

The New York Forest Owner

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

For people who care about New York's trees and forests

November/December 2008



Member Profile: Tony Pingitore

Volume 46 Number 6



FOUNDED 1963

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**The New York
Forest Owner**

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 46, NUMBER 6

The New York Forest Owner is a bi-monthly publication of The New York Forest Owners Association, PO Box 541, Lima, NY 14485. Materials submitted for publication should be sent to: Mary Beth Malmshemer, Editor, The New York Forest Owner, 134 Lincklaen Street, Cazenovia, New York 13035. Materials may also be e-mailed to mmalmsh@syr.edu. Articles, artwork and photos are invited and if requested, are returned after use. The deadline for submission for the January/February issue is December 1, 2008.

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

www.nyfoa.org

COVER: Tony and Connie Pingitore in front of their self-built log cabin in Stockton, NY. For member profile, turn to page 21. Photo courtesy of the Pingitores.

From The Executive Director

This fall marks the beginning of my fourth year as NYFOA's Executive Director. My family and I always enjoyed being part of the organization for a number of years prior to me working for the association; and we still find good value in our membership today, especially receiving this excellent publication six times each year. The November edition of *Forest Owner* is no exception. It contains a number of outstanding articles on a variety of timely and interesting topics.

By now everyone should have received the NYFOA Fall Appeal letter. NYFOA's Board of Directors and I recognize that weak economic conditions right now make contribution decisions especially tough. Now more than ever, though, your donations are needed to help support NYFOA's education and advocacy work. Please respond to this appeal as you are best able.



Would you like to see your donation dollars go further? Then check with your employer about their matching funds program. Several members have been able to double their contribution, by getting their companies to also make a donation. It's a pretty simple process – just get a match form from your employer, send it in with your contribution, and Liana will invoice your employer for their share.

I am looking forward to continuing my meetings with each of NYFOA's ten chapters' steering committee members. As of this writing, I have had the opportunity to speak with several chapters; and hope to complete all visits before the end of the year. What I'm hearing so far is very heartening – enthusiastic support for NYFOA's strong voice for forestry in state-level discussions including continued involvement as leaders

of the NYS Council of Forest Resources Organizations. We are speaking out about the importance of addressing threats to NY's forests from invasive species, making sure that timber thefts are investigated and prosecuted, and assuring that forestry projects receive their fair share of Farm Bill cost-share funding.

Please take a minute to respond generously to the NYFOA fall appeal. A donation envelope was mailed to you recently.

NYFOA's chapters are doing great things, too. They are busy planning for next year's landowners' workshops and woodswalks. They are reaching out to local media's editorial boards with messages about the public benefits of sustainably managed private forests. They are involved in area schools and with other youth education efforts such as the Envirothon and 4-H forestry programs. They are concerned with bringing timely information to their members about managing their forests for important wildlife habitats and taking advantage of emerging opportunities for forest-based income such as ways to participate in new carbon credit programs.

There's a lot happening; and more still planned! NYFOA is a wonderful organization - with excited and engaged members, dedicated chapter volunteers, and an active group of leaders at the state level. It's been my honor to serve you over the last three years; and I'm looking forward to continuing my involvement for many years to come. 🌲

–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 people who care about NYS's trees and forests and are interested in the thoughtful management of private forests for the benefit of current and future generations.

Join! NYFOA is a not-for-profit group 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*, woodswalks, chapter meetings, and statewide meetings.

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NYFOA's Northern Adirondack Chapter Chair Bill LaPoint presenting the book "Bringing the Northern Forest to Your Classroom" to Grade School President Ms Pressey. This book is available to order online at <http://www.nrs.fs.fed.us/pubs/3558>. In recent years the Forest Service has reemphasized the need for increased environmental literacy among the Nation's citizens and has recognized the benefits of addressing that need among school-age children. This publication is a product of an Adirondack Curriculum Project workshop sponsored by the USDA Forest Service, Northeastern Research Station, and Paul Smith's College. The workshop was held at Great Camp Sagamore in Raquette Lake, NY, in June 2005. For 2 days, 22 teachers met with resource professionals with expertise in either the Northern Forest or in teaching methods and techniques, or both, and developed the lesson plans in this publication.

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Letter to the Editor

Thank you for the excellent manner in which you presented my article in the September/October issue of *The New York Forest Owner*.

It was very rewarding to me to see it published. I have already received two compliments from people who were in my group at the MFO workshop last week at the Arnot Forest.

I have really enjoyed receiving this magazine since joining the New York Forest Owners Association last year.

Yours truly,

Kenvyn Richards
Oswego, NY

Mr. Richards article appeared on page 18 of the last issue.

Editors Note: The Editor of the New York Forest Owner would like to issue a formal apology to Mr. Robert Greenman. His "Members Voices" article that appeared in the September/October issue had numerous spelling errors. These errors were made by the editor, and not the author. We wish to extend our sincere apologies for this mistake.

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

USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) is moving to help us stop EAB moving in with nursery stock

We are amending the regulations governing the importation of nursery stock to prohibit or restrict the importation of ash (*Fraxinus* spp) plants for planting, except seed, from all foreign countries except for certain areas in Canada that are not regulated areas for emerald ash borer. This action is necessary to prevent further introductions of this plant pest into the United States and to prevent the artificial spread of the emerald ash borer.

This interim rule was effective September 23, 2008.

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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 with an explicit mention of "Ask a Professional." Additional reading on various topics is available at www.forestconnect.info

Question:

I have several maples on my property and am considering tapping some for syrup. I struggle though to recognize red maple from sugar maple. Any suggestions?

Answer:

The similarities between red and sugar maple and the struggle to identify one from the other may be the most common tree identification frustration I hear from forest owners and enthusiasts. Fortunately there are several consistent features that help us separate these two species.

Before looking at red versus sugar maple, there are some fundamentals of the study of trees, or dendrology, worth mentioning. Trees, and all flowering plants, are separated into species based on characteristics of the flower. Although we seldom have access to tree flowers for identification, they are the most reliable feature of a tree for identification. The fruits that develop from flowers similarly have high consistency for identification and are more available than the flowers. Other features of the tree that are often reliable include twig and bud characteristics, but these vary some between the growing and dormant seasons. Bark characteristics often help,

but change during the life of the tree. Within a group of similar trees, like maples or oaks, ecological features such as soil moisture or geographic location can sometimes help separate the related species. Leaves are the most popular feature but also have the greatest degree of variation. With the variation among features, success in tree identification will require that you carefully observe several specimens and features for a more positive identification. Maintain collections of twigs and fruits of known

trees to help when making comparisons to new specimens from your woodlot.

As a reference for tree identification, I recommend *Trees of New York State: Native and Naturalized* by Dr. Donald J. Leopold and published through Syracuse University Press. This book is of coffee-table quality and design. It provides outstanding technical accuracy, high-quality useful pictures, and detailed line-drawings. Anyone interested in trees will enjoy this book.

Back to red and sugar maple. The fruits of all the maples are the "helicopters" better known as paired, winged samaras. The fruit type samara is also shared with the ash family. Key fruit differences are that red maple fruits develop and drop in the spring while sugar maple fruits develop through the summer and develop in the fall. The angle between the paired samaras on red maple is often V-shaped, whereas the angle for sugar maple is often U-shaped and the outer margin of the sugar maple samaras are approximately parallel.

The fall and winter twigs of red maple are typically reddish in color and the ends of the buds are rounded or blunt. For sugar maple, the twigs are brownish and the buds are sharp pointed. Twig color will change some from summer to fall, but the blunt or sharp feature is reliable during this time. Both have buds



Sugar Maple foliage




Red Maple foliage

with overlapping scales, although red maple often has only three or four pairs of scales compared with perhaps twice as many on sugar maple.

The bark on large (greater than 14" diameter) red maple is typically scaly with plates that are loosely attached to the tree, as compared to sugar maple. The red maple bark plates will flake away in small pieces as you rub your hand across the trunk. The bark of large sugar maple is also scaly, but the bark is tightly held and doesn't fall away as you rub the trunk. Small sugar maple stems will start to roughen sooner than similarly sized red maple, especially for those growing in shaded conditions. A notable feature of red maple is that as the bark on medium sized trees starts to transition from smooth to rough, sections of the trunk will form concentric rings that resemble a bull's-eye target. This doesn't happen on every red maple, but is a useful feature when it appears.

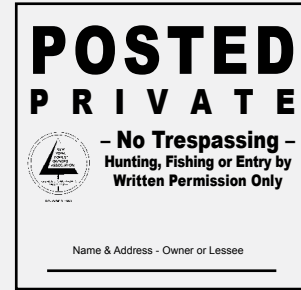
Sugar maple is more site demanding than red maple and typically only thrives on relatively fertile soil with adequate but not excessive moisture. Red maple can grow on good sites, but may also be found on slightly drier or slightly wetter sites than sugar maple.

The leaves of red and sugar maple are readily differentiated by features of the margin and the sinus between the points. Red maple has a toothed margin and the notch of the sinus, between the points, is V-notched. Sugar maple has a smooth, untoothed margin, and the notch of the sinus is U-shaped. Note that the sinus shape rather matches the connection of the paired samaras. The classic fall color of red maple is red and for sugar maple a combination of amber or orange.

Both red and sugar maple make delicious maple syrup. The most abundant sap and highest sugar content comes from vigorous trees with broad and deep crowns. Trees with broad and deep crowns grow faster and thus heal the tap holes sooner. Red maple buds will become active sooner than sugar maple buds in the spring, with the activation triggering a chemical reaction in the sap that produces an off-flavor. If you tap both, check the red maple sap frequently for off flavors that will concentrate in the syrup. 

Peter Smallidge, NYS Extension Forester and Director, Arnot Teaching and Research Forest. Cornell University Cooperative Extension, 116 Fernow Hall, Ithaca, NY 14853. pjs23@cornell.edu

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* Minimum order is 50 signs with additional signs in increments of 25.

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New York State Tree Farm News

ERIN O'NEILL



Parcelization and how we can manage a smaller woodlot in the Tree Farm Program

Parcelization refers to the change in ownership patterns to lots with smaller acres. Sixty-one percent of landowners nationwide own 10 acres or less.

Landowners may be eligible for the Tree Farm Program if you own 10 acres or more. This means that on a nationwide scale, 49% of landowners may be eligible for Tree Farm depending on the landscape of their lot. In New York, 62% of the landscape is forested, equaling a total of 15.9 million acres of timberlands and over 500,000 private landowners. Of all these forestlands, only



6.5% are enrolled in the NY Tree Farm Program.

There are many ways a smaller woodlot can meet the criteria for Tree Farm certification. Many small woodlots already meet sustainability and environmental criteria. Harvesting is usually the issue landowners of fewer acres have. Working with a knowledgeable forester can help you make decisions about how to manage for firewood or quality timber and how to improve aesthetics, create edges and brush piles for wildlife and to prevent erosion and damage to remaining trees. Harvesting can be used as a tool to accomplish a landowner's desires, and for ecosystem services like water quality. For small woodlots, harvest operators must be open-minded and innovative. The woodlot can be productive in markets from firewood to quality timber.

The harvest requirements for the Tree Farm Program are minimal. You are simply required to have a harvest program that involves cutting trees. This can be anything from providing the landowner with a couple of cords of firewood to a profitable commercial operation. The premise of this is simple. A stand of trees cannot be sustainable without harvesting trees. The idea of sustainable management is that the forest provides for the landowner and future generations. If you simply let the trees die, while it is the natural order of things, nothing has been provided from the land. Good management will accelerate the natural progression of the forest to allow the landowner to reap the benefits in the present and his other offspring to reap the benefits in the future.

So, with all this in mind, if you would like to learn more about the NY Tree Farm Program remember, a Tree Farm representative is only a phone call (1-800-836-3566) or e-mail (nytreefarm@hotmail.com) away. 🌲

Erin O'Neill is the Chair of the NYS Tree Farm Committee.



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Kid's Corner

REBECCA HARGRAVE



Bob Manning submitted this photo stating, "This picture of my grandson Zane was taken at Garnet Lake. While it is not in my woodlot, it is nearby. Someday I expect that he, along with my three other grandchildren, will own my woodlot." Bob's 230-acre woodlot is located on Oven Mountain in the town of Johnsbury, Warren Co. (Skiers at Gore Mountain look down on it) It is a Tree Farm and FSC certified in the RCPA program. He has owned it since 2004.

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!

How big is that tree?

Some trees grow to be very large, over 100 feet tall, while others stay small, only 15 or 20 feet tall. And, some can have trunks over 4 feet wide! How big a tree gets depends on many factors: sunlight, water, nutrients, how closely it is to its neighbors, and how healthy it is. Many forests have trees of different sizes mixed together. It is often thought that the smaller trees are younger, while in fact many of the smaller trees just couldn't compete for sunlight, water and nutrients as well as their neighbors, and they never grew very big.

We can measure how big trees are using a simple tool called a tree scale stick. It can be used to measure both height and diameter of the tree. Knowing how large a tree is can be important for harvesting the wood, tapping it for maple syrup, or for determining when it will produce seeds for wildlife.

You can make your own tree scale stick to measure the trees in your woods. You'll need to go to the 4-H Forestry Invitational web page at <http://www.aces.edu/n4hfi/page76.html>, where you can download a copy of the tree scale stick and instructions on its

use. You will need a yard stick, some glue and a printout of the scale stick and you'll have your own tool very similar to the one professionals use.

Follow the directions at the web site on how to measure both the height and the diameter of a tree. Once you figure that out, you can calculate the volume of the tree using the chart on the face of the stick. Tree volume is measured in board feet or 12"x12"x1", which is a little different than what you're used to; think of it in terms of how you buy pieces of lumber at the store. Then take your scale stick out into the woods and see how you do!



4-H members measuring the height of trees at the State 4-H Forestry Weekend

Activities:

- Which of your trees is the tallest?
- Which of your trees has the largest diameter?
- Which of your trees has the largest volume in board feet?
- The average American uses 84 rolls of toilet paper per year, which is equal to 14 board feet. Can you find a tree that is 14 board feet?
- In total we use 960 board feet of wood per year, how many trees do you need to equal 960 board feet? ▲

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

BARRED OWL (*STRIX VARIA*)



The barred owl is a large bird, up to 20 inches long, with a wingspan of 44 inches. It is gray-brown in color, with whitish streaks on the back and head, brown horizontal bars on its white chest, and vertical bars on its belly. This owl has a round face without ear tufts, and a whitish facial disk with dark concentric rings around brown eyes. Males and females look similar, but females can weigh about one third more than males.

“Who cooks for you, who cooks for you all?” This is the familiar call of the barred owl defending its territory or attracting a mate. If you live in or near a heavily wooded area with mature forest, particularly if there is also a stream or other body of water nearby, this sound is probably familiar. Barred owls are the most vocal of our owls, and most often are heard calling early at night and at dawn. They call year-round, but courtship activities begin in February and breeding takes place primarily in March and April. Nesting in cavities or abandoned hawk, squirrel, or crow nests, the female sits on a nest of 1-5 eggs for 28 to 33 days. During this time, the male brings food to her. Once the eggs have hatched, both parents care for the fledglings for at least 4 months. Barred owls mate for life, reuse their nest site for many years, and maintain territories from 200 – 400 acres in size.

Barred owls are strongly territorial and remain in their territories for most,

if not all, of the year. However, in times when food is scarce, these birds have been known to wander in search of prey. Barred owls are opportunistic predators, eating small mammals and rabbits, birds up to the size of grouse, amphibians, reptiles, and invertebrates, including crayfish. They sit and wait on an elevated perch, scanning the area for prey, then swoop down silently and grasp their prey with their talons. An owl’s stomach absorbs the nutritious parts of its prey and regurgitates the indigestible matter (hair, feathers, bones, claws, insect chitin) as round pellets about seven hours later. These owl “pellets” can be found on the ground under roosts, and dissecting these pellets is a fun way to learn about an owl’s diet.

Barred owls prefer large, unfragmented blocks of forest. They are most often associated with mature and old growth forests of mixed hardwoods and conifers due to a greater availability of potential nest sites. In addition,

mature forests have a lower density of branches in the lower levels of the forest, which may make hunting easier. A closed canopy also provides protection from the elements and from mobbing by other birds.

If you are a landowner hoping to encourage or maintain barred owls on your property, characteristics to pay close attention to are the size (number of acres) of forest, the age or maturity of the forest, and the number of large diameter snags or cavity trees available for nesting. Barred owls are seldom present in areas with tens of acres of forest, but are common in forests that are hundreds or thousands of acres in size. Therefore, if you live in a region with small patches of forest, it is unlikely that you will be able to attract barred owls to your land. However, in heavily forested regions, you can encourage barred owls by maintaining mature forest stands with two or more trees per acre 20 inches in diameter or larger to allow for the development

NYFOA SAFETY TIP

Working In Cold Conditions

Very cold temperatures, like very hot ones, can be hazardous to your health—even deadly. Proper dress and some sensible practices can prevent a lot of the problems associated with cold.

General Hazards:

The most common hazard in the cold is frostbite. Your body doesn't get enough heat and the body tissues freeze. Body parts most often affected by frostbite are the nose, ears, cheeks, fingers, and toes.

In very bad cases, frostbite can cause permanent tissue damage and loss of movement in the affected body parts. In the worst cases, you could become unconscious and stop breathing or suffer heart failure.

The other cold hazard is hypothermia which occurs when you're exposed to cold so long that your body temperature gets dangerously low. Like frostbite, the worst case results are unconsciousness and death.

With both hazards, you're more at risk if you're *older, overweight, or have allergies or poor circulation*. Other factors that

raise the risk are smoking, drinking, and taking medications such as sedatives.

Protection Against Hazards:


The best way to deal with cold problems is to prevent them in the first place. The most sensible approach is to limit exposure to cold, especially if it's windy or humid.

If you know you're going to be in cold conditions, *don't bathe, smoke, or drink alcohol* just before going out.

- Dress for the conditions in layers of loose, dry clothes. The most effective mix is cotton or wool underneath, with something waterproof on top.
- Change into dry clothes immediately if you do get wet.
- Be sure to cover your hands, feet, face, and head. A hat is critical because you can lose up to 40 percent of your body heat if your head isn't covered.
- Keep moving when you're in the cold.
- Take regular breaks in warm areas—and go where it's warm any time you start to feel very cold or numb. *Drink something warm, as long as it doesn't contain alcohol or caffeine.*

Safety tip provided by Ed Wright, President, W. J. Cox Associates, Inc.

of cavity trees or snags (dead trees) suitable for nesting. You may also help create a snag or two by girdling a couple of large, live trees. Leaving dead wood on the ground can also enhance habitat by providing cover for amphibians, reptiles, and small mammals that in turn provide food for barred owls. By focusing on just a few habitat elements, you can continue to enjoy the characteristic sounds of the big woods.

To hear the call of the barred owl, visit http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AboutBirds/BirdGuide/Barred_Owl.html. 

Kristi Sullivan coordinates the Conservation Education Program at Cornell's Arnot Forest. 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.arnotconservation.info



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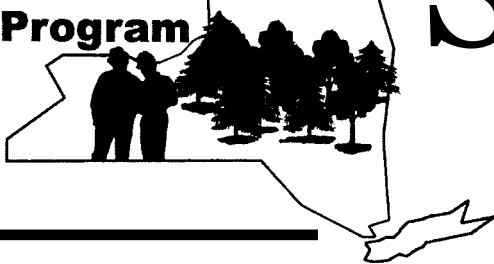
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NY Master Forest Owner/COVERTS Program



Stories from the Woods

GLEND A GEPHART

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.

Master Forest Owners are the appropriate banner-carriers for the implementation of New York's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy.

They can be in the forefront of spreading the word about the plan and the proposed accompanying State Wildlife Grants that may be able to help property owners and public and private organizations and agencies with projects for fish and wildlife species in greatest need of conservation.

MFOs are encouraged to study the habitats of landowners' forests in their site visits and consider what species would most benefit from that habitat. It is hoped that information shared will serve as a springboard for potential projects for property owners to undertake on their own or in partnership with appropriate organizations or agencies.

"We need to get the word out. I think the MFOs can do that and will do that," said MFO Dick Patton, who lives near Sherman in Chautauqua County; and has been an MFO since 1999.

"MFOs are interested in everything that's going on in the woods – the places where the animals are and not the people."

Patton searches for sustainable habitats on his site visits, but he doesn't have to look beyond his own property. He has an ideal site for ruffed grouse, which are listed on the state's list of bird species in greatest conservation need.

A line of small brush is located next to a field, often hayed, and behind it are mature woods, Patton said.

"It's absolutely wonderful transitional land for that kind of wildlife," Patton

said, and he has, indeed, seen grouse in the area.

Patton said he could improve the habitat for grouse with aspen trees, which the birds like for nesting and food. This is the type of information MFOs have access to, and it's the type of action desired under the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy.

Michael Birmingham, an MFO and an MFO regional coordinator who lives in Kinderhook in Columbia County, said he often responds to property owners' wildlife questions with information from the Internet, DEC or Cornell Cooperative Extension. As a now-retired, 37-year employee of the DEC, Birmingham already has an extensive knowledge about the state's

wildlife, especially plants. But he said the same is true for other MFOs.

"Many of them have very broad interests," Birmingham said, which will be valuable as the MFOs make site visits and discuss wildlife issues. He likes the idea of NYFOA and the DEC working together on the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy and "getting some emphasis on wildlife out of this."

Birmingham noted that MFOs across the state report about 150 site visits each year, though he believes the number is "way underestimated."

The DEC's Division of Fish, Wildlife and Marine Resources wrote the state's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy in September 2005, and it



Master Forest Owner volunteers gather in September for a refresher workshop at MFO Ron Pedersen's tree farm near Deposit. One of the topics of discussion was the important role that MFOs are playing in sharing information with forest owners about opportunities for implementing the state's new Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy on their properties.

was approved by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in April 2006.

With that approval, New York will continue to receive State Wildlife Grants, first offered by the Fish & Wildlife Service in 2001. Funds for projects are apportioned to each state based on a formula. More than \$17 million has been awarded to New York projects since the start, according to the DEC.

Projects are expected to be aimed at securing the state's wildlife populations and their key habitats, thereby preventing future listings of species as threatened or endangered.

"The first projects to receive funding are diverse, covering all animal groups, all areas of the state, and ranging in scale from ecosystems to subspecies. The projects vary in length from one to five years, and include baseline surveys, research, conservation planning, and habitat protection," according to the DEC. The Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy is organized by the state's 10 major watersheds. The plan analyzes the species in each watershed as well as each area's critical habitats.

Two examples of projects in New York: measures to protect migratory birds and bats from flying into wind energy developments and other tall structures and a three-year survey using hundreds of volunteers to catalog all the dragonfly species in the state.

Patton, Birmingham and other MFOs are finding that the property owners with whom they meet are very interested in wildlife habitat issues. Often, they said, those issues are the owner's primary concerns.

"Everyone isn't just interested in trees. Some people want to attract wildlife," Patton said.

The shift in focus, he said, is frequently coming from new owners of forestlands. These are folks who have often moved from urban areas, or who still live there, who are not expecting to make a living from their woods.

Managing forests and improving habitat are definitely compatible, Patton said.

"That's what I do every day. I make my woods better, and I'm also building brush piles and leaving un-managed ravines for the wildlife," he said.

The Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy stresses this compatibility: "Active management of vegetative succession is needed. Mature and early successional forest habitats may suffer because of negative public perceptions related to timber cutting. The result is large, homogenous forest tracts with lower structural, vegetative, and species diversity than would be encountered in forests with both natural disturbances (e.g., fire, wind throws)

continued on page 18

Folks Helping Wildlife

Joe and Betsy Urban moved to Italy Valley Road in Yates County 14 months ago. A small, manmade, spring-fed pond on the 7.5-acre property caught their attention. This would be a great little swimming hole, a place to cool off on hot summer days.

"But then we started to really observe it," Betsy said. "I noticed we had baby fish and a lot of frogs. I discovered tons of life in there. It started to become more and more their water space.

"What really clinched the deal was when the snapping turtle moved in."

The snapping turtle, along with the painted turtle, is common across New York, but the Urbans' reaction to their experiences shows how property owners can take easy steps – or, as with the Urbans now, no steps – to encourage wildlife. It's a response that is especially important for addressing the needs of wildlife species in greatest need of conservation.

In Sherburne in Chenango County John Karoll Sr. is thinking about encouraging wildlife by building a pond on his 55 acres, which he has owned for 15 years, but has lived on only for the last seven.

Like the Urbans, he knows he wants to improve conditions for wildlife on the property. He has put in a food plot for turkeys and deer, and he's thrilled to see ferns and raspberries returning. Deer are hanging out in the 40 pines he planted as a windbreak, and other plantings include oak, hemlock and cherry.

"I like the wildlife. I enjoy it, and my children do, too. It calms me down," Karoll said.

He has been working with MFO Jerry Michael. The Urbans have met with MFO Dale Schaefer.

Kathy Joseph of the town of Bristol in Ontario County has also worked with Schaeffer. She has lived on her five-plus acres for about two years.

"We've tried to keep the environment as natural as possible," she said. "We're just not being destructive."

Hérons, woodpeckers and hummingbirds are common sights on Joseph's property. Joseph said she wants to learn more about how to keep her "little forest" healthy and find a balance that serves her goals and the needs of the wildlife she is living side-by-side with. She uses words such as "respect" and "honor."

"We do try to be mindful of the wildlife," she said.

Betsy Urban said that appreciating the wildlife around her and wanting to improve their property came with time.

"The longer we've been here, it's become more of a focus for us," she said.

Like the pond they have now left alone, the Urbans are leaving dead trees for raptors' use. They are learning how not to impact the wetlands on their property and which trees to harvest and which to plant.

"We knew nothing about woods. We were astounded by what we've learned from Dale. He gave us so much of his time. He was so enthusiastic," Urban said.



Sponsors of the MFO Program include: The Robert H. Wentorf, Jr. Foundation, NY Forest Owners Association, USDA Renewable Resources Extension Program, Cornell Cooperative Extension, NYS-DEC Div. of Lands & Forests, and private donors.

Timber Theft and How to Prevent It

HUGH CANHAM AND RONALD PEDERSEN

Property Boundaries are a Landowner Responsibility

The failure of landowners to have property boundaries clearly marked invites disaster. Timber thieves frequently explain away transgressions by saying they did not see the boundary markings or were misinformed about ownership of the trees in question. Consequently, a theft likely will be handled as a civil matter, whereas the thief should be prosecuted under criminal laws.

Clearly marked property boundaries should be the number one management activity for rural landowners. Well maintained boundary markings are particularly important if you or your neighbor do not live on the property, since absentee owners can be an easy target for thieves.

Your property line is also your neighbor's property line. You and adjoining owners need to resolve jointly any questions about the boundary and it's wise to stay in touch about each other's plans. In addition to boundaries, obvious access points such as previous log landings or skid trails should be marked or blocked.

Sometimes the most prudent approach to property line uncertainties is to hire a surveyor. In New York, surveyors are licensed professionals who have the skills and training to "translate" often archaic deed language into on-the-ground mark-

ings. In selecting a surveyor, explain exactly what you need and understand the range of services that could be provided and their costs. For example, marking a line through the woods will entail much more of a surveyor's time than if only the corners are marked. A surveyor who has worked in the immediate area may lower costs, and it is not uncommon for adjoining owners to share costs.


The surveyor's mark (or "monument") is often a half-inch metal rod driven in the ground until about six inches shows, with a plastic cap identifying the surveyor who set the monument. Obviously, this exact point is important to maintain and it is wise to more deliberately mark it so it can be easily found as years of leaves, weeds and undergrowth do their best to hide it.

With boundaries located and agreed with adjoining owners, the lines must be clearly identified so that any reasonably alert person will notice the markings. Painting trees is one way to identify the boundary and some folks use three horizontal stripes about head high (well above usual snow depths) but any distinctive painting can serve as well. Paint must be periodically redone, and special care is needed on color and pattern if timber near the boundary is paint-marked for harvesting. Various boundary signs are available, such as those with owner

contact information for those seeking permission to hunt. Under the Environmental Conservation Law, properties may be posted and the familiar "Posted" signs are good visual markers. In addition, the law provides minimum spacing and maintenance provisions which can be helpful as a guide for other signs or markings.

Some owners clear a trail along property lines in wooded areas as a convenience in checking their property, and, to provide somewhat of a break in the trees to further indicate the change in property ownership. One instance is known wherein five strands of smooth fence wire were constructed along a boundary line on a steep hillside in dense forest. Quite a task, but there is no doubt about the property line!

Stone walls and old cattle fences may help identify and mark a boundary line, but beware. Our ancestors often put fences and walls where they were needed to keep the cows or sheep out or in. Many old fences are seen to have zig-zagged and wandered in search of trees to hang on, and numerous stone walls are seen internal to properties. If the walls or fences are indeed on the property line, when signed, they make an excellent demarcation.

Responsible forest ownership recognizes boundary line maintenance as an ongoing management activity. It should not be left to chance, it should not be left to the neighbor. If you need help, speak with your neighbors, call your forester, ask DEC, or check out a surveyor. Good boundaries and good neighbors foster safe and rewarding forest ownership. Your trees are your responsibility. 

Hugh Canham is a retired professor from SUNY ESF and a member of the CNY chapter of NYFOA. Ron Pedersen is a past President of NYFOA and is a member of the CD chapter of NYFOA.

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NEWS & NOTES

New Deer Disease in NYS.

Pennsylvania and NY State are home to nearly 3 million white-tailed deer. White-tailed deer are a valued natural resource, but possess a tremendous ability to reproduce to high population levels, which can be conducive to the transmission of diseases that can be detrimental to their populations and of concern to human health and well-being. We must continue to monitor deer numbers and attempt to maintain their populations at acceptable levels.

Epizootic Hemorrhagic Disease (EHD). This is an infectious viral disease in deer, carried and transmitted by biting midges or no-see-ums. The disease is of no health risk to humans and occurs very rarely in domestic animals. The disease was first documented in the northeast in 1955 in NJ, and is a “native” and fairly common disease in the southeastern US. The first diagnosed cases were seen in PA in 1996, 2002 and 2007. NY’s first confirmed cases occurred in the fall of 2007. About 120 infected animals were found in Albany and Rensselaer counties and two in Niagara County. Outbreaks of the disease tend to be sporadic and more common and severe at the end of long, hot summers. The disease ends for that season with the first hard frost that kills the midges. Because the disease is rare in the northeast, deer have not built up immunity and virtually all infected deer die within 1-3 days of appearance of symptoms. Clinical signs include:

- hemorrhaging, with formation of blood clots and damage to blood vessels
- swelling of eyelids, tongue, and lips
- deer appear feverish and stay close to water sources
- respiratory distress, with white and red foamy fluid flowing from the mouth and nose.

For more information go to: <http://www.uga.edu/scwds/HD.pdf>

To report suspected cases contact:



Symptoms of epizootic hemorrhagic disease in deer include swelling, bleeding and ulceration at eyelids, tongue and lips.

The DEC Wildlife Pathology Unit, Delmar, NY phone: 518-478-3032. To date, no deer have been found with the disease in 2008.

—Gary Goff, Senior Extension Associate, Cornell University; Rich Taber, Forestry Initiatives Program, Broome-Chenango Cooperative Extension

Oak Wilt – A new threat to forest and landscape trees in New York

Thanks to keen observations by several homeowners in Schenectady County, New York and prompt action by Cornell Cooperative Extension educator Chris Logue, plant pathologists at Cornell recently confirmed for the first time that oak wilt—a lethal disease of red oaks in the upper Midwest and mid-Atlantic states and Texas—is now present in New York State. So far, oak wilt is only known to occur in the state in an area equal to about three city blocks in Scotia. However, as word of the discovery spreads and more people learn to identify symptoms of the disease, Cornell Plant Disease Diagnostic Laboratory staff expect to process more samples from various localities elsewhere and, from them, to get a better picture of just how widespread the disease is.

In the meantime, here is a brief synopsis of what scientists have learned about oak wilt since the disease was first identified by forest pathologists in Wisconsin in 1944.

What is this disease?

Oak wilt is caused by a fungus – *Ceratocystis fagacearum*. Scientists don’t know for sure where the fungus came from; it may have been introduced to North America from some other part of the world or it may have evolved as a variant of some closely related endemic fungus growing on another plant. *C. fagacearum* grows in the water-conducting vessels of host trees and as it does, it causes the vessels to produce gummy plugs that prevent water transport, eventually causing tree death. The mode of action of the fungus in oaks is similar to that of the Dutch elm disease pathogen in elms, but there are few other similarities between the two organisms and their hosts.

What species of trees are likely to be affected?

All species of oaks native to New York State are susceptible to oak wilt to some degree, but those in the red oak “group” (e.g. northern red oak, black oak, pin oak) are much more likely to die soon after they contract the disease. Movement of the pathogen in these trees is so rapid that it may kill trees in as little as three weeks. White and bur oaks are more resistant to the disease (but they are not immune) and may survive for many years after infection, losing just a few branches each year. However, each individual tree reacts differently from others in the same species and it is difficult, if not impossible, to predict how long an infected bur or white oak will live.

To download the complete article on Oak Wilt go to: <http://blogs.cce.cornell.edu/community-horticulture/files/2008/09/oak-wilt-announcement.doc>.

—George W. Hudler
Department of Plant Pathology and
Plant-Microbe Biology

A Decline Of Smooth Bark Hickories

DOUGLAS C. ALLEN, JOHN J. GRAHAM AND KIM B. ADAMS

In recent years, both of my co-authors have examined mixed species woodlots where bitternut hickory experienced substantial mortality or showed signs of a typical decline (Fig. 1). John, a state forester working out of the Cortland Office of the NYDEC, has noticed this disease in many central and western counties in New York State.

There are several frustrating aspects about such a problem; first, is the difficulty in identifying the agent or agents that predisposed these trees to the secondary organisms that lead to their death and, secondly, once the malady is understood it is a very frustrating exercise to develop reasonable tactics to manage the problem.

Many forest owners have woodlots that consist of mixed hardwoods, including various species of hickory. This is the first of two articles about hickory decline. Part I describes the symptoms, presents a brief history of

the disease's occurrence and provides information about one of the principle agents associated with the problem. In Part II, we will discuss current research that is attempting to determine if micro-organisms are also involved. Additionally, we will

briefly discuss other insects associated with the deterioration of diseased hickory.

Decline by definition results from a series of events that result in the slow (over a period of a few years) demise of a tree, beginning with the deterioration of the crown. Initially foliage discolors and wilts. This is followed by twig death and premature leaf drop, until eventually the crown begins to die from the top down (crown dieback) (Fig. 1). The time frame and diverse sequence of agents involved separates the disease we call a decline from relatively fast acting mortality that occurs in a year or two.

Hickory bark beetle plays a key role in both the rapid mortality of hickory under some circumstances and the more slowly acting problem we call a decline. This insect, considered the most serious insect pest of hickory, is an aggressive "secondary" agent that flourishes in a host tree after the latter has been stressed by some other event. Healthy trees, except for scattered branches in the crown that are dying as a consequence of natural pruning, are generally resistant to the bark beetle. Stress from such things as drought, heavy defoliation, excessive stand density and other disturbances, however, often have been associated with infestations of hickory bark beetle and eventual death of the host.

Observations made by entomologists early in the last century repeatedly refer to drought (or



Figure 1. Typical appearance of hickories in decline.

moisture stress associated with land form, thin soils or other site conditions) and excessive grazing in wood lots as two predisposing events that were thought to trigger a rapid build up of this bark beetle.

The occurrence of hickory decline is not new nor is its' distribution restricted to New York State. The disease has been noted throughout the eastern United States, generally most everywhere within the range of smooth-barked hickories. The New York State Entomologist, Ephraim Porter Felt, in his annual report of 1910 noted the loss "of thousands of trees in central New

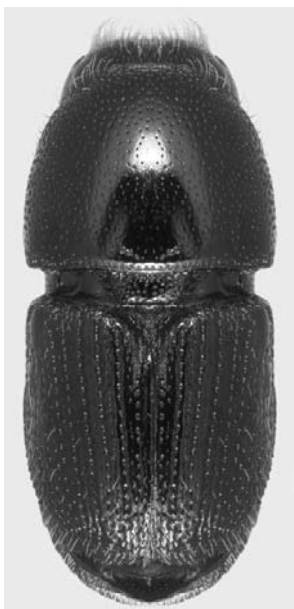


Figure 2. Top view of a hickory bark beetle.

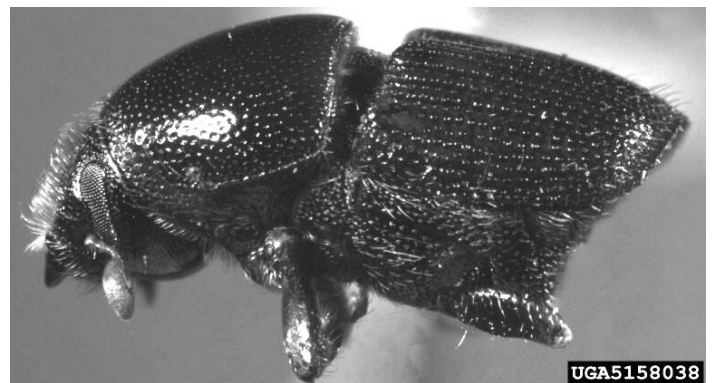


Figure 3. Side view of a male hickory bark beetle. Note one of the posterior spines projecting from the lower margin of the abdomen.



Figure 4. Typical gallery pattern of hickory bark beetle. This is etched on the surface of the sapwood in smooth barked hickories. The short vertical gallery in the center is the egg or brood gallery; the fan-shaped collection of larval galleries radiate from both sides of this.

brood (egg) gallery (Fig. 4) approximately 1.0 to 2.5" long and parallel to the grain of the wood. In thick barked hickories like shagbark, the brood gallery may reside entirely in the bark, while the brood gallery in thin barked species, such as bitternut, is etched on the surface of the sapwood. Eggs are deposited on both sides of the brood gallery. Initially larvae feed across the grain away from and perpendicular to the brood gallery, but eventually they turn and feed parallel with the grain. The result is a very characteristic, fan-shaped gallery pattern (Fig. 4). Larvae over-winter in the bark and change to adults in the spring. There is one generation a year in New York State and two in the deep south.

York in recent years" associated with an outbreak of hickory bark beetle. In 1912, Hopkins, who at that time was in charge of forest insect investigations for the U.S.D.A. Bureau of Entomology and was an early leader in forest entomology, published one of the first papers on the biology of this bark beetle and its association with hickory mortality. Two professors at the College of Forestry in Syracuse reported on the occurrence of hickory decline, and established its association with the hickory bark beetle, in central NY as early as 1916.


The beetle is 0.1 to 0.2" long and dark reddish-brown to almost black (Figs. 2 and 3). Males are readily identified by the presence of four stout spines (Fig. 3) on the end of the abdomen (posterior end of the insect). The female lacks these spines, but it is about the same size and color as the male.

Adults emerge through small round holes in the bark (0.1" dia.) in early summer. They soon mate and eventually females penetrate the bark of the same or another weakened hickory. Once beneath the bark they excavate a

ally they turn and feed parallel with the grain. The result is a very characteristic, fan-shaped gallery pattern (Fig. 4). Larvae over-winter in the bark and change to adults in the spring. There is one generation a year in New York State and two in the deep south.

The foliage of heavily infested trees or branches turns yellow by early summer, becomes reddish with time and quickly fades and dies. When the tree shows symptoms of crown dieback and discolored foliage, it becomes susceptible to another group of inner-bark-feeding insects called long-horned beetles.

Management of the bark beetle and/or the agent that predisposes a stand of hickory to attack is difficult. As with most bark beetle problems, keeping individuals or stands of the host vigorous is key. Infestations often appear in a relatively short time. As soon as hickories exhibit discolored foliage and crown dieback, they should be salvaged if the forest owner is interested in recovering some economic value. When trees deteriorate to the point where wood-borers and fungi invade the wood, the latter may lose value very quickly. Also, removing trees early

(i.e., prior to beetle emergence) will help to reduce the bark beetle population in an infested stand. Encouraging hickory on moist sites and removing it from stands that are likely to be moisture-stressed during dry periods may reduce the likelihood of this disease. Some of the older literature indicates that hickory decline often appeared in stands that were heavily grazed by cattle. Grazing damages root systems, compacts soil and removes vegetation that is thought to help keep soil moist and cool. This is not unlike a similar problem associated with heaving grazing in sugarbushes. 

This is the 95th in the series of articles contributed by Dr. Allen, Professor of Entomology at SUNY-ESF. John Graham is a forester with the NYS DEC in Cortland, and Kim Adams is an Instructional Support and Extension Specialist at SUNY ESF. It is possible to download this collection from the NYS DEC Web page at: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/31301.html>.

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Stories from the Woods (continued)

and active management (variable cutting regimes). In truth, sustainable forestry practices, when implemented in accordance with NYS silvicultural best management practices, improve forest health and resilience."


Extensive information about the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy is available from the DEC and its website, <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/30483.html>. The NYFOA website soon will have information, as well, including details on future opportunities for landowners related to the State Wildlife Grant program.

The NYFOA website information is among the steps the Association is taking under a contract awarded by the DEC to NYFOA through a State Wildlife Grant to help publicize Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy implementation needs to forest owners.

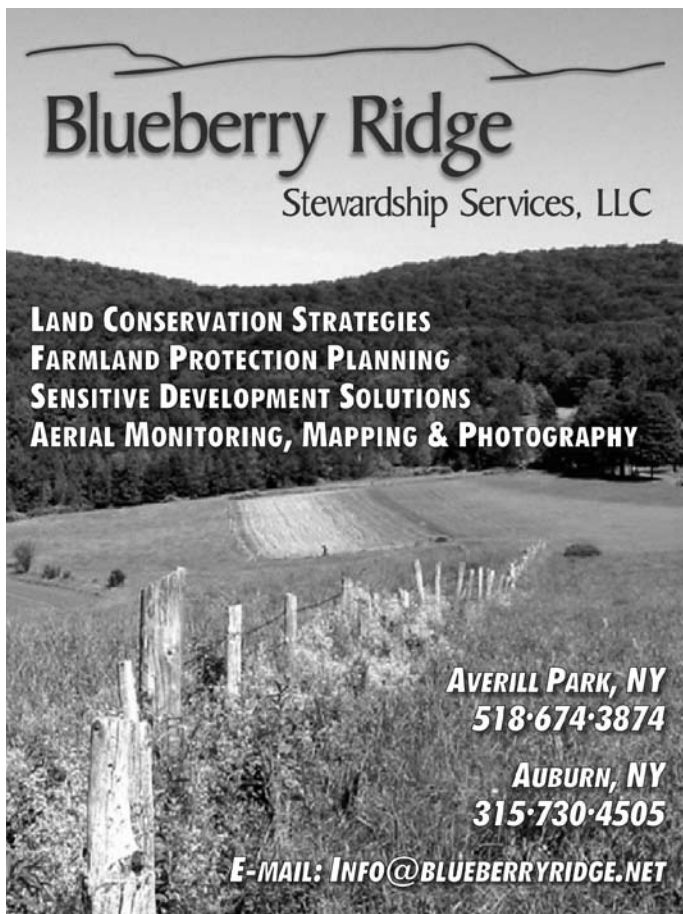
With 72 percent of New York's forest land in private ownership, NYFOA's role is more than appropriate.

Support for the MFO training and visits are part of NYFOA's involvement. NYFOA will also be creating a database and map of privately owned critical habitats based on Geographic Information Systems (GIS) analysis. This information and map will be an important basis for developing future projects to further the Conservation Strategy missions. Gary Goff, of Cornell University's Renewable Resources Extension Program and director of the MFO program in NYS is involved with getting information out to the MFOs. The 4-day initial training all MFO volunteers receive emphasizes wildlife habitat needs and how sawtimber and wildlife management can be compatible. Last year, thanks to a grant from the NYS Biodiversity Research Institute, attending volunteers learned of the unique biodiversity in NYS's various regions and how to protect critical habitat. This year each regional refresher workshop similarly contained a presentation about NY's Compre-

hensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy. According to Goff, "We will continue to update the volunteers annually about program specifics that come out of DEC regarding the State Wildlife Grant Initiative."

Join NYFOA in helping improve habitats for New York's wildlife! Invite an MFO for a site visit to your forest land and learn what you can do. To contact the volunteer serving your area, check the MFO list at www.dnr.cornell.edu/ext/mfo/. 

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If you are interested in obtaining landowner information on sustainable forestry or have questions about Johnsonburg's efforts in the SFI program, feel free to call Dan Evans, Wood Procurement Manager, Johnsonburg Mill at (814) 965-6399.



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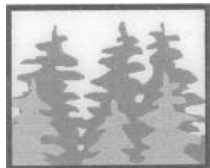
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Member Profile: *Tony Pingitore*

ALEXANDRA SILVA

Six years ago, Tony Pingitore was invited to the Christmas party of NYFOA's Allegheny Foothills Chapter and told to bring along his fiddle. Tony was asked to the holiday gathering by NYFOA members with whom he worked when donating forty bushels of his property's butternut crop to a fund-raiser. Though he had been a NYFOA sleeper member for six years, Tony quickly began networking at the party and promptly became active in the organization. Soon afterwards he was inspired to become a MFO (Master Forest Owner) volunteer.

Tony stills plays the fiddle and is regularly accompanied by his wife, Connie, who plays the piano and mountain dulcimer. Together, they perform with their church group, mainly at nursing homes located near their residence in Stockton, New York.

Aside from fiddle-playing, Tony also fashions walking sticks from trees on his property. Fellow NYFOA member, Dan Anderson, paints folk art onto the sticks, which are then donated to a range of organizations, including their respective churches, county fairs and NYFOA. The walking sticks, carved from black cherry, beech, and hard maple and honey-suckle shrubs, are used as prizes for fund-raising raffles.

Along with the trees used to make the walking sticks, the Pingitore property also grows aspen and wild-apple trees. The assortment of aspen, ash, hard maple and cherry trees that comprise the wooded area have naturally regenerated sixty years ago from pasture land. By the time the Pingitores purchased the first twelve acres of property in 1970, the area had already started to revert from

pasture to woods. Tony and Connie purchased another twenty-one acres of land as their second installment, and then another twelve acres for a total of forty-five acres.

There was originally an old farm house on the property, but the Pingitores decided to replace it with a rustic log cabin. Tony built a major portion of the cabin himself, with the help of some hired professionals. Trees from the property are used to warm the cabin, which derives all of its heat from a wood-burning stove.

Tony harvests the low value trees, mainly those competing with high-value or storm damaged trees, for firewood. Of the culled trees, Tony sells half of the wood and keeps the other half as his own use.

In cutting down the lower value trees for firewood, Tony practices crop tree management and TSI (Timber Stand Improvement) by selectively choosing trees to be used in future timber sales and cutting down the surrounding trees in order to promote growth. Tony's most recent timber sale netted an \$11,000 profit on thirty-three trees. While he harvested the trees himself, Tony relied on a DEC forester for guidance in the timber sale process.

Retired from thirty-one years as a tool and test-equipment design engineer for Moog Inc., Tony now spends much of his time walking around his property, scouring the grounds for future timber sales. With his gun in tow, Tony regularly strolls around the property, seemingly in pursuit of deer. In reality, Tony admits that he spends most of his time looking up at the trees, rather than focusing on the hunt.

While Tony may not always concentrate on hunting, he does encourage guests to hunt on the property or to fish in their man-made lake. The only activities not allowed are snowmobiling and ATV riding, as the noise is bothersome to wildlife and the soil is fragile.



Tony Pingitore with Max, the youngest of twelve grandchildren, canoeing on the Pingitore's man-made lake.

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Topping off a Timber Stand Improvement cut on the 45-acre Pingitore property.

Deer can always be found on the property and once in a while the resident fox can be seen just feet from the front porch. Of course, with the fox on the grounds, the Pingitores keep a watchful eye on their cat, Bob, who patrols the property with Tony. The local squirrels have already abandoned the area despite the plentitude

of butternut trees. Occasionally, the fox leaves presents for his neighbors, including half of a mink on Easter Sunday, and remnants of wild turkeys at other times.

At one point, a black bear visited the property. In the past, the Pingitores managed thirteen bee hives and would sell the honey they pro-



Tony and Max, age 5, sporting a few of the walking sticks that a fashioned from trees on the property.

duced, but the number of hives was significantly reduced after ten years. Eventually, the bear wiped out the last of their beehives and the Pingitores decided not to restart their apiary.

Without bee hives to manage, Tony is able to focus even more of his time on his forestry methods. One of the most important aspects of Tony's forestry methods is the aforementioned Timber Stand Improvement and not high grading. In order to ensure the growth of the more valuable trees, Tony removes less desirable trees so that sunlight hits the under-story, thereby enhancing natural regeneration. He also refrains from using herbicides or any other form of chemical treatment on his property. Tony does his best to share his knowledge about sustainable forestry during the informal woods walks that he gives to visitors, and visits to other's woodlots as an MFO.

Though Tony has yet to host a formal NYFOA woodwalk at his property, the NYFOA Allegheny Foothills Chapter Treasurer hopes to do so in the future. 🏠

Alexandra Silva is a Forest Resources Extension Program Assistant at Cornell University, Department of Natural Resources, Ithaca, NY 14853.



Tony and Max fishing together on the Pingitore property.

MAGAZINE DEADLINE

Materials submitted for the January/February 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. Articles, artwork and photos are invited and if requested, are returned after use.

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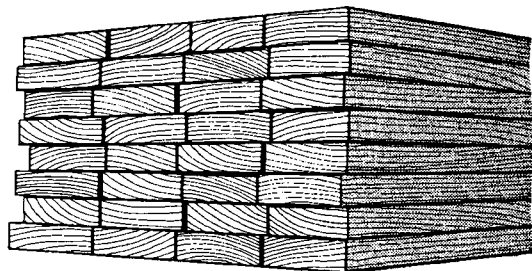
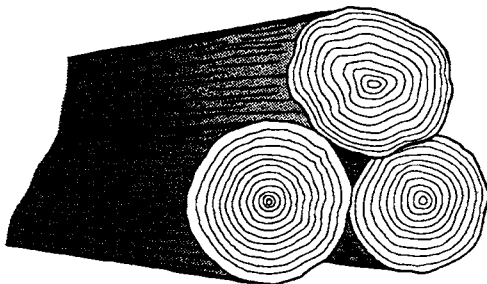
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