

The New York Forest Owner

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For people caring about New York's trees and forests

July/August 2013



Member Profile: Ed and Donna Welch

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Forest Owner**

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 51, NUMBER 4

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 mmalmshe@syr.edu. Articles, artwork and photos are invited and if requested, are returned after use. The deadline for submission for the September/October issue is August 1, 2013.

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.

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www.nyfoa.org

COVER: Ed Welch peeling a pine log for their new house. For member profile see page 21. Photo courtesy of Ed and Donna Welch.

From The President

Well, for the most part our 2013 Restore New York Woodlands initiative is history and represented broad involvement across the state. There are one or two additional sites that feel they would be in a better position to show regeneration efforts this fall which we're happy to support. Your RNYW team of **Kelly Smalldige**, **Jerry Michael**, and **Dave Williams** have been reviewing the results of this



May's efforts and an initial summary can be found in this issue of the *Forest Owner* along with a photo montage of the events.

They are also doing a "Lessons Learned" about the effort as a whole and seeking a better understanding of why some sites were a bigger draw than others and why some were particularly successful at recruiting new members, all in an effort to improve on the firm foundation of this year's events. Please continue to visit the RNYW section of our NYFOA website (www.nyfoa.org) to track how these ideas evolve.

Notes from the field: I was sure I was on top of things with my tree planting this year as last fall I had gone through all of my plots and noted how many trees had not survived in each of them. I confidently sent in my order to DEC Saratoga in February for trees to use as replacements. When they arrived in Rochester in early May I promptly loaded them into my car and drove the

100 miles to my farm, ready to start planting. However, it appears that I arrived too early.

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

Even though I had done the count, unfortunately I hadn't marked specifically which trees had died. Being on a north face, the first week in May was too early for the trees to have budded out enough to reliably see which ones had and hadn't made it. Thus I couldn't say which trees needed to be replaced. Reluctantly I packed the seedlings back in the car and drove them the 100 miles back to their temporary home in a dark and damp room in my basement to help them survive a little longer. Some years I wish I could collect the "frequent flier" miles that my seedlings end up getting. Eventually got the last of them in the ground in early June.

My dad had an expression which I've since come to learn is based on an old Dutch adage: "We get too fast old and too slow smart." On some days it just seems that the rate of divergence of these two is inexorably accelerating.

Yours in good forestry (persistence, anyway). 🌲

—Jim Minor
NYFOA President

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 helps the interested public 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.

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The NYFOA Scholarship Fund


JIM MINOR, PRESIDENT, NYFOA

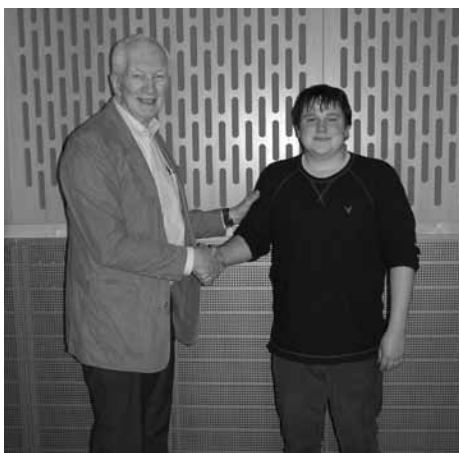
In 1996 the New York Forest Owners Association and the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (ESF) formally agreed to the establishment of a permanent endowment for forestry education and research purposes at the College. It is known as The NYFOA Endowment Fund. As stated in the agreement, "Grants and awards shall be assigned by the ESF Chair of the Faculty of Forestry, in consultation with the President of NYFOA."

This April, once again, I was privileged to attend this year's Scholarship Appreciation luncheon held at ESF's main campus in Syracuse, NY in the school's beautiful new Gateway building. I was seated at a table with fellow NYFOA board member and chairman of ESF's Forest and Natural Resources Management department, **David Newman**, along with **John Farnsworth** who's father, **C. Eugene Farnsworth**, was the eighth president of NYFOA. Mr. Farnsworth was representing the interests of another ESF award in his father's name. We were joined by **Jordon Weaknecht**, this year's NYFOA scholarship winner. Note, the NYFOA award is given to

the Junior Forestry major with the highest Grade Point Average so it's quite a distinction.

Mr. Weaknecht tells us, "I grew up in Kempton, Pennsylvania. It is located in the rolling hills of Southeastern Pennsylvania, nestled in the shadow of the Appalachian Mountains. I am a junior in the Forest Ecosystem Sciences major with a minor in Water Resource. I plan on pursuing a career managing aquatic ecosystems in forested areas or as a natural resource specialist in forested ecosystems. This summer I will be working as a Park Ranger at Blue Marsh Lake outside of the city of Reading, Pennsylvania managing the lake and trails in the park. Some of my hobbies include fishing, hiking, hunting, and going to live concerts."

The NYFOA Scholarship Fund is based on an endowment from which the interest is used to fund the individual scholarships, one per year. The amount is modest but could grow with additional monies supplied to the base endowment. Individual NYFOA members probably represent the greatest potential sources of support over the long run. Donations, in the form of memorials, honoraria and bequests, would be a very appropriate means of commemorating personal relationships through demonstrated support for the type of study vital to the needs of forest owners, present and future. Individuals wishing to make such a contribution should make their checks payable to ESF College Foundation and mail them directly to the Development Office, SUNY-ESF, One Forestry Drive, Syracuse, New York 13210. Please note that they are to be directed to the NYFOA Scholarship Fund. Gifts are deductible to the extent provided by law. 



Jim Minor congratulates Jordon Weaknecht.

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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

Utilizing firewood from an improvement harvest: decay resistance

Question, From Ken K.

I recently worked through my forester to harvest timber. As part of the harvest there was considerable top wood left behind. I want to extract firewood from the tops and other stems. Which species rot the fastest, so I can use those first?

Response:

An added benefit of forest harvesting is the potential for firewood. Access to your own firewood through sustainable cutting practices is one of the perks of good silviculture as described in the Restore New York Woodlands Initiative (www.nyfoa.org). If the harvest was an improvement cut, then then trees with defects or of undesirable species were removed to allow increased growing space for more desirable trees. If the harvest was a regeneration cut, then some defective but also perhaps some mature trees were removed; residual trees would be the best quality to ensure a seed source to regenerate the woods.

There are several factors to consider relative to your question about the decay resistance of wood and removal for firewood. The USDA Forest Products Laboratory rated woods based on their resistance to decay, under conditions

that favor decay. Because fungi are a key organism in the decay process, and fungi require moisture, reducing moisture in the stem will slow the rate of decay regardless of species. If branches or stems are not in contact with the ground, they will decay more slowly. However, decay resistance ratings are only attributable to heartwood. Heartwood is the dark wood located in the center of the stem of some but not all species

(e.g., aspen, willow, and basswood lack heartwood). Therefore, most young stems and branches would not have heartwood and the ratings for resistance to decay would not apply.

There are two sources that provide information directly related to the question of decay resistance. These links are provided in the "Resources" section, or in a blog on Decay Resistance in Trees at <http://CornellForestConnect.ning.com>

Most of the hardwoods common in our NY forests lack much decay resistance in the heartwood (Table 1). As noted previously, little if any decay resistance would be expected in sapwood or branches. However, decay requires moisture, so stems that can dry will rot more slowly than when wet.

It is worth noting that the original USDA publication references the difference in decay resistance between old-growth and second growth wood. Essentially all NY woodlands being harvested are second-growth, and thus would be rated at an equal or lower decay resistance than old-growth trees. The placement of white pine in the table is curious. In my personal experience I have not found white pine to be

Table 1. Comparative Decay Resistance of the Heartwood of Some Common Native Species. Reproduced from the USDA Forest Products Laboratory Research Note FPL-0153. 1967. Species marked with an "*" are especially resistant to decay as compared to others within their category.

Resistant or Very Resistant	Moderately Resistant	Slightly or Nonresistant
Baldcypress (old growth)	Baldcypress (second growth)	Alder
Catalpa	Douglas-fir	Ash
Cedars	Honeylocust*	Aspen
Cherry, black	Larch, western	Basswood
Chestnut	Oak, swamp-white	Beech
Cypress, Arizona	Pine, eastern white	Birch
Junipers	Pine, longleaf	Buckeye
Locust, black*	Pine, slash	Butternut
Mulberry, red*	Tamarack	Cottonwood
Oak (bur, chestnut, white)		Elm
Osage-orange*		Hackberry
Redwood		Hemlock
Sassafras		Hickory
Walnut, black		Magnolia
Yew, Pacific*		Maple
		Oak (the reds)
		Pine (except as noted)
		Poplar
		Spruce
		Willow
		Yellow-poplar

moderately resistant, and “local lore” would typically place hemlock as more resistant than white pine. The table is only a guide. It is also worth noting that the Oregon State College of Forestry publication referenced in the “Resources Section” concurs with this ranking for common NY hardwoods.

Based on these guides, and the relative uniformity of decay of sapwood and branch wood, it seems to make little difference which species you recover first for firewood. Alternatively, those sections of wood that have ground contact will rot sooner, so you might recover them sooner.

As a practical matter, a large harvest area or an intensive harvest will produce significant amounts of firewood potential. One forest owner described this type of situation as “drinking from a fire hose.” There are ecological benefits to leaving some wood on the forest floor. You might alternatively focus removal in patches, leaving other patches of wood to decay. Species such as birch, aspen, red maple, cherry (but see below for cherry) and ash have lower heat values than oaks, sugar maple, or hickory. If you sense you will not be able to fully utilize all the wood, or desire to enhance some of those ecological values, remove those with the highest heat value (and easiest to access). The other woody material can remain on the forest floor to serve as habitat for wildlife, offer a bit of browse protection to seedlings that might establish, and increase organic matter for the forest floor.

If the harvest was in the spring or early summer and included black cherry, you might want to extract the black cherry tops, or lop them to accelerate their drying or ground contact for decay. Spring harvested black cherry may support populations of the peach bark beetle as long as the wood is somewhat fresh. The beetles can infect residual black cherry and degrade sawlog quality. The beetle is less likely to use a stem that is dry or decayed. See the reference to the Doug Allen’s 1999 article in the NY Forest Owner.

Be careful with any equipment you use to move logs or firewood. Damage



Large diameter and bunched tops of harvested trees may serve to protect seedlings from deer browsing in some circumstances. Leaving some slash or woody debris on the ground is not harmful to the forest (see the note about cherry however), and provides a stable microenvironment that some wildlife prefer.



These tops of white ash provide an opportunity for collecting firewood for home use, or sale.

to the residual stems can prove costly and reduce future value. Also, reduce soil compaction by using dedicated trails and not traveling with equipment when soils are saturated. Soil compaction will damage roots and may result in subsequent crown dieback. Avoid driving across the slope as stumps and

ruts can change a tractor’s center of gravity and roll. A roll-over protection system (ROPS) is important to have on a tractor used in the woods.

Finally, chainsaw are useful tools, but can be dangerous. Anyone using a chainsaw should complete a chainsaw

continued on page 18

New York State Tree Farm News

ERIN O'NEILL



When I meet with Tree Farmers, whether it is for the first time or for a re-inspection, I talk about the importance of management plans. In fact, several of my columns in this magazine have been on this subject. It's always something I feel I can't

stress enough, having a plan for your property, a guiding document for you and your family, something to refer to and update and modify with each change that happens on your woodlot.

There are some things to keep in mind when you're looking thinking

about a management plan. It's important to understand the reason why natural resource professionals tell you that you should have one! A well managed forest can provide benefits and resources to the people who own it and an organized plan helps a landowner reach specific goals. It's important to evaluate the potential of your woodlot, think about what the long term goals and objectives are and then write them down somewhere.

The American Forest Foundation has a new on-line forest management planning tool I'm so excited to tell you about. It's called My Land Plan and it can be found on line at mylandplan.org. My Land Plan can help you explore and discover how to manage your woodlands. Easy to use tools guide you to map your woodlot, set goals, keep a journal and connect with woodland owners and foresters. It's informative, educational, practical and easy to use. No matter what you hope to do with your property, enjoy it, profit from it, protect it or all of the above, this web site can help you do it. Your whole family can get involved with this tool. You can get in touch with your forester or natural resource professional and let them know you can link your plan to their account and they'll be able to help you set your goals and manage your property.

If you're interested in ways to connect with Tree Farm or if you're looking for a forester, a great place to start is always contacting a Tree Farm inspector. Just 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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Ashes to Ashes

CHARLIE MOWATT

During the time that Marian and I were stewards of Hog Hollow Tree Farm in Cattaraugus County, we built many memories that we will carry with us to our dying days. One of the most cherished memories was centered, appropriately, around a tree. This tree was a sugar maple sapling that was destined to become The Remembrance Tree.

The Remembrance tree is located near an area known as Bill's Park, so named after our brother-in-law, who'd often sought refuge and solitude in those surroundings. Upon Bill's death, his wife Edith, Charlie's sister, thought it fitting that his cremains be scattered in Bill's Park. A sugar maple sapling was purchased and planted as a memorial. A family gathering heard appropriate words from Bill's daughters, Sandra and Margo. Bill's ashes were scattered in the area of the tree. Another brother-in-law, Hugh, offered a sweet rendition of Taps on his trumpet.

Unfortunately, the forester in charge failed to protect the planted sapling, and the following fall, a buck found

it perfect for rubbing and polishing his antlers, thus girdling and killing the tree. The forester was chagrined; he vowed to make amends. A volunteer sugar maple sapling, growing adjacent to Bill's Park, was recruited to replace the tree killed by the deer. It was immediately staked and caged with sturdy hardware cloth; thus, The Remembrance Tree was born.

Niece Margo purchased a weatherproof bench and some small statuary, which were placed near the tree. We planted flowers, arranged in a large circle, around the tree. A very talented friend, Erik, who hunted on the property, observed, "You have a tree, a bench, and some flowers, but you do not have a rock. Get a rock, and I will engrave whatever you wish on it." My tractor grunted, but was able to transport a fairly big rock from across the valley to the tree. Erik spent a whole day sand-blasting an engraving that reads, "In Remembrance..."

About this time, Charlie's eighth grade science teacher, a dear friend and mentor, died. Unbeknownst to us, he'd left word that he would like to have his ashes scattered beneath The Remembrance



Tree. We scurried to plant another 250 daffodils in The Remembrance Tree flower circle before Don's cremains arrived from Florida. They were delivered by Charlie's northbound snowbird sister, Grace, and her husband, Hugh. Before she died, Don's wife, Jane, let it be known that she "wanted to be with Don." She is.

The last ashes spread under The Remembrance Tree were those of our cat, Hunter. He was every bit a member of our family, and he did a good job living up to his name. He was a very good mouser.

Two years ago, we had to sell Hog Hollow Tree Farm due to uncertain health issues. The Remembrance Tree had grown to about 8" DBH at that time. We have designated our bodies to go to the University of Buffalo Anatomical Gift Program, so the timing and destination of our own cremains are a little hard to predict, but our administrator, JoAnn, told me that she didn't care if she had to climb the back fence: "You are going there!" As time has passed, we have determined that the placement of our cremains is not so important, but we certainly appreciated her thought. It is thoughts like these that remind us of the words of the late, great astrophysicist, Carl Sagan: "To live in the hearts of those left behind is to never die." 🏠

Charlie Mowatt is a retired DEC Forester and former NYFOA Board Member. He can be reached at MowattCharles@gmail.com.



Wild Things in Your Woodlands

KRISTI SULLIVAN

PAINTED TURTLE (*Chrysemys picta*)



The painted turtle is a brown, somewhat flattened, medium-sized freshwater turtle. This animal has several bright yellow blotches or lines on the head and throat, and often has yellow or red markings on the legs and tail. It gets its name from these markings and the attractive patterns of red and yellow along the margin of the shell. Although the shell markings are bright and colorful in many individuals, they can be faint or even absent in some older turtles. The carapace of an adult male can measure up to 15 cm (5.8 in.), and females usually are larger than males.

In the northeast, painted turtles are perhaps the most conspicuous turtle, often seen basking on logs and rocks, and along banks of ponds. Painted turtles thrive in marshes, ponds, slow rivers, and along edges of lakes with shallow water, abundant vegetation, muddy bottoms, and plenty of basking logs or rocks. To fulfill their nesting requirements, there should be some nearby open areas with sandy or loose soil. The painted turtle is tolerant of a wide range of conditions and can be seen in swift-flowing and even brackish waters. They also fare well near human developments, in moderately polluted lakes, farm ponds, and golf course ponds.

Painted turtles are widely distributed throughout eastern North America and extend in a continuous band, from the east coast to the west coast, along the northern U.S. and southern Canada. In the northeast region, painted turtles

are common from sea level up to 300 m (1000 ft), but become scarce at higher elevations. Individuals can be seen basking on sunny days from March to early November. They mate in spring and feed actively from April to the end of September. Although primarily aquatic, individuals do come out on land, especially during the nesting season in June and July. At this time, females travel to nesting areas around the edge of ponds, in open areas and along dirt roads, and are often seen moving across roads and highways. During winter, painted turtles remain below water, usually burrowed into the muddy bottom or bank. They remain under water until the ice melts, and do not become fully active until around mid-spring.

Painted turtles reach sexual maturity after they are at least four years old. It is relatively easy to determine the sex of painted turtles larger than 9

cm (3 1/2 in.) in carapace length. On their front feet, males have very long claws they use to attract the attention of females during courtship. Males also have much longer thicker tails. Courtship and mating occurs in April and May. Females nest throughout June and early July, and nesting activity is often associated with rainy weather. Excellent long-term studies in Michigan have shown that some females will not nest in years when conditions are harsh, but may lay eggs more than once in other years. A typical clutch of eggs contains from three to nine eggs, depending mostly on the size of the female. Painted turtles hatch from their eggs by autumn, but most hatchlings remain underground during their first winter. There they remain very still, expending minimal energy, until they emerge the following spring and head into the water.


Painted turtles are omnivorous,

eating a variety of plants, fish, tadpoles, and invertebrates. They also are willing scavengers. Although individuals can move on land, they tend to be faithful to the same habitat for their entire lives. Individual painted turtles can live for more than 30 years in the same pond.

The usual group of predators such as raccoons, foxes, skunks, birds, and dogs preys upon eggs, young, and adults. Adults frequently are killed on roads as males move about in the spring and as females travel to nesting sites in the summer. Painted turtles are too small to be of great commercial value for harvesting by humans. They also present very little nuisance to humans, and are generally viewed as a welcome member of any community. Their acceptance and the relative ease with which they adapt to disturbed and artificial environments combine to make the painted turtle extremely common throughout most of its extensive range.

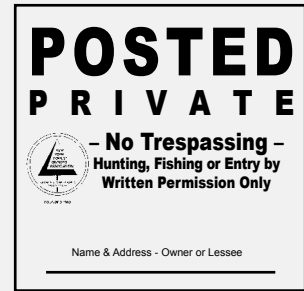
The turtle is an excellent example of a long-lived animal. Male painted turtles take 4 to 6 years to reach maturity and females take from 6 to 10 years. Other turtles can take more than 15 years to reach maturity. Once turtles begin to reproduce, they can continue to do so for many more years, even for decades to come. Normally it is very difficult to determine the age of animals in the wild. However, many turtles

carry around their own age and growth records imprinted on their shells; you just need to know how to read the code properly. Long-term studies over many decades have shown that, at the onset of cold weather each year, turtles stop growing and this creates visible lines. If you look at the individual scutes of many turtles, you can plainly see the rings that represent each year of growth. Thus, aging turtles is much like aging trees: you merely count the rings.

Landowners can enhance habitat for painted turtles by providing basking logs in lake and pond habitats. A tree or two dropped into the water can offer a place for turtles to bask, and for people to view them. By maintaining open areas with loose soil near aquatic habitats, landowners can also ensure that these turtles have adequate nesting sites. Old log landings, maintained as open habitat, can make suitable nesting sites. 

Kristi Sullivan is Co-Director of the Conservation Education and Research Program, and Director of the New York Master Naturalist Program at Cornell University's Department of Natural Resources. More information on managing habitat for wildlife, as well as upcoming educational programs, can be found by visiting the Conservation Education and Research Program web site at ArnotConservation.info

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Restoring New York's Woodlands: A NYFOA Initiative

KELLY SMALLIDGE AND JERRY MICHAEL

Woodswalk Weekends: A Huge Undertaking! A Qualified Success!



NYFOA's first statewide woodswalk event is now history. To help celebrate our 50th Anniversary, and bring critical forest health issues to the attention of forest owners and the general public, Chapters hosted 32 woodswalks in practically every corner of the state during the month of May. While information is still trickling in, it appears that well over 500 people participated in these woodswalks, with an amazing 84 showing up for the event hosted by Ken Gaines, Springville, Niagara Frontier Chapter. The central theme for all woodswalks was NYFOA's "Restore New York Woodlands" (RNYW) initiative, with an emphasis on the many benefits of forestland and the threats to the next forest from a lack of regeneration and

the degradation caused by highgrade harvesting practices.

NYFOA is indebted to the 32 individuals, families and organizations who hosted these woodswalks, to the Chapter leaders who helped plan and publicize them, and to the 27 Master Forest Owner Volunteers, 5 Consulting Foresters, 3 DEC Service Foresters and numerous university faculty who actually led or assisted with the walks. We were successful in attracting many non-NYFOA members to these woodswalks and at least 22 new members were signed up on the spot.

One of our RNYW objectives is to inform forest stakeholders who are not forest owners about forest health issues, and this segment of the population was well represented in several woodswalks. For instance, the event at Molyneaux's

Tree Farm (Southern Tier Chapter) included Board members from the Broome County Environmental Management Council, the Waterman Conservation Center, Sierra Club, etc. After witnessing the dramatic differences in the understory between stands with and without deer enclosure fencing, they were heard to say "We will never



Some attendees of the Dave Swanson woodswalk are hugging the 2nd largest bur oak in NY State <http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/5248.html>, with the goal of encouraging it to move into first place!

look at the forest in quite the same way again".

Many woodswalk participants completed written questionnaires regarding their experience and the responses were uniformly positive, as were verbal comments offered to hosts and leaders. Hosts also completed questionnaires and all were positive, or in many cases enthusiastic about the event. The only significant disappointment with RNYW Woodswalk Weekend was low participation for some events. Some Chapters and hosts were less successful than others in getting local media to publicize the woodswalks. In some cases, the media cooperated, but there were a large number of competing events during the same weekends. Scheduling and publicity are certainly two items we will have to examine more closely as we plan for the future.

Woodswalk Weekend was only the "opening salvo" for NYFOA's "Restore New York Woodlands" initiative, which will be a major focus for our Association for many years. Several RNYW action plans were publicized in the November/December 2012 issue of this magazine, and a progress report will appear in a future issue. The RNYW Planning Committee will also be reviewing the results of our recent Woodswalk Weekend with the Chapters and the NYFOA Board, and proposing "next steps" for the initiative. Stay tuned. 📖



South Bristol Event at John & Debby Holtz's property. John Holtz and Dale Schaeffer are smiling and pointing to the Restore NY Woodlands sign that is already affixed to the Holtz's sign. Debbie Holtz is standing in front as is Ray Cavallero and Peter Muench. John and Debbie own the 120 acre woodlot known as Berby Acres and the hillside in back of the picture is part of that woodlot. They had approximately 25 - 28 people in attendance.



Zoar Valley woods walk at Ken Gaines property had 84 people attend!



Forester Tony Lamberton teamed up with the Capital District Chapter of NYFOA and the Agricultural Stewardship Association to lead a woods walk in Buskirk, NY. In photos above and below, participants viewed a recent selective timber harvest and learned about techniques to manage deer over-browsing. Lamberton also discussed the benefits of small clear-cuts to remove invasives and encourage regeneration of desirable trees.



Arriving woodswalkers at Molyneux's Tree Farm. L. to R., Dick Molyneux (N Y State Tree Farmer of the Year in 1992), Steve Kutney, Northern Tier Chapter Chair, Jerry Michael, Master Forest Owner, Gene Molyneux, Co-Host.



Woods walk at Charles and Sarah Stackhouses's property in Yates County. Fifty showed up for the event and were led by DEC Forester Jim Bagley and visiting Forester Corey Figueriedo



MFO and woodswalk host Pat Crosby (in the hat) explaining simple inexpensive measures any landowner can do to increase biodiversity. In this example, a simple old truck bed liner got filled with rainwater. Very shortly, frogs moved in, salamanders appeared, and several new varieties of birds came. And, of course, children of all ages enjoy watching the life cycle from frogs, to eggs, to tadpoles, to little frogs, to sunbathing frogs. The presence of frogs indicate a healthy ecosystem.

Woodland Health

A column focusing on topics that might limit the health, vigor and productivity of our private or public woodlands

COORDINATED BY MARK WHITMORE

SIREX NOCTILIO: A COSMOPOLITAN FOREST PEST

BY CHRISTOPHER FOELKER

In the age of globalization, the rate and magnitude of biological interchange has never been greater. Trade and travel have allowed plants, animals, insects, and microbes to colonize regions well outside their historic range of movement. This is not a new problem. Non-native organisms have long been a leading issue in effective forest management. Chestnut blight, Dutch elm disease, and gypsy moth are prime examples of forest health topics that have been present for decades. A relatively new issue is the establishment of forest pests across multiple continents. An excellent example of this is *Sirex noctilio* (Hymenoptera: Siricidae), the European woodwasp. Originally distributed across Eurasia and northern Africa, this insect has now become established on every continent except Antarctica. The most recent establishment has been in North America when it was identified from a trap catch near Fulton, New York in 2005 (Hoebeke 2005). It has since been found throughout New York State and parts of Ontario, Pennsylvania, and Vermont.

This insect attacks primarily Scots (*Pinus sylvestris*) and red pine (*P. resinosa*) in North America and feeds deep in the bole of trees during the larval stage. Adult females drill through the bark into the xylem tissue using an ovipositor, a specialized egg-laying structure connected to the abdomen. Though the ovipositor looks similar to a wasp's or bee's stinger, it is not used to attack or defend itself.

Females carry a symbiotic fungal mutualist, *Amylostereum areolatum*, which they inject into the tree when depositing eggs (Fig. 1). This fungus aids the insect in weakening the host and serves as a nutritional substrate for the developing larvae. Female *S. noctilio* also produce and inject phytotoxic mucus that further weakens the trees and helps initiate *A. areolatum* growth. A definite symptom of a *S. noctilio* attacked trees is the presence of resin beads or runs along the main bole (Fig. 2).

This new introduction creates an interesting scenario because much of the preliminary or basic research has

already been conducted in regions where it has previously established. In the case of *S. noctilio*, a considerable amount of investigation on its biology, management, and biocontrol agents occurred in the Southern Hemisphere, where it has been present for over a century. It was initially introduced to New Zealand in 1900 and subsequently spread to Australia, southern Africa, and South America in the following decades. Pine forests of the Southern Hemisphere are considerably different than those found in northeastern North America. Pines are not native to the Southern Hemisphere and are grown in large industrial plantations. These monocultures are comprised primarily of North American pine species, loblolly (*P. taeda*), Monterey (*P. radiata*), and slash pine (*P. elliotii*). They usually are planted densely and managed for short rotations because of the rapid growth of pine in these drier regions. However, these stands are often overstocked, which can lead to widespread susceptibility when coupled with other environmental stressors, such as drought. Additionally, pine plantations in the Southern Hemisphere are devoid of many of the common



Fig 1. Female Sirex noctilio drilling into a red pine and depositing the symbiotic fungus, phytotoxic mucus, and eggs. Photo taken by Christopher Foelker.



Fig 2. Resin beads on Scots or red pine are a symptom of *Sirex noctilio* attack. Photo taken by Christopher Foelker.

insect pests of pine, such as bark beetles. The absence of natural mortality agents allows weakened or stressed trees to persist in stands they would have otherwise been naturally removed from. An abundance of susceptible hosts and an absence of native competitors is an ideal scenario for rapid population growth of *S. noctilio*. These stand conditions, both historically and currently, have led to extensive tree mortality in the Southern Hemisphere directly attributed to *S. noctilio*.

Large outbreaks of *S. noctilio* first occurred in New Zealand during the 1930-1940s. In response, forest managers and entomologists developed a successful management strategy based on silvicultural treatments and introduced biological control agents. The most successful biocontrol organism was a parasitic nematode with a unique and interesting biology. The nematode, *Deladenus siricidicola*, is able to complete its lifecycle either as a parasite within *S. noctilio* or by feeding on the fungal mutualist, *A. areolatum*. As an internal parasite, the nematode sterilizes adult females by infesting the eggs within the ovaries. Females then deposit these parasite-filled eggs when attacking susceptible trees. These parasites either continue feeding on the fungus or seek out new larvae to infest. This developed into a successful management strategy in certain areas, with infestation rates of *S. noctilio* exceeding 90%. Culturing and releases of *D. siricidicola* continues where *S. noctilio* remains a persistent forestry pest (Hurley et al. 2007).

Forests in northeastern North America are similar to conditions across its native range in Eurasia and northern Africa. Pine is a smaller component of northeastern forests and not as widely planted as in the Southern Hemisphere. Not only is the host less prevalent for *S. noctilio*, there is also a large ensemble of native predators, parasitoids, and

continued on page 16

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Woodland Health (continued)

competitors that may limit their population growth rate. These include Hymenopteran parasitoids (Ibaliidae and Ichneumonidae), woodwasps (Siricidae), longhorned beetles (Cerambycidae), jewel beetles (Buprestidae), and bark beetles (Scolytinae). Northeastern forests are also less prone to drought stress, a key environmental factor underlying outbreaks in the Southern Hemisphere. Thus far, mortality from *S. noctilio* in northeastern forests has been primarily in smaller diameter trees in densely-stocked pine stands (Dodds et al. 2010).

There is substantial concern and interest on how this insect will behave in pine-dominated ecosystems of southern and western North America. These regions are similar to plantations of the Southern Hemisphere--expansive pine forests frequently subject to drought stress. Like the northeast though, they will encounter a collection of native predators, parasitoids, and competitors. It is difficult to predict when *S. noctilio* will reach the southern and western states. The insect is a strong flier and is capable of dispersing about 30 km per year. It also spends the majority of its lifecycle as larvae developing deep in bole of dead or dying trees. This opens the possibility of it being moved large distances by humans transporting firewood.

Is *S. noctilio* a threat to North American pine forests? This is a challenging question and one that equally interests landowners, forest managers, and research scientists. There are shortcomings in drawing comparisons with outbreaks in the Southern Hemisphere because of differences in management strategies and greater diversity of insect communities in North American pine ecosystems. In the northeast and specifically New York State, *S. noctilio* appears to primarily attack suppressed pines growing under poor conditions. However, there is greater concern as this insect moves across the continent,

particularly into southern and western pine forests. One certainty is that previous research and control of *S. noctilio* has laid a beneficial framework to base future management strategies, should the need arise. ▲

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Christopher Foelker is a PhD Student-Entomology at the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry Syracuse, NY.

Mark Whitmore is a forest entomologist in the Cornell University Department of Natural Resources and the chair of the NY Forest Health Advisory Council.

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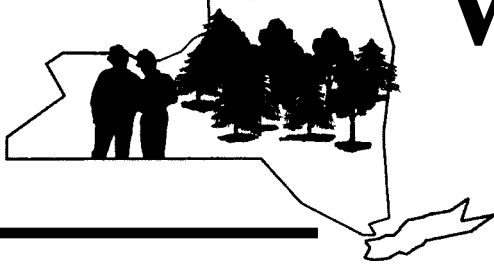
Got Trees? Got Questions?

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to share ideas, information and questions with fellow woodland owners, foresters and other members of the forest community across New York

 **Cornell University Cooperative Extension**

NY Master Forest Owner Program



Volunteers making a difference

GARY GOFF

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.

WANTED: Forest Owner Volunteers *or* Help Spread the Forest Stewardship Message


Cornell Cooperative Extension is looking for a few good forest owner volunteers to meet and work with their neighbors. The NY Master Forest Owner Volunteer Program is entering its 23rd year with a new volunteer training scheduled for Sept. 25 to 29, 2013 at Cornell University's Arnot Teaching and Research Forest Van Etten, NY. Volunteers who complete the 4-day workshop will join the corps of 200+ certified volunteers across the state. Applications due by September 11.

Volunteers can commute daily, or accommodations are available at the Forest. There is a \$100 fee that helps defray lodging, publications, food, and equipment costs. The workshop combines classroom and outdoor field experiences on a wide variety of subjects including; tree identification, finding boundaries, forest ecology, wildlife and sawtimber



The 2012 graduating class of MFO volunteers at Arnot Forest.

assistance based on their training and personal experience.

Some of the program's biggest supporters are the volunteers who have worked with the program for years. Give one of them a call to learn of the program's unique benefits. More information regarding the MFO Program, a listing of current volunteers, a sample training agenda and an application form is also available on our website at: www.cornellmfo.info or call 607/255-2115. 



The 2012 MFO class scaling logs at Wagner Hardwoods Cayuta Sawmill.

management, communication techniques, timber harvesting, and a visit to a nearby sawmill.

The goal of the MFO Program is to provide private forest owners with the information and encouragement necessary to manage their forests to enhance ownership satisfaction. MFOs do not perform management activities nor give professional advice. Rather, they meet with forest owners to listen to their concerns and questions, and offer advice as to sources of




Tom Gerow, Chief Forester at Wagner Companies, explains some details of the lumber industry.

Ask a Professional (continued)



Some harvesting leaves behind significant amounts of top wood and branches that owners can collect for firewood. Owners can choose to only collect the easily accessible wood, or to work with neighbors to provide wood to a number of families.

safety course such as the Game of Logging before they begin cutting. See the “events” panel at <http://CornellForestConnect.ning.com> for a list of training sessions. 

Resources

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Peter J. Smallidge is the NYS Extension Forester and Director Cornell University Arnot Teaching and Research Forest. He can be reached at email: pjs23@cornell.edu or visit his website at www.ForestConnect.info



Collecting firewood after a harvest often involves limbing and other cutting techniques for branches that are twisted or under tension. Caution should be used because the tops may spring, twist, or pinch the bar. Never stand on a pile of tops while you are cutting. Extra caution is warranted, including training such as the Game of Logging. All appropriate personal protective equipment should be used.



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You will receive an email every two months that includes a PDF file of the publication. While being convenient for you – read *The Forest Owner* anytime, any place; this will also help to save the Association money as the cost of printing and postage continues to rise with each edition.



For information related to the Restore New York Woodlands Initiative, visit the NYFOA webpage at www.nyfoa.org Also, visit and 'like' RNYW on Facebook

Getting the Message to Albany

FRANK WINKLER

Most of us managing a successful forest resource on our own properties recognize the long-term commitment required for success. We try to do our homework and seek professional assistance to reach our goals. Making this long-term commitment effective requires the State of New York to understand our challenges and to work with us to achieve this quest. NYFOA and other forestry related organizations face a constant challenge of working with our legislators and the Governor's Administration to inform them of the threats to having a healthy forest. The Council of Forest Resource Organizations (CFRO) works to deliver a uniform message to our representatives in Albany. CFRO works to develop key issue statements that we all can all support. We conduct an annual Forestry Awareness Day (FAD) where we visit legislative and administrative representatives and make them aware of our key concerns.

This past year the agreed to key issues have been on forest property taxation, greater use of residual wood supplies for energy, modifying state policies to

promote sustainable forest management, and to more aggressively react to forest health issues.

Forest taxation has been a difficult issue to enact change. Any time a reduction in the local tax assessment can occur there will be strong opposition. If forestry land resources get a reduction, the tax dollar difference has to be found from another source. The current economic climate in New York State with local tax cap and very little expansion in the tax base creates a difficult challenge. Keeping our legislators informed of the detrimental effects of forest fragmentation by subdivisions, high grading and the resulting loss of our valuable timber industry helps them to recognize action is required.

One of two avenues to help address this problem in part is to get DEC to change the procedural requirement for the current 480a property tax law. Recommended changes tentatively agreed to are requiring only a 10-year update of the management plan instead of a 5-year update, and eliminating the 15-year work schedule, but having a 30-year timber

harvest requirement. There will still be the annual 10-year rolling commitment. These changes could help reduce administrative cost for DEC and cost to the landowner, while still meeting the intent of the law. Hopefully the final details and actual implementation procedures will still bring about real advantages. Several recent studies have shown that unless forest resources are being managed under 480a very little sustainable harvesting is actually occurring on private forest.

The second avenue to help forest taxation is for DEC to complete the implementation of a law (480a ii) passed in 2008 whereby other forestry certification programs like American Tree Farm, Forest Stewardship Council and Sustainable Forestry Initiative certified lands meet the requirements of 480a. DEC has been working on this, but has yet to reach a final determination for implementation. DEC's attorneys believe there are difficult legal requirements that may not be met with integrating this law into 480a. After 5 years a decision needs to be made.

New York State tends to overlook the use of low quality timber to help meet our energy needs. New efficient and clean burning wood furnaces could help heat our homes, schools, hospitals, municipal buildings and factories. This is an under utilized energy source in most areas of the state. With a stronger market it will be easier for landowners to get this lower value resource harvested, and make way for the sunshine to reach our future high quality trees. We are not asking for any special program, but to expand existing efforts to promote renewables by including woody biomass from sustainable managed forest.

Sustainable managed forest should be promoted within our state. The state is already managing 786,000 acres of certified land. The state should at a minimum favor the purchase of wood products from sustainable managed forest. New housing standards should provide incentives for forest sustainability while attaining LEED and Green Globes environmental standards.

Improving and protecting forest health

continued on page 20



Message to Albany (continued)

is a constant concern. Too many of us tend to be complacent regarding forest health if there are no issues in our immediate area. Even then we may not recognize local challenges. Forest regeneration is a major challenge in vast areas of the state. We need to encourage adequate deer harvest to allow for adequate tree regeneration. Wild boar are becoming established. Emerald Ash Borer is eliminating ash from our woods. Asian Long Horned Beetle threatens our maples. Climate change is changing the way we need to manage our woods. Adequate resources need to be provided to control invasives while on-going funding is needed to recognize existing and future challenges.

We need to make a continual effort to bring our concerns to our legislative representatives. Having a local NY-FOA "Go-To" person on forestry issues is needed to promote our concerns. Expressing your concerns for your own forest resource is important. This is more important than having a Lobbyist or even making campaign contributions. With broad based landowner participation we can accomplish our goals. Legislators need to hear our message more than once a year. Getting Albany to act can be painfully slow. We need some of the thousands of forest landowners to express their concerns to our Albany Representatives. ▲

Welcome New Members

We welcome the following new members (who joined since the publishing of the last issue) to NYFOA and thank them for their interest in, and support of, the organization:

Name	Chapter
Mark A. Adrian	NFC
Susan and Carl Albers	WFL
Robert Ambrosino	SAC
Garnet Barrigar	NAC
Holly & Hank Beekley	CNY
Vanessa Bittner	NAC
Frederick Bockis	CDC
Bernard W. Brock	SAC
Elaine Case	SOT
Katherine Childs	WFL
Diane Chodan	AFC
Steve Cromwell	WFL
Pat Crosby	SOT
Laurel & Gary Ebert	AFC
Konrad Edwards	SAC
David Fannon	CNY
Christina Fortunato	SAC
Dr. Richard Gagnier	WFL
Robert Gang	CNY
Jeremy Gasiewicz	NFC
Janice Glover	WFL
Carey & Josh Harben	SFL
Lynda & Tim Holt	CDC
Nigel Jones	WFL
Gerry Lambert	NAC
Kathy and Jim Lawler	CNY
Rev. William Leone	WFL
Melissa & James Listman	CDC
Mailing Name	Chpt
James Mack	SAC
Lorraine Manelis	WFL
Mary Marchewka	SAC
Curtis Martin	NFC
Milan Marvelous	SFL
Melissa Mazzarelli	SAC
Barb and Al McGuffie	WFL
Jon Morris	CDC
Holly & Scott Nachbar	AFC
Dan Nalepa	AFC
Jill & Greg Northway Sr.	NFC
William Nuhn	SOT
Richard Ogden	SAC
Charles Oliver	SOT
Robert Sharp	AFC
Gregg Slezak	SAC
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Member Profile: *Ed and Donna Welch*

MAUREEN MULLEN

Ed Welch and Donna Trautwein-Welch, NYFOA members and forest landowners, love the Adirondacks and have had a bond with the mountains of this region for some time. Ten years ago, with retirement nearing, they decided to buy a 223-acre property — the “Danker parcel” — in the Town of Johnsbury in Warren County. Since that time, they added an additional 150 acres of adjacent property — the “Applebee parcel” — and are in the process of obtaining another 30 acres. Ed and Donna are now “mostly retired” educators who spend five days a week on the property and they love it! “We were really looking for a piece of property in the Adirondacks, never thinking that we’d buy as much as we did, or that we would become involved in being active forest owners,” says

Donna. “It was just a way of getting a foothold in the Adirondacks because we loved to be there often... and we just wanted to spend more time there.” The property has many tree species found in the Adirondacks (e.g., birch, maple, pine, ash, etc.) except cedar.

Ed and Donna Welch completed their first forest thinning on their land this year. All their time spent researching the process, getting advice from fellow NYFOA members and friends, and working closely with their forester made this thinning a success. With no previous forestry experience, the Welch’s joined NYFOA about a year after purchasing the Danker parcel. “Then we started to learn about forestry and forest management and what could happen with the property and so then we



one of our trails in winter

became really committed to promoting sustainable forestry on our land. And so our motivations changed,” said Donna. By talking with other NYFOA members, reading NYFOA articles, and consulting with professionals from Cornell Cooperative Extension, they learned a great deal and became very committed to the land. Their goal for the land became clear: to steward the land sustainably so that the forest remained intact and (mostly) undeveloped for generations to come. To make this goal a reality, Ed and Donna needed to create forest management plans for the Danker and Applebee parcels.

The forest management plans were initially started by Steve Warne, a fellow NYFOA member and forester, and later completed by Chris Gearwar of Lake George Forestry. Chris, Donna, and Ed developed a basic principle that guided the plans — sustainability — and this led them to implement a thinning on 140 acres to improve the forest’s condition and promote long-term growth. After inventorying and marking the trees Chris sent the information to loggers. They decided to do a lump-sum bid where the owner receives a single



Donna and granddaughter, Megan

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payment for trees to be sold before the harvest begins, rather than a “yield sale” or pay as you cut approach where a landowner is paid a certain amount for each unit of product cut. Ed and Donna put much time into researching and selecting loggers and after receiving four bids they eliminated the lowest one. The Welch’s then inquired about the quality of work done by the remaining loggers by visiting their job sites and learning about their harvesting methods. They also asked the loggers about the estimated time for the thinning, the condition of the trees, and any concerns. NYFOA members, many of whom are loggers or forestry experts, gave the Welches advice on

this selection process. The Welches selected the logger that they felt would give them the greatest likelihood of forest regeneration: Jim Peck of Peck Logging.

For the Welches, one of the fascinating things about the thinning process was finding out where their wood was going and how it was going to be used. The majority of the wood was sent to either Vermont or other parts of New York State. The pine logs went to lumberyards for construction elements (like doors and trim); the hardwood lumber was used for cabinets and flooring; the white birch was made into levels, gun stocks, and reels; the red pine was made into plywood;

and the pulp wood went to a paper company. “We knew it was going to be sawed into lumber, but we just had no idea the different kinds of uses for all of the different logs,” said Donna.

In addition to their forest management plan, the Welches also created a legacy plan that helps with taxes and will also ensure that the management of the land is carried into the future. After speaking with Sydney and Evon Antonio, NYFOA members in Greene County who have also developed a legacy plan, Ed and Donna were advised to meet with an estate planner and accountant. Their land is now part of a Limited Liability Corporation that they formed and two of their six children have been designated as future managers to carry out the long-term forest management plan.

The Welches’ advice for other forest landowners: join NYFOA! Their experience with other NYFOA members has been priceless. NYFOA members have given them guidance on creating forest management plans, conducting a proper thinning, and creating a forest legacy plan. In addition to peers, the Welch’s also recommend that landowners seek information from professionals, such as Cornell Cooperative Extension. Another piece of advice: communicate with those helping you on your land! By communicating with Chris during the thinning process, they gained a shared understanding of the outcome and Chris kept that in mind when marking trees so that forest regeneration and aesthetics could be enhanced. Ed and Donna would like to thank the people who have not only been great resources, but who have also become great friends: John Sullivan, Bob Manning, Laurel Gailor, Chris Gearwar, Steve Warne, and the other NYFOA members. 📌

Maureen Mullen is an Extension Aide at Cornell Cooperative Extension, Human Dimensions Research Unit, Cornell University. Dr. Shorna Allred is the faculty advisor for the NYFOA Member Profile Series.



Ed and logger, Jim Peck.



Overlooking the Welch’s pond.

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MAGAZINE DEADLINE

Materials submitted for the September/October 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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