest Owner* would like to see it! Send an electronic or hard copy to *Forest Owner* editor, MaryBeth Malmsheimer, (address on page 22) and it may end up on this page!

Jim DeLellis submitted this photograph. The picture shows Nick (left) and John Dellis showing Mom (Maryanne) Dad's timber harvest at their property in town of Hume in Allegany County, New York.

## Maple Syrup, Nature's Candy

Buckets hanging from trees; the smell of sweet maple sugar in the air... it must be March!

Maple sugaring season is here. Maple syrup is made by boiling the sap of the sugar maple (*Acer saccharum*), New York's most common tree, down into a sweet, thick syrup. Not only is this all natural sugar great on pancakes, it can be made into candy or incorporated into baked goods and dinner dishes.

Making maple syrup is fun and easy. Sap is water that has been transported into the tree through the roots, which pull water from the soil. This sap, with 1-3% sugar, readily flows out of tapped trees when there are freezing temperatures at night and warm temperature during the day; typical weather for the northeast in the early spring.

To collect the sap, start by tapping the sugar maple (drilling a hole into the wood) and then placing a spile (spout) into the hole. This allows the sap to flow out of a tree where it can be collected in buckets or through tubes and taken to a sugar house to be boiled. At the sugar house, the sap is boiled in an evaporator to concentrate it into syrup (66% sugar).

### Maple Syrup Fun Facts

- Sugar Maple and Black Maple are the two best types of maple used to make syrup.
- Maple Syrup is only made in the Northeast
- Tapping maple trees was taught to European settlers by the Native Americans
- It takes 40 gallons of sap to make one gallon of syrup.
- Trees shouldn't be tapped until they are 10" in diameter, once they are 18" they can have an additional tap.

### Maple Syrup Activities

- Go to a Sugar Shack for a tour or participate in Maple Weekend. Sugar Houses around the state will be having open houses with tours, samplings, pancake breakfasts, sleigh rides and more on March 17-18 and March 24-25, go to [www.mapleweekend.com/](http://www.mapleweekend.com/) to find a syrup maker near you.
- Make maple syrup at home. There is a great publication "Maple Syrup Production for the Beginner" that can found with other great activities at <http://maple.dnr.cornell.edu/>.
- Turn maple syrup into maple candy or maple cream. See the above resource for hints and fun treats.



Maple cream is great, I strongly recommend everyone taste it at least once in their life.

- Taste the different grades of maple syrup- light amber, medium amber, dark amber, and grade B. Which has the flavor you like best? How might you use each one? ▲

*Rebecca Hargrave is the Community Horticulture and Natural Resources Educator at Cornell University Cooperative Extension in Chenango County.*

# Wild Things in Your Woodlands

KRISTI SULLIVAN AND STEVE MORREALE

## WOOD FROG



*The wood frog (*Rana sylvatica*) is medium-sized, with a dark brown mask through its eyes, a dark line that connects the mask to the tip of the snout, and a white stripe along the upper lip. It also has pronounced ridges (folds of skin) that extend down each side of its back. The body coloration varies from light tan to dark brown, and changes with temperature; the darker color is more common for wood frogs in cold breeding ponds. The underside is white, occasionally with gray marks. Adults generally measure from 3.4 to 7 cm (1 1/3 to 2 3/4 in.).*

With the first warm rains of the year, usually in late March or early April, adult wood frogs move across the forest floor and enter shallow pools or ponds to breed. Adult wood frogs do not remain in the ponds for long and, after a short and intensive breeding period lasting from 1 to 2 weeks, they return to the woods, where you may occasionally encounter them moving about during the day. They are the first frogs to breed, often moving to water even before the snow and ice have melted away.

Once they reach the water, the males often are seen floating on the water surface with their hind legs submerged below the surface. The male's call resembles a short quack of a duck, and can not be heard from a very great distance. Females are attracted to the males' call and the expansion of the light-colored pair of vocal sacs on the males' throats. After being grasped by the male, they deposit from 1000 to

3000 eggs in large globular masses, which are attached to submerged vegetation, sticks, or other substrate in the water. Often several females will lay eggs together, resulting in very large clusters up 1/2 m (1 1/2 ft.) in diameter, containing many thousands of eggs.

Wood frog eggs usually hatch in less than 1 month. In May and June, small temporary ponds may be full of wriggling wood frog tadpoles. The tadpoles can take an average of 9 weeks to develop into tiny wood frogs, which then leave the water and take to the woods. Tadpoles feed on anything small enough, but mainly algae. On land, wood frogs are carnivores, consuming insects, slugs, spiders, and worms. They remain on land for 2 to 3 years before returning to the water to breed.

Wood frogs are common, and found throughout New York State. They have the most extreme northern range of any amphibian on the North American

continent. Some wood frogs are found on the Canadian Tundra; others live in Alaska, north of the Arctic Circle. During winter they hibernate at surprisingly shallow depths under the leaf litter on the forest floor. They do not burrow deeply into the ground or retreat below the water during winter to escape freezing temperatures. Instead, they distribute high levels of glucose throughout their bloodstream, which keeps cells from freezing while their other bodily fluids freeze. In the spring, the animal slowly thaws out, and picks up where it left off before the freeze.

The wood frog is an important component in both aquatic and terrestrial communities. They prey upon a variety of small animals, and are prey for larger animals such as snakes, birds, mammals, and other amphibians. Because of their complex habitat requirements, wood frogs can be affected by the loss of both wooded and aquatic habitats. Furthermore, their



Is there a certain species of wildlife that you would like to see featured in an upcoming "Wild Things" column? If so, email Kristi Sullivan at [kls20@cornell.edu](mailto:kls20@cornell.edu)

tendency to migrate between these habitats during the breeding season makes them vulnerable to mass mortality. Roads that separate upland sites from breeding ponds are particularly hazardous.

To provide habitat for the wood frog, landowners can enhance and protect both their aquatic breeding sites and the surrounding woods. Shallow woodland pools that dry up during late summer or fall (and do not support predatory fish) provide particularly valuable breeding habitat. Protecting these and other breeding sites from pollution (chemicals, sediments from erosion) and disturbance is essential for these animals. By marking the boundaries of breeding pools during the wet season, landowners can help prevent disturbances within the boundaries of the pools during drier times.


In surrounding woodlands, maintaining a mostly closed forest canopy (> 75 percent within 100 feet, and > 50 percent within 400 feet of the pool or pond) will provide optimum habitat for the wood frog and many other amphibians. A closed canopy shades the forest floor, keeping soils moist and leaf litter abundant. Coarse woody debris (logs, tree tops, etc.) can also be left on, or added to, the forest floor to provide safe havens for the wood frog throughout much of the year.

Maintaining minimal disturbance between breeding pools and adjacent woodlands allows wood frogs to move freely between the two. Disturbances such as road construction, skid trails, or large ruts can create barriers to travel if they occur close to breeding pools and ponds. Locating skid trails away from (400 feet) breeding pools, and harvesting timber when the ground is either frozen or completely dry, provides extra consideration for wood frogs and other vernal pool wildlife. 🌿

For more information on timber harvesting guidelines for vernal pool animals, ordering information for *Forestry Habitat Management Guidelines for Vernal Pool Wildlife* can be found at <http://www.wcs.org/international/northamerica/mca/publications>.

*Kristi Sullivan coordinates the Conservation Education Program at Cornell's Arnot Forest. Steve Morreale is a Senior Research Associate in the Department of Natural Resources at Cornell University. More information on managing habitat for wildlife, as well as upcoming educational programs at the Arnot Forest can be found by visiting the Arnot Conservation Education Program web site at [www.dnr.cornell.edu/arnot/acep/](http://www.dnr.cornell.edu/arnot/acep/)*

Jim Allen  
Forester

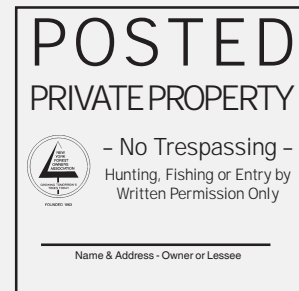


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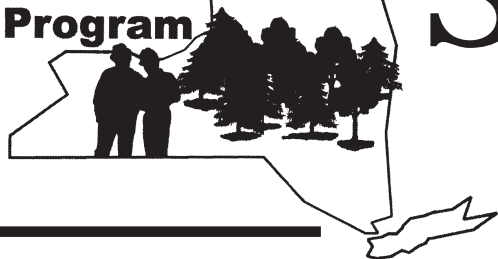
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\*\* Shipping Costs: 50 signs, \$4.50; 75 signs, \$4.75; 100 signs, \$5.25; 100+ signs, add \$.75 for each 50 signs over 100 (150 would cost \$5.25 plus \$.75 for the additional 50 for a total of \$6.00).

**NY Master Forest  
Owner/COVERTS  
Program**



# Stories from the Woods

SCOTT SMITH

*The goal of the MFO/COVERTS Program is to provide private forest owners with the information and encouragement necessary to manage their forests to enhance ownership satisfaction.*

This "stories from the woods" article is the third in a series written by Master Forest Owner Volunteers telling of one of their visits. The volunteers truly enjoy the interactions with the forest owners they visit. We hope you too enjoy the stories and learn a bit from them also!

## My Woods

First, I need to say that the MFO training we received last September was great. Gary Goff and company put on a top notch event. I would recommend the program (and have) to anyone interested. After 4 days of what seemed like an around the clock whirlwind of forestry training, I went back to my woodlot with a new

appreciation and a more focused approach. In fact, I took my wife with me, and that's where it gets interesting.

I have to point out here that we rarely agree on anything (probably the reason we have remained married for 25 years). Her approach to our woodlot has been more of a "these trees must be worth a lot of money...let's have someone cut them all down" kind of outlook. Mine has been more of an "I can't bear to cut any of these beautiful trees down" kind of approach. I do, however, heat our home with wood, and had been doing some thinning.

During our walk, we disagreed over the size of the trees we looked at, the estimated value of those trees to a logging company, and which ones

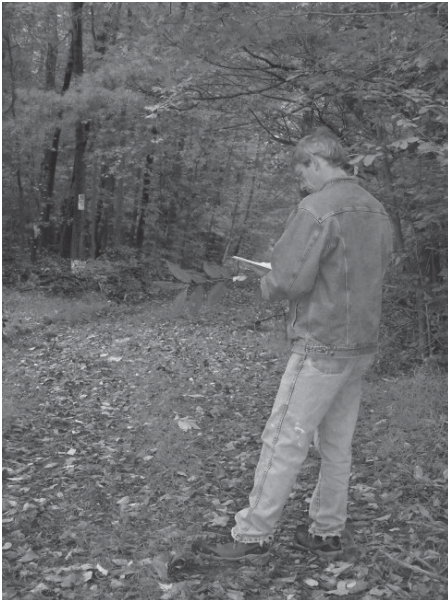
ought to be cut. She, of course wanted to cut them all. I wanted to leave them all standing. "So basically what you're saying is that you're not cutting anything!" she said. "That's not what I'm saying. I cut enough to heat the house the last couple of years, and most of these other trees aren't large enough for timber." And so that's the way the walk went. I guess we'll just agree to disagree. She just has a little more faith that I might possibly know what I'm talking about since I did the MFO training.

We did succeed in identifying the "mystery tree" at the back corner of our woodlot during the walk. The "mystery tree" is a very old tree on the corner of our woodlot. For many years, I thought it was a sugar maple left over from the original hedgerow that existed before the woodlot grew in. I realized recently that the maple leaves I was looking at didn't belong to the tree at all. They were attached to the understory trees. The bark looked kind of cherry like, but not enough like the cherries I was used to seeing to convince me it was a cherry. To make matters more confusing, I picked up some leaves under it on a recent walk that looked like ash leaves. The bark was not white ash bark, though. Could this be a black ash growing in a very atypical place? I had lost the leaves before I got home and never identified them to be certain. This day, I was on a mission. I still couldn't get a good look at the leaves. I did, however, see a white ash tree close by in the understory...first piece of the puzzle solved. I was finally able to climb part way up the tree and retrieve



According to local "lore," this vernal pool was caused by a meteorite. Given its location in the southern tier of NYS, it is more likely to be a "kettle hole," caused by the melting of a large block of glacier ice, after the surrounding glacier had retreated and deposited its glacial till (14,000 years ago), hence the depression. Either story seems fantastic and regardless, the pool now provides valuable habitat for amphibians.





We all have at least one “mystery tree” in our woodlots. Here Scott Smith is working on figuring out his, which turned out to be a large, old, decrepit, black cherry.

a small sucker growing on a branch. The “mystery tree” turned out to be not much of a mystery after all. It was a gnarly, old black cherry. I learned a very valuable lesson that day. Sometimes you have to climb!

The MFO training also instilled in us the importance of having a written forestry plan. The week of our training, I had the DEC forester walk my land with me and come up with written plan. The plan calls for continued thinning

with a secondary goal of doing some timber harvesting in another 10 years or so, and I have continued my firewood thinning with a vengeance.

### **My First MFO Visit.**

My first “real” MFO walk took place just recently. A co-worker of mine has a beautiful 20-acre forested lot, where he lives, that borders Cayuta Lake in Schuyler County. His property goes down to the lake with the last 200 feet or so being a designated wetland. Upon arriving at his house, I was fed breakfast (no one told us in training that we could expect to be fed). During breakfast I found out that Chis and his wife Katie have owned the property for 4 years. They are very interested in the recreational value their land brings and are also very interested in managing their property for wildlife. Chris’s dad and mom were also visiting. They own 125 acres near Olean, NY. Chris’s dad was very interested in the MFO program, so I made sure I left him some information on the program. He also accompanied us on our woods walk.

We walked a good bit of the property during the 3 hours I was there. I immediately began noticing the contrasts between Chris’s property that sits on the side of a lake at about 1300 feet and my property sits on a hilltop at about 1950 feet. There were both red and white oaks here. I have yet to find a white oak on my hilltop property. The wetland had a fair number of large cottonwoods in it, another tree I don’t run into in my woods. His property didn’t have many sugar maples, which are so common on the hill. He also had a fair number of large beeches. This is where I noticed something very strange; I looked long and hard, but could not

find one instance of beech bark disease to show him. This is in stark contrast to my property, where I have to look long and hard to find a resistant tree.

During our walk, we also checked out a shallow pond on the property. Local legend has it that the pond was created by a meteor strike, and at one time it was studied. Judging by the shape, it looked like this was as plausible an explanation as anything else. Whatever the cause, this pond was the perfect home for amphibians (it was fairly shallow and nearly dried up in the summer). In fact, with the wetland area, this property was an amphibian haven as evidenced by the deafening roar of the frogs in the spring.

The forest was mostly pole and small saw timber sized. Like most forests around here, this used to be a farm field that was left to reforest itself. Besides the species already mentioned, we saw some yellow birch, hemlock, white pine, shagbark hickory and white ash, among others.

Other topics we touched on were doing a hedgerow/privacy planting by the road and how best to build a raised boardwalk over the wetland and down to the lake. The wetlands designation would require DEC approval to build anything, according to Chris. I left him with a suggestion to get in touch with the DEC forester and schedule a walk through his property. The DEC could help him with a plan to improve wildlife habitat and give him some pointers about how best to make the boardwalk become a reality. I left feeling that the woods walk was much fun for everyone concerned and that we all learned something. I also went away with a full stomach (a very good thing). 🍌

Scott Smith has been a MFO volunteer since 2006.

### **For more information on:**

*The MFO Volunteer Program*— contact your county Cornell Cooperative Extension Office or [www.cornellmfo.info](http://www.cornellmfo.info)

*Vernal Pools or Landforms of Glaciation*— <http://www.physicalgeography.net/fundamentals/10af.html>

*Tree Identification—Know Your Trees.* <http://dspace.library.cornell.edu/bitstream/1813/86/2/art.pdf>  
A Field Guide to Trees and Shrubs (Peterson Field Guide Series, no. 11), and Trees of the Central Hardwood Forests of No. America, by Donald Leopold.

### **Information for the MFO members**

- Arnot MFO Refresher Workshop: Friday & Saturday, July 20-21, 2007. Topics will be presented by the Arnot undergraduate summer interns.
- New MFO Volunteer Training Workshop: Wednesday to Sunday, September 19-23, 2007.
- MFOs who attend refreshers will receive several information bulletins for distribution to forest owners that they visit.
- We need volunteers to host the western, eastern, and northern refreshers this summer. Please contact Gary Goff at [grg3@cornell.edu](mailto:grg3@cornell.edu) or 607/255-2824.

*Sponsors of the MFO Program include: The Ruffed Grouse Society, New York Forest Owners Association, NYS-DEC Div. of Lands & Forests, The Robert H. Wentorf, Jr. Foundation, USDA Renewable Resources Extension Program, and Cornell Cooperative Extension.*

# If a tree falls in the forest when you cut it, do you know which direction it will fall?

PETER J. SMALLIDGE

**H**as this happened to you?...attired with appropriate chainsaw safety equipment you walk to a tree destined for the firewood pile. You notice an opening in the forest canopy into which you could fell the tree, but alas the tree is leaning in another direction. You hope against hope the tree might fall towards the opening, but reality strikes and you pinch your saw and hang the tree. Unfortunately, this scenario and worse happens repeatedly each year. Take heart, your luck is about to change especially if you complete a Game of Logging training. You will then know how to evaluate your ability and the lean of the tree to know if you can move the crown of the tree against gravity and into a forest canopy opening. You will learn how to work through your felling plan and execute a perfect tree fall knowing how to avoid hanging the tree and

the associated headaches, risks and hazards.

Unfortunately, most forest owners and other chainsaw users have never had a safety course, much less a course in directional felling that provides safety plus productivity training. What more could you ask for in a course? Here's what...include some training on chainsaw chain and engine maintenance for the full benefit of safe and productive woods work. Add to that small classes sizes and the fact that every participant gets hands-on instruction. Through educational programs such as exist at the Cornell University's Arnot Forest the opportunity for this type of training exists. The program, Game of Logging for Landowners, teaches forest owners the skills they need to go from beginner to accomplished tree feller. Sessions are limited in class size to allow individual attention from the certified instructor. At the Arnot Forest, NYFOA members receive a substantial price discount.

I know that a thorough working knowledge of directional felling is essential for safe and productive work in the woods. I have participated in three levels of the Game of Logging training. I use the skills in management and research throughout the state. My wife and I use the skills in our woodlot. The training is mandatory for people who work at the Arnot Forest. The skills you learn in saw sharpening and maintenance more than pay for the cost of the course. But don't take my word, listen to some testimonials from people who have taken and now use the skills that come with directional felling.

## Testimonial 1 (Ron Pedersen)

The Game of Logging should be required at a young age, like driver training or hunter safety for a big game license. My chaps and helmet probably used to feel out of it, but now they are in use whenever there is action. I'm fortunate I am in one piece and was able to take GOL 60 years later than I should have. Directional felling is now a fun challenge, no longer a complete mystery, and when I miss, the stump usually shows me why. Safety and know how—that is sustainable. I can't imagine anyone not thinking that GOL isn't a great value!

## Testimonial 2 (Chuck Winship)

We, at Sugarbush Hollow, a maple



A certified Game of Logging instructor guides each participant through a felling plan and the correct way to directionally fell a tree. The "game" is a fun and friendly competition on safety and felling technique among participants for a variety of prizes.

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Participants each fell a tree and then inspect the stump and tree to further understand how to apply correct cutting techniques.

syrup operation, will not let any one use a chainsaw in our woods with out first taking the Game of Logging course. We do extensive timber stand improvement even among our tubing systems. The course, with its various levels, provides each of us with the right safety procedures which enables us to have the necessary confidence and skills in handling the most dangerous tool invented by mankind. We have the ability to make the felling of trees efficient from a time and effort point of view. The trees fall where we want them with out hanging up or damaging

the residual trees as well as avoiding the tubing systems. The course is fun and taught by a person who can hold your interest all day. Those of us new to a chainsaw, men and women, can safely and effectively compete against those who have chainsaw for years without this training.


**Testimonial 3 (Tim Levatich)**

Game of Logging 1 and 2 have radically improved my felling work. I now have a quick step-by-step system and the proper techniques to get any tree down to the ground. I feel much safer and I

work more efficiently, so I can get more done with my limited time. The courses I've already taken are well worth the fees paid - it's hands-on training with individual attention and real skills learned. I'm planning to take GOL 3!

**Testimonial 4 (Mike Farrell)**

Although I was trained as a forester, my chainsaw skills were very limited before taking GOL. Whereas I used to just mark the trees to be cut and let someone else do the felling, I now have the confidence and skills to do the actual cutting when implementing thinning operations.

These forest owners have described how they have benefited from Game of Logging for landowners course. The course schedule for 2007 at the Arnot Forest is May 5-6, 19-20, and 21-22 for Levels I and II, respectively. Level III will be on June 23<sup>rd</sup>. Each level is required before attending the next level. For more information or to register, visit the calendar at [www.ForestConnect.info](http://www.ForestConnect.info) or call (607) 255-2115. Class size is limited and spaces fill quickly. Other classes are likely to be offered during the summer and fall with notices via the web or by calling for more information. 

*Peter J. Smallidge, NYS Extension Forester and Director Arnot Teaching and Research Forest, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY.*



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# Red Oak Borer

## *A threat to stressed trees*

DOUGLAS C. ALLEN

For the past several years, red oak in hardwood forests of the lower Midwestern United States (especially southern Missouri through the highlands of Arkansas) have experienced a general decline and extensive mortality. Many factors, including drought, have been associated with this problem, but one outstanding feature has been an unprecedented outbreak of a long-horned beetle known as the Red Oak Borer (ROB). This beetle has contributed significantly to the decline and mortality of red oak in this region.

As I interpret the most recent (1993) U.S. Forest Service FIA report (Forest Inventory and Analysis), New York State has approximately 3.1 million acres of hardwood forests that contain red oak. Roughly 55% of these stands are in the sawtimber class (dia.  $\geq$  11.0 inches). Trees of this size are a prime target for the ROB. Depending on where a forest owner lives, the latest DEC, Division of Lands and Forests Stumpage Price Report (summer 2006) indicated that the median value of quality red oak ranged from \$200 to \$400/MBF (International 1/4" rule), and its value can be as much as \$3000/MBF in western and central parts of the state. In short, it is one of our relatively valuable forest resources. Generally speaking, ROB damage is a major source of degrade to oak logs, but the exceptional borer densities currently experienced in the south are capable of killing trees.

The Distribution of ROB includes all areas where red oak is found in the eastern U.S. and southeastern Canada. Its Primary Hosts in upland forests are

black oak and northern red oak. It is present in New York State, but at this time occurs in relatively low numbers.

The Adults are light brown, robust beetles approximately 0.9 inches to 1.25 inches long. The male antennae are approximately twice as long as the body (Fig. 1), whereas the female antennae are more or less the same length as the body (Fig. 2). Many specimens have a dark patch on top of the body segment that occurs immediately behind the head. Many specimens sport another dark area on top at the base of each wing cover. Also, both sexes have a small spine on the inside tip at the end of each wing cover (Fig. 2). The shiny, white, grub-like immature (larval stage) (Fig. 3) occurs beneath the bark or in the wood, and can not be seen unless bark is removed or a log is opened up; for example during the milling process or when splitting firewood.

The Life Cycle begins when the nocturnal adults emerge during June, July and August. After mating, females lay eggs in bark crevices, beneath patches of lichen or under bark scales. Often several eggs are deposited on a single tree that, for some reason, is favored by the female—this is called a brood tree. Larvae feed beneath the bark and at the end of the first year over-winter in a small, hollow burrow they excavate beneath the bark or in the surface of the sapwood. During the first summer, larvae push conspicuous amounts of a granular frass (fecal material combined with wood chips) to the outside through ejection holes that the larva chews through the bark. Deposits of this frass accumulate in bark crevices or at the base of the tree

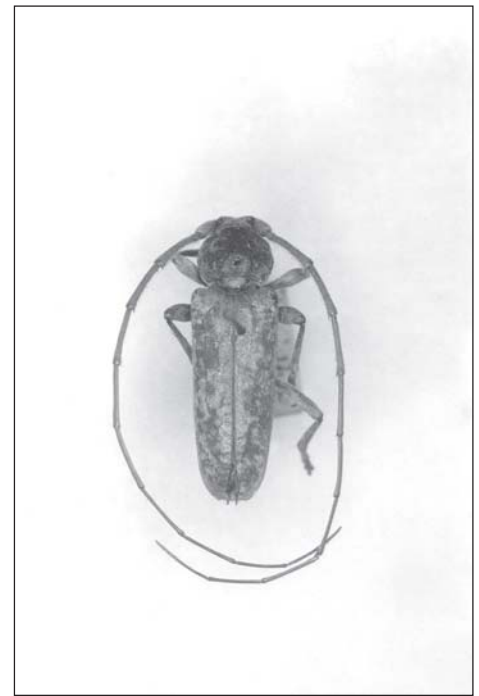


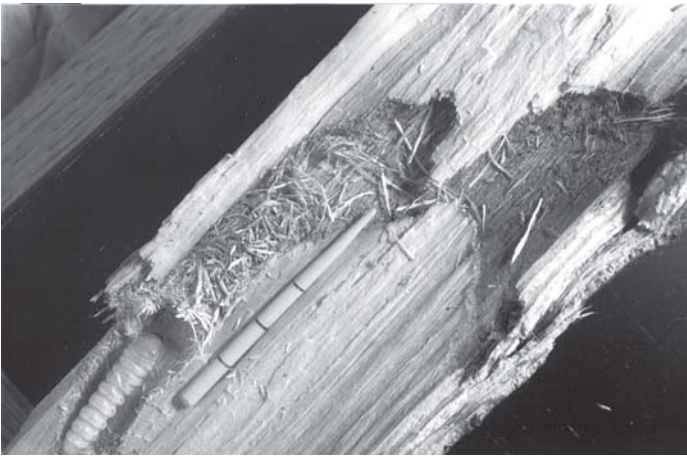
Figure 1. Male red oak borer. Note the length of his antennae relative to body length.

and often are accompanied by sap flow which stains the bark around and below each hole (Fig. 4). Larvae continue feeding beneath the bark during early summer of the second year of the two-year life cycle.

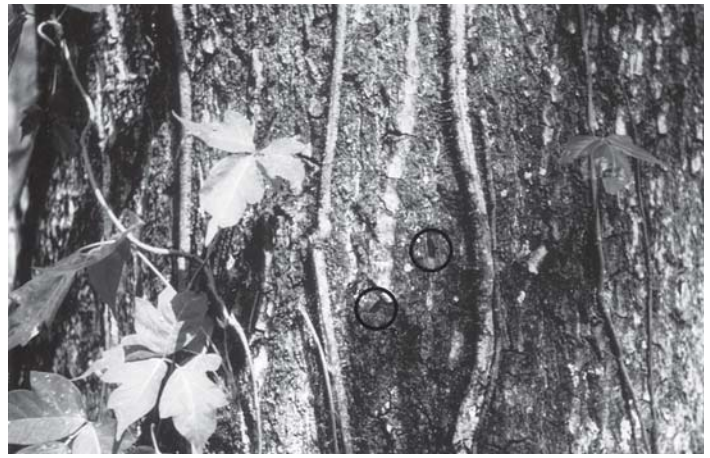


Figure 2. Female red oak borer. Note the relatively short antennae and dark color immediately behind her head and at the base of each wing cover (arrows).





**Figure 3.** Red oak borer larva (lower left) working on its frass plug. Below the larva (not visible) is an over-wintering chamber similar to the darkly stained cavity on the upper right side of the piece of wood. Marks on the pencil are 1" apart.



**Figure 4.** Accumulation of granular frass and dark stain at the base of an oak associated with holes in the bark (black circles) through which frass is pushed to the outside of the gallery.

Towards late summer they enter the sapwood and eventually the heartwood for a vertical distance of 6 to 10 inches. At the end of this gallery each larva excavates a large over-wintering chamber (Fig. 3). Much of the frass produced at this time is packed tightly in the gallery behind the larva (Fig. 5). It is in this chamber where the larva will eventually transform into the adult. Tightly packed frass, now consisting of large, excelsior-like strips of wood, is used to plug the gallery (Fig. 3). This barrier protects the relatively helpless insect during this stage of development.

Maintaining thrifty stands by controlling stand density and encouraging red oak on good oak sites are key to managing this pest under

forest conditions. Additionally, brood trees should be removed. The latter are conspicuous because there have numerous holes in the bark, many dark stains on the surface of the bark and(or) abundant frass in bark crevices or at the base of the tree.

I chose this insect for an article partly because I believe it is a good example of a forest pest whose significance in our region may change over the next several decades in response to global warming. Currently, populations in New York State are sparse and of minor concern to most forest owners.

There is wide spread consensus, however, that ecologically important global warming will occur during the next century. *If* warming continues at predicted rates, the northeast *may* become more suitable for ROB, especially *if* our weather patterns change in such a way that periods of unusual drought become a reality. Results of current research with this borer in the southern United States indicated that Oak under this type of stress is particularly vulnerable to ROB. Also, the predicted rise in temperature *may* increase the incidence red oak in the northeast. This scenario is very speculative, of course, but portrays a forest-related

example for our region of the type of disturbance that might result in the wake of continued global warming. 🌲

*This is the 88th 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/dlf/privland/forprot/health/nyfo/index.html>.*



**Figure 5.** Serpentine larval galleries.

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# A Deer Exclosure Fencing Project

EDWARD PIESTRAK

Last year we purchased a 40 acre parcel that adjoins our present tree farm. After examining the parcel during the cold winter nights of 2005-2006 we came to the conclusion that a perfect site was available for a deer exclosure. This is one of the problems when we get nervous with not much outdoor work to do in the winter.

The site considered was a 2 acre parcel of an abandoned field that was surrounded by forest on three sides. The field portion was nicely stocked with large seedlings of oak, soft maple, aspen, hickory, etc. But as one could imagine the white tail deer keep the trees in a well groomed manner. That is, the tops were well browsed.

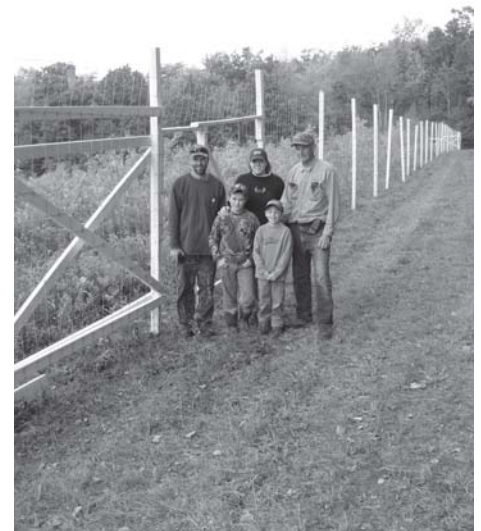
After a decision with my oldest son Jeffery it was concluded that we can do a deer exclosure fencing project ourselves. At this time we did not realize the weather would be so wet. During March we cleaned a road around the parcel and put our posthole digger to work. This required well over 100 holes 2½ x 3 feet in depth. For the three days that we installed poles it rained each day. The holes would fill up with water in a half hour

or so. Thus we had to dig each hole and immediately install a pole.

This was a family project with my son, daughter and grandchildren involved. Now that the project is completed I have ordered some additional trees for inside the fence. During the upcoming spring of 2007 we will have approximately 100 oak trees to ensure survival and form. Also, a few white pines will be added to the mix. At least the seedlings will not have to be tubed inside the fence. We had a commercial deer fence contractor erect a fence a couple of years ago, but I foresee our 2 acre fence lasting much longer than the commercial fence and ours is much more heavy duty.

For someone interested in building a deer exclosure below is the cost of our fence:

- 100+ 4x4 treated posts (culled lumber): \$275.00
- 100+ 2x4 treated lumber (culled lumber): \$125.00
- 1000+ feet of 8 foot high deer fence: \$910.00
- 5 gallons of paint: \$25.00
- 20lbs. of nails and staples: \$40.00



Project Complete - left to right Jeffery Piestrak, Joshua Piestrak, Crystal Piestrak, Cody Piestrak & Edward Piestrak.

Note: I go to several lumber stores and purchase their culled lumber at a 80% reduction in price. Trust me the deer will never notice that some of the poles aren't perfectly straight. We also nailed 2x4 lumber together to make 4x4's. One can not include the labor since it was "free". You only have to provide food and drink. Those little fellows in the picture eat and drink more than any adult. With the family involved, it is not very difficult to get them to participate in a seemingly worthwhile project. After all, they will see the long range result from what we did today. 🌲

*Edward Piestrak is a member of NYFOA.*



Getting started with the holedigger. Jeffery Piestrak in tractor.



Taking a break - left to right Crystal Paluck, Cody Piestrak, Jeffery Piestrak & Joshua Piestrak



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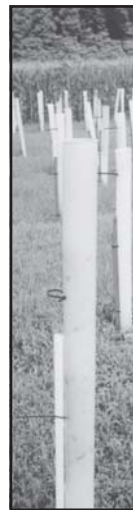
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# Member Profile: *Eric Rasmussen*

ALEXANDRA SILVA AND MARILYN WYMAN

As an avid outdoorsman since childhood, it was no surprise that Eric Rasmussen went on to earn an Associates degree in Forestry from Paul Smith's College after leaving high school. Forests having been a life long passion of Eric's, he also received a B.S. from the SUNY College of Forestry. After graduating, Eric went on to work with the U.S. Forest Service on the Siuslaw National Forest.

Encompassing over 630,000 acres of varying ecosystems, the Siuslaw National Forest is situated along the Pacific Coast in Oregon. The territory is home to countless varieties of wildlife, as well as a mixture of different species of trees and plants.

Eric was so enchanted with the area at the time of his first visit that, years later, he went on to name his own

property after the Oregon forest. While Siuslaw, meaning "land of the far away river," originally referred to the Columbia River in Oregon, Eric's Siuslaw Tree Farm refers to the Hudson River in New York.

It was in 1959 that Eric assumed ownership and management of Lange's Groveside Resort & Motel in Acra, Greene County, NY. The area, located in the town of Cairo, had originally been farmland in the 1800's, but was returned to natural forestland over time. The parents of Loretta, Eric's late wife, acquired the property in 1946 and later handed it down to the Rasmussen couple. The resort's property included 150 acres of forest, field, ponds and streams which Eric cultivated into the Siuslaw Tree Farm. The property is comprised of mainly

red oak tree stands, though it is interspersed with some white oaks. The land is also home to an abundant amount of wildlife.

Eric has made the Siuslaw Tree Farm available to numerous resort visitors and countless other guests to explore, hike, bird watch, hunt or just observe and learn from. In addition, Eric's Siuslaw Tree Farm has been visited by over 10,000 sixth grade students from Greene County through Environmental Awareness Days, which have been held there every year since 1970. These thousands of mostly eleven, twelve, and thirteen year old kids have learned about forests, wildlife, water quality and many other topics in a wonderful outdoor setting. Some of these youths have gone on to enter various fields related to forestry and conservation as a result of this initial exposure.

Eric has been repeatedly recognized for his commitment to educating others through Siuslaw Tree Farm. Eric received the 1999 NYS Tree Farmer of the Year Award. The annual award is presented to a forest landowner who practices sustainable forest management and who goes above and beyond to educate others about good forestry practices. More recently, Eric was presented with the 2006 Forester of the Year Award. On February 1, 2007, the New York Society of American Foresters honored Eric with the award, which is given to a person who has demonstrated sustained and exemplary service to the forestry community.

Perhaps Eric's most generous act is his recent gift of his beloved Siuslaw Tree Farm to the Agroforestry Resource Center (ARC), an education and research facility run by Cornell Cooperative Extension of Greene County. The ARC is one of two agroforestry centers in the U.S. It is Eric's desire to ensure that Siuslaw will be forever available to those who wish to learn about the importance of forests and forest management, as well as sustainable practices. As such, Eric and his family donated the entire



Eric Rasmussen during a woodwalk at the Agroforestry Center in Greene County, NY.

*continued on page 22*



Above: Eric Rasmussen presenting Andy Turner with a plaque referred to as "The Key to the Siuslaw Tree Farm," which he recently donated to the Agroforestry Resource Center. Andy Turner is the Executive Director of Cornell Cooperative Extension of Greene County. Below: Eric Rasmussen provides a welcome presentation during a workshop at the Agroforestry Resource Center.



property to the ARC, with the exception of the 5 acres where he continues to live.

Eric's current memberships include the Society of American Foresters and the Catskill Forest Association. In addition, he is chairman of the Greene County Soil and Water Conservation District. Eric is also on the Advisory Committee for the ARC, whose mission is to "sustain the ecological, aesthetic and economic values of forested lands through education". This is the exact same mission that Eric has always shared. In addition, Eric has been a member of NYFOA since the 1960's, when he attended the first meeting at Bray Hall. ▲

Alexandra Silva is a Forest Resources Extension Program Assistant at Cornell University, Department of Natural Resources, Ithaca, NY 14853 and Marilyn Wyman, Natural Resources Extension Educator, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Greene County.

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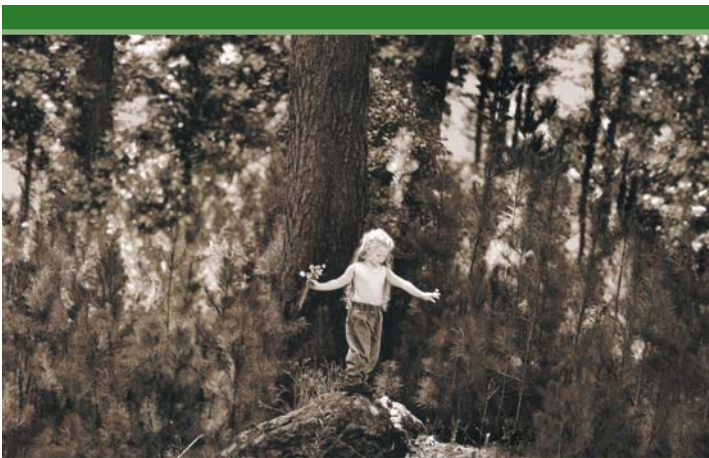
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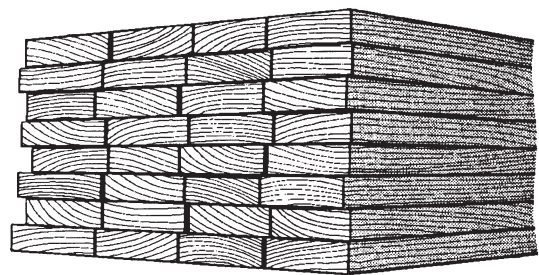
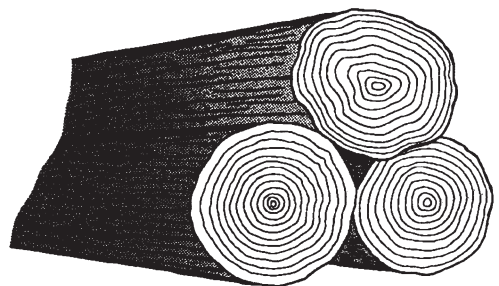
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