

The New York Forest Owner

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

For people caring about New York's trees and forests

November/December 2015



Members Profile: Bob & Pat Glidden

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**THE NEW YORK
FOREST OWNERS
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**The New York
Forest Owner**

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

VOLUME 53, NUMBER 6

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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 \$45.

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COVER: Bob Glidden showing one of his wood duck houses. For member profile see page 21. Photo courtesy of the Glidden's.

From The President

Autumn is a great time to be in the woods. As I write this column, we have had clear and cool weather, the ground is dry and the foliage is turning color. I finished filling the woodsheds and when I look at this winter's firewood, it is hard to imagine owning woods without a chainsaw. The September 2015 Bulletin of the American College of Surgeons has a short article detailing the history of the chainsaw and some grim statistics on chainsaw injuries.



In the U.S. in 2013, there were approximately 36,000 people treated in hospital ER's and 5,570 people were admitted to hospitals. The majority of these incidents

occurred at home. Be safe! Chainsaw safety entails maintaining the saw correctly, keeping the chain sharp, wearing the right protective gear, and getting trained in safe use of the saw. I highly recommend the Game of Logging training, which is offered periodically by some of our chapters, as well the New York Center for Agricultural Medicine and Health (NYCAMH). Level I of Game of Logging includes using and maintaining safety equipment, safety features of the saw, how to hold and handle a saw safely to reduce fatigue, understanding parts of a tooth for sharpening, understanding the reactive forces of a running chainsaw, the proper way to do a bore-cut, the mechanics and physics of hinge wood, directional felling to a plan, and how to identify the lean in a tree.

I'd like to make you aware of a few more items:

- You can support NYFOA when you shop at Amazon. Visit www.smile.amazon.com and select NYFOA as your charitable organization. Whenever you shop, Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your purchases to NYFOA, as long as you shop through Amazon Smile and not regular Amazon.

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

- NYFOA still allows members to give gift memberships for the reduced price of \$25. This is a great way to introduce woodlot owners to NYFOA. Make sure to reach out to these new members, invite them to woodswalks and NYFOA events, and introduce them to other NYFOA members.

- The governance of NYFOA is through a board of directors, which has a number of committees working on various topics. A number of the most active committees have non-board members on them. Any member can serve on a committee, not just board members. We would love to have NYFOA members help, as we are starting a complete revamp of our website with the need for ongoing website maintenance, as we deal with proposed changes to the 480-a Forest Tax Law program and other governmental policies, as we pursue membership growth, and as

continued on page 5

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*, woodswalks, chapter meetings, and statewide meetings.

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New Member Snapshots

Tony and Sally Wagner

Forest Land: 265 acres, Broome

Objectives: Hiking, Forest Management, Wildlife Habitat Improvement

Tony, along with his siblings Carol and Art, own 310 beautiful acres in the towns of Sanford and Windsor. They received the land from their parents, who originally bought the property in 1958. They are currently implementing a detailed plan to transition the land to five grandchildren of Tony's parents, so it can remain intact, without development, for future generations.



The Wagners hike the land extensively and are working to improve the trail network for personal ATV use. They enjoy an active role in the implementation of their 480-A forest management program and make use of the resultant firewood to heat their log cabin. In addition, they are involved in projects to enhance wildlife habitat through USDA's WHIP (Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program).

Tony and Sally are both retired. Tony was a Marine Engineer by training from SUNY Maritime, and Sally a writer, public relations professional, and trainer with a degree from Sweet Briar. Tony is a 33 year member of Rotary International. Sally sang choral music for 30 years and remains in her church choir. They have four grown children and six grandchildren (that's young Ethan and Samantha in the photograph). Shown in the picture are their son Matt and his wife Amy, who are avid supporters of the work being done on the land.

Les and Wanda Wood

Forest Land: 30 acres, Yates

Objectives: Firewood, Hunting, Wildlife, Timber

Les and Wanda Wood have owned their home and adjacent mixed hardwood woodland since 1999 and enjoy the privacy, hunting and wildlife viewing it affords, as well as picking berries and cutting their own firewood. They have a stewardship plan for their property and had a mature black walnut harvest several years ago which provided more trail access for hunting and firewood recovery.



Both Les and Wanda are retired U.S. Air Force officers. When they were stationed in Germany, they were impressed by the beauty and tranquility of the well-managed German forests, and gained an appreciation for good forest stewardship. One of their primary goals is to significantly reduce the population of invasive and interfering plants in their woods, particularly multiflora rose and wild grapevine, to encourage a healthy, diverse and productive forest that is a benefit to man as well as wildlife.

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Bear Houses

ED AND WANDA PIESTRAK

This past winter Wanda and I were looking out our large windows and observing the birds and occasional animals go by. Being so cold and snowy, we discussed what we could do for the animals to make their lives a little more comfortable. A couple of years ago we built a half dozen rabbit houses and they are quite successful (see *New York Forest Owner*, September/October 2015 issue).

So we thought, what about the largest animal in the forest, the black bear. They are sleeping all winter (in theory), maybe in a hole or under a log. What about a nice warm hut where they could stretch out,

be protected from the harsh winter, and in some cases could use a cozy place to bring little bears into the world. Since we have a large contingency of bears on the Lindley property, we decided we would explore a den building project.

As we began to consider this project, we knew we needed to locate four sites that were off the beaten path and would allow the bears some peace and quiet. We also needed helpers for the construction phase — only my daughter Crystal volunteered.

In regards to building materials, we

continued on page 14



A completed bear house.

From the President (continued)

we push forward with our Restore New York Woodlands initiative that seeks regulatory and legislative measures to ensure healthy forests in the future.

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Seed Bank has launched an intensive effort to collect and store ash tree seeds because of the risk of reduced genetic diversity due to the Emerald Ash Borer (EAB). They are looking for individuals and organizations to get involved. Their website is <http://www.marsb.org/seeds/fraxinus-ash> if you are interested in participating.

The paper used in issues of The New York Forest Owner for the past several years was donated by Finch Paper (www.finchpaper.com). Finch Paper continues their history of generous support of NYFOA by pledging to donate the paper for all our 2016 issues. A very sincere THANK YOU to Finch as this represents a substantial savings for NYFOA.

—Charles Stackhouse
NYFOA President

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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 influence 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

Logs to Lumber

Question: I have some ash and some silver maple in my 40 acre woods, each of these representing one-quarter to one-third of the woods. I would like to harvest some trees for boards, especially the ash before it is lost to the emerald ash borer. Does time of year matter and how should I treat the logs and boards for use? (Fred K., WFL)

Answer: A common feature of managed woods, and an aspect that has made them popular among farmers, woodlot owners and maple producers is the potential to harvest logs and produce boards. Managing your woods for lumber involves consideration of the logs for lumber, but also cultivating the woods to ensure future productivity and healthy trees. If the woods are mined rather than tended, future options and opportunities may be eliminated.

An Internet search for "lumber from local woodlots" will yield access to a free publication on the ForestConnect publications page that addresses types of trees and wood properties, measuring trees, harvesting plans, and matching lumber supply with building needs. In this article I will share information on manipulating the woods, harvesting, and utilization. Additional resources are listed at the end of the article.

Manipulating the woodlot – what you take and what you leave

The starting point for harvesting trees is to have a clear and full understanding of your ownership objectives. Obtaining lumber is one objective, but you may also be interested in maple sap and syrup, aesthetics, trails, wildlife habitat and more. A written management plan will help you obtain these varied objectives.

If a harvest removes trees that are large enough to provide lumber, the owner will benefit from involving a forester. The forester can write a plan for the owner, and can also mark trees that will be removed in the harvest. The forester can identify trails the owner can use for

skidding the logs, or the forester can administer a commercial sale if the logs are sold. If the harvest is commercial, it is in the owner's interest to sell the standing trees in a lump sum sale. It is rarely advantageous for an owner to harvest trees and then sell the logs roadside. The owner might also designate specific trees to retain as logs for personal use, or buy back some logs from the logger. Discuss these options before signing a timber harvest contract.

The strategy for harvesting will fall into one of two broad categories. One category, called "intermediate treatments" is intended to improve and enhance the existing woods, or residual trees left behind. Intermediate treatments are analogous to weeding your garden. The other strategy is a "regeneration treatment" and is intended to grow the next forest. Based on the condition of your woods and the specifics of your objectives, your forester can develop a harvesting plan to suit your needs.

A harvest is a good opportunity to adjust the composition, and the mixture of species, in your woods. For owners with a high percentage of white or green ash, harvesting will allow you to utilize some ash and concentrate growth on other desirable species. Harvesting should not attempt to eliminate ash, but the harvest may diminish its abundance. Ideally this process happens before the emerald ash borer (EAB) is close, and you can avoid crisis management as part of forest management. The ForestConnect site (see resources below) has a fact sheet on



Advance planning will allow arranging logs in a manner to more easily load the sawmill. Creating a cut bank or using a gentle slope makes easy work of loading logs if the sawmill lacks hydraulics.



Thinning, an intermediate treatment, should remove stems that allow the best trees to grow until the final harvest. In this picture, two oak stems (pictured on the left in the photograph) are marked for harvest and concentrate growth on the better quality stems. Both marked trees could produce lumber.

silviculture for invasive insects. Owners and their forester might plan for several sequential but small-scale harvests the owner conducts every few years to provide lumber at the timing and quantity you can manage while avoiding an abrupt change in the forest.

Except in special circumstances such as created by the emerald ash borer or hemlock woolly adelgid, harvesting should generally maintain the mixture of species that have naturally established on the site. Of course there will be changes as forest succession proceeds, but the species



Although this tree would produce lumber, cutting the tree would include the double hazard of the stem under tension and the likely re-settling of the root ball. Some trees are better left uncut.

naturally established are likely (but not always) matched to the soils and will perform well.

A temptation when harvesting trees for use as lumber is to cut the biggest and straightest trees and leave the rest. This harvesting strategy is effectively a diameter-limit cut and also known as a high-grade. The removal of only the biggest trees and those most easily turned into boards can result in a degraded woodlot with predominately trees of low value, poor form, undesired species, and slow growth. Owners who heat with wood, or sell firewood, have distinct advantages in being able to utilize the cull trees. The smaller trees are most often similarly aged “runts”, and are not younger trees that need to be released. A forester can help you select trees that ensure you obtain the logs you need for lumber, cull the woods, and leave a residual forest (the trees that remain after harvesting) that will be healthy and productive.

Harvesting and processing

Either the owner or someone contracted by the owner can harvest trees for use as logs. Harvesting trees, regardless of size, is potentially dangerous to the owner and can damage the residual trees.

The person felling the trees should have completed Game of Logging

(GOL) training levels I and II, and hopefully level III. Game of Logging is an educational program that originated for loggers to increase productivity and safety. It has been adapted for and found great favor among woodlot owners. The GOL teaches owners how to use PPE (personal protective equipment) and also PPB (personal protective behavior). For someone with adequate training, felling a tree can be straightforward. However, trees under tension (aka spring poles), root balls of windthrown trees that may tip back into their hole, and hung trees are relatively common and warrant special consideration to avoid personal injury or death.

The equipment used to move logs is an important consideration. Professional loggers use skidders and forwarders to move logs; this equipment is designed specifically to work in forest settings. Most owners will use a tractor or an ATV to move logs. These machines can move logs, but they need special attachments and special attention. When moving logs by tractor or ATV you must ensure that the front end of the log is elevated off the ground. Without elevation, the log may catch on stumps or rocks with the potential for damage to the machine and injury to the operator. Further, the center of gravity on a tractor or ATV is usually higher relative to the hitch point and machine width than for skidders, so special care must be used to avoid operating on side-slopes where the machine might roll sideways. A variety of 3-point hitch skidding winches are available for tractors and arches are available for ATVs. Look for a training course and use considerable caution; every year there are tragic accidents that involve woodlot owners, maple producers and farmers.

A common source of damage to residual trees is when an owner or someone they contract uses equipment that isn't quite adequate to do the job. The wrong tool for the job seldom works well, and often results in increased risk of damage or injury.

The time of year trees are harvested can influence the need for additional actions. For ash, summer harvesting can result in significant lengthwise splitting of logs to the point they cannot be sawn into boards. The splitting of ash logs can be reduced

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Homestead Woodlot

Hands-on, low-tech approaches to working with your woodland

JEFF JOSEPH

Retaining Woodlot Diversity

It's not always easy to find time to spend in the woods. Other than when engaged in demonstrably productive activity—cutting firewood, say, or maybe during hunting season—life has a way of steering us away from our woodlots. This is one reason why I particularly enjoy being an MFO (Master Forest Owner) volunteer: every so often I am called upon to spend a few hours wandering someone's woodlot, with no other objective than to take it all in, offer an outside perspective, and field questions from the landowner(s). It is leisurely, not agenda-driven as is often the case in my own woods, and gives me a chance to talk about one of my favorite subjects, so is invariably enjoyable. The best part for me though, beyond simply being of service to fellow woodlot owners, is that I learn things on every visit, and gain valuable perspective on what I have (or don't have) back at home.

In ten years of volunteering, I have walked only two woodlots that I would classify as being in the upper echelon of timber quality: well spaced, maturing stands of straight timber in species of high market value. The majority of woodlots I have visited fall closer to the mean: maybe some decent timber here and there, but usually overstocked, and likely cherry-picked at least once in the past 50 years. A few have been brutal: diameter-limit cut, and left with all the defective 'runts' of the last litter. Lots of cankered beech, multi-stemmed red maple, and invasive/interfering plants.

The sites with great timber were very impressive, but each had one shortcoming—at least to my mind—that left them less than ideal. Though they were capable of producing large numbers of high quality trees in a few select species (primarily hard maple in each), neither seemed to consist of more than maybe a dozen tree species in total, though admittedly this assessment came from a relatively brief survey of

each woodlot. From a financial and timber quality perspective these woodlots were exceptional, but they still felt somehow incomplete due to their lack of variety.

My own woodlot is nothing to write home about, and lies somewhere in the middle of the pack of what I described above, but it is undoubtedly diverse for its size. At about 32 wooded acres, I count at least 33 native or naturalized forest tree



species. Some of these—did I hear someone say beech?—are very well represented, while a handful are very sparse and low in number.

At the extreme end of the spectrum, my acreage (and my entire valley, as far as I've been able to determine) hosts one lone tulip poplar (*Liriodendron tulipifera*). While a common tree in isolated areas of the state, and especially farther south, it is rare in my neck of the woods, so I'm glad to have it. Tulip is a monoecious species, with perfect flowers (containing both male and female parts) and the ability to self-pollinate, so in theory it should be able

to regenerate despite its lone-wolf status. Similarly, my woodlot hosts a grand total of two cucumber trees (*Magnolia acuminata*), one large sawtimber size, one a sapling.

It seems I always find one large cucumber per woodlot, as if it were fulfilling a quota. It's around, but usually quite sparse. Like the tulip, the cucumber can self-pollinate, so it too can theoretically reproduce in the absence of more of its kind in the vicinity.

I say "in theory" and "theoretically" with regard to these species being able to reproduce, as in our forests, being able to produce viable seed is only one of many hurdles a given tree will face in its efforts to generate viable offspring. Far more challenging are the factors highlighted by NYFOA's Restore New York Woodlands (RNYW) initiative, namely the availability of light, and the presence of deer and/or invasive or interfering vegetation.

Since my forest is even-aged, and closed canopy throughout, those tree species that are *intolerant*—requiring a high percentage of sunlight to reach the forest floor in order for their successful germination and survival—are pretty well barred from regenerating at this point, short of a disturbance large enough to bring the necessary light. Like most woodlots here in New York, mine has a horde of hungry deer on the prowl for succulent tree seedlings, and though I have limited problems with invasive species—there's not enough available light for them except at the margins—I do have significant ground-level interference from rampant beech and hay-scented ferns.

In the case of the tulip, I once found a single seedling. This was such a rarity I marked the spot so I could keep an eye on it, but it was in near full shade, and even if this weren't the case, it shortly thereafter vanished, most likely a victim of deer browsing.

The cucumber produces seed every so often, but to date I have found no seedlings around the large stem, so I presume they are eaten (by rodents?) prior to germination. The single cucumber sapling here resides in the shade of some large white pine, so its prospects are dim (excuse the pun).

Sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*) is another sparsely represented, shade intolerant species in my woodlot. It has the advantage of numbers compared to my previous two examples, with at least a dozen individuals

varying from sapling to small sawtimber size present, though scattered widely in my stands. Another advantage it has over the previously mentioned species is its ability to reproduce vegetatively by sprouting from its roots (cloning); a distinct disadvantage is its dioecious nature—its flowers are imperfect and unable to self-pollinate. So for successful sassafras mating, separate male and female trees are required.

Thankfully, I do have two large sassafras that seem to have been ‘making time.’ Side by side, with twisted trunks and signs of decay, they are like a venerable old couple, with a scattering of offspring around their perimeter that are seemingly too widely spaced to be attributed solely to root sprouts. Either way, they are doing their best to reproduce themselves. The sticking points once again though are 1) deer, as the seedlings and shoots are mostly browsed off each year, and 2) a distinct lack of light reaching the forest floor.


The deer I can manage to a degree; if not solely through hunting, I can cage individual seedlings until they grow up beyond browse height. The lack of light is another matter. Short of a hurricane or tornado blowing through anytime soon, the necessary disturbance needed in the overstory will have to be of the human variety.

On a larger scale than mine, retaining intolerant species in a forest mix is most readily accomplished with even-aged methods, growing the trees like a crop, wiping the slate clean at the time of harvest (after having ensured regeneration of desired species), and starting over. In this case, my current even-aged timber is at more or less middle age, and I am managing my stands with the aim of creating uneven-aged character throughout my woodlot. This being so, there will be no single big timber harvest taking place that would allow for intolerant regeneration. Instead, this means I can use to enhance light levels around specific trees I wish to regenerate will be to create ‘patch openings’ in strategic locations. This type of patch cut can vary in size, but generally runs between about 1/4-2 acres. I found one source stating that the technique can be successful down to as little as 1/10th acre, though the smaller the opening, the more likely it will be to favor tolerant regeneration over the intolerants that I

would like to encourage in this instance (Leak et al. 2014).

With a smallish woodlot such as mine, clearing even 1/10th acre is not something I will undertake lightly. I am by nature too stingy to simply drop the surrounding trees without a plan to use them in some fashion. There are also some stems in the vicinity that I would like to retain as crop trees, so it seems that even my micro-patch cut will be a little ‘patchy.’ But if I’m not quite ready to bend over backwards for my aging sassafras, hopefully meeting them halfway will suffice, and a century from now, some future landowner will have them—and ideally many other species—to appreciate as I do today.

If you have yet to do so in your own woods, undertaking a species survey—which will require a lot of slow and attentive exploring— is a good first step toward

understanding where your woodlot falls on the spectrum of timber diversity. It is a great way to get to know your land and its inhabitants, and will give you a sense of where you might be able to come to the rescue of some lonely, under-represented tree species liable to vanish from your woods without your help. 

Resources

Leak, W.B., Yamasaki, M., and Holleran, R., 2014. *Silvicultural Guide for Northern Hardwoods in the Northeast*. USDA Forest Service Northern Research Station General Technical Report NRS-132.

New York Master Forest Owner Program: <http://www.cornellmfo.info/>

Jeff Joseph is a woodworker and MFO volunteer hailing from Willseyville, NY.

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	Name	Chapter
Dave Antos	CNY	Jared T. Mason	WFL
Briana Binkerd-Dale	SFL	Michael Moser	CDC
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Wild Things in Your Woodlands

BY KRISTI SULLIVAN

DEC Launches Pilot Project to Improve Collection of Public Input about Deer Populations and Impacts

This issue of “Wild Things in Your Woodlands” focuses on a pilot project DEC is conducting to generate a public recommendation for deer population change within Wildlife Management Unit (WMU) aggregates. While this pilot project will focus on the Central Finger Lakes units, the associated educational programs are open to participants across the state. Please join us to learn about deer and this new initiative.

Overview

There will be an increased opportunity for the public to learn about deer and give input about deer populations under a pilot project launched by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). This new project will generate a public recommendation for deer population change based on input from a broad cross-section of New Yorkers gathered through a public survey and recommendations from a small group of citizens convened for the purpose of identifying and prioritizing deer impacts in their region. DEC biologists will base final objectives for deer population change on whether the public recommendation is compatible with existing levels of deer impacts on forests.

Results of the process, as well as the decisions pursuant to it, will be shared with the public broadly, serving as an audit on the pilot system, and providing feedback for improving the process before expanding it to other WMU aggregates in the future. Once refined, DEC intends to implement the new process on a routine cycle in each aggregate in the state to respond to changing conditions and attitudes about deer impacts over time.

The Human Dimensions Research Unit (HDRU) and the Cooperative Extension in

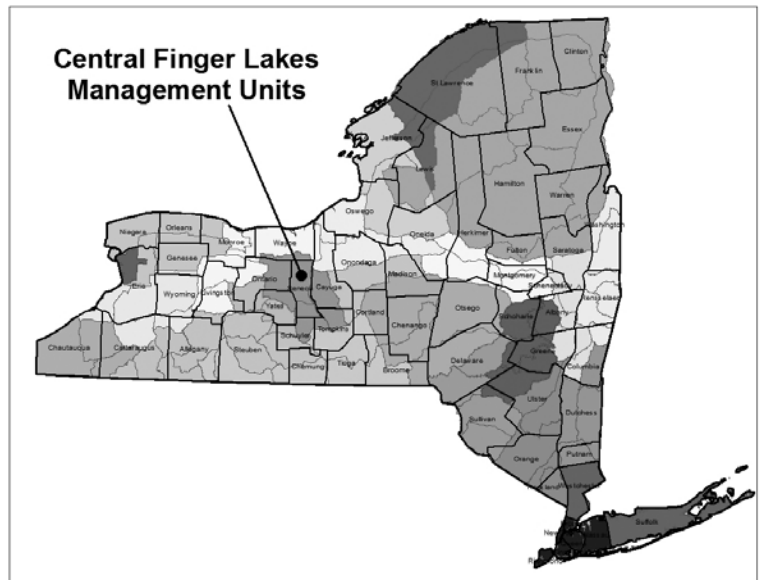
the Department of Natural Resources at Cornell University are assisting DEC with the research and educational aspects of the pilot.

In addition, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Seneca, Cayuga, and Tompkins counties will play a central role in implementation of the pilot process.

Pilot Region and New Aggregate Wildlife Management Units

DEC has grouped the existing 92 Wildlife Management Units (WMUs) into fewer, larger WMU aggregates for deer management that will allow for better use of existing and new data and improved deer population monitoring. Public recommendations for deer population change will also be identified for WMU aggregates rather than individual WMUs. DEC is evaluating the best approach to engage the public at this larger scale.


The pilot effort will take place in a region consisting of a 1,325-square-mile group of three WMUs (7H, 8J and 8S) which encompasses Seneca County and portions of Ontario, Wayne, Yates, Schuyler, Tompkins and Cayuga counties. This WMU aggregate is called the Central Finger Lakes Unit.



Opportunities to Learn about Deer and Provide Input to DEC

The pilot project will include a broad-scale education effort this fall to develop public understanding of the process, share results of the survey and convey information to the public regarding deer, deer impacts, and management issues and challenges. Following a number of educational events, a small group of interested citizens will be convened for the purpose of identifying and prioritizing deer impacts in the pilot WMU aggregate.

Upcoming Events and Opportunities to Get Involved

Join our Webinar series “Deer and Deer Management in New York State.” For more information about upcoming events and opportunities to get involved please contact Kristi Sullivan (kls20@cornell.edu) at Cornell University or Stefan Lutter (sml339@cornell.edu) at CCE Cayuga County. 

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Two Family Heirlooms

DAVE WILLIAMS

As a small woodlot owner seeking to leave a good mark on my property I realize that my “lease” is short term, and I wonder who will benefit from my Timber Stand Improvement (TSI) work, and my eradication efforts of the fern, multiflora rose, and beech brush. I know that trees will come and go as temporary

owners also come and go. And I expect, with some degree of certainty, that my heirs will not be in a position to take over after I am done. But I can leave a legacy of good stewardship, even as I collect souvenirs along the way that my heirs can cherish as they remember the old woodlot that will then be in new hands.



This is the wedding chair.

One way to collect souvenirs is to convert raw materials from the woodlot into lasting family treasures. Windsor chair builder David Abeel has been doing just that for many years. Each August he is drawn back from Traverse City, Michigan for the annual family reunion in Guilford where he enjoys an extended stay with cousins Dan and Jean Schlafer on the old family homestead founded by their grandfather, Frank Schlafer, a century ago. To get more bang for the buck as he makes these long treks to and from Michigan, David gathers materials—sticks, hardwood lumber and thick, wide pine planks—to take back home to create furniture. The following year sees finished stools and chairs returning to New York as heirloom gifts for the family “back east.” One of these chairs (the wedding chair) arrived in time for Karen Schlafer and Todd Williams’ wedding day and on the underside of the seat is this inscription:

**To Todd Williams and Karen Schlafer
on your wedding day: 9/9/2000**

Continuous Arm Windsor Chair

**“Stop a moment....
park your seat.....
clear your mind and rest your feet”**

“As you sit: remember the quiet hills of Guilford where you and the sticks and slab that comprise this chair all took root and flourished. The white pine seat comes from the North Hill pole lot. The ash legs and arm are from the steep hill before Hort’s pond on South Hill Road. The hickory spindles come from the hill facing Foote Cemetery.

.....Take heart, things and people from this valley that come together are prone to have great duration. How fitting that you and these sticks should have such common roots.”

For several years I have had the good pleasure of sitting upon various “Abeel” Windsor stools while visiting the Schlafers on the farm. Each fall I could see the new one that arrived with David in August and I knew I wanted to



Windsor chair workshop participants: Finn and Sophie Williams on shaving horses, second row—Oscar Williams and Dave Abeel. third row—Jean Schlafer, Tom Carey, Don Schlafer, Peter Smallidge, back row—Dan Schlafer, Dave Williams and Todd Williams.

make one. Later, when Dave and I met for the first time we talked about a chair workshop and the concept “simmered” until the time was right. The time seemed right for a chair class this summer and the SOT chapter of NYFOA agreed to sponsor it.

The two day Windsor chair workshop was held July 30 through August 1 at Todd and Karen Williams 113 acre forested homesite in Waverly, New York.

Under Dave’s tutelage, nine participants ranging in age from seven to nearly seventy built four Windsor side chairs and five stools. Beginning with roughed-out seat slabs, spindles, and legs, students used a shaving horse for holding work and used a wide variety of tools including: tenon cutters, drilling and boring tools, spokeshaves, travishers, compass planes, hoop shaves, block planes and draw knives, to name a few. At the conclusion of class, chairs and stools were glued up, leveled and ready for participants to sand and apply paint or a sealing finish of choice at home.

Enthusiastic “chair camp” graduates were eager to plan a similar event during 2016. David Abeel said he is willing to come back to Waverly or any

woodlot owner’s location in New York where five or more individuals can be gathered to form a class. Contact Dave Williams at kdwillmill@gmail.com if you would like to sign up for a future chair camp. David Abeel can also be contacted at abeeldavid@hotmail.com. He will be offering future workshops at John Wilson’s Shaker Oval Box workshop in Charlotte, Michigan, the Oliver Art Center in Frankfort, Michigan and through the Northwestern Michigan College Extended Education in Traverse City, Michigan.

Special thanks go out to the Todd and Karen Williams family for their hospitality and for providing facilities for this event.

By the way, since the workshop concluded the Schlafer homestead has new “tenants”. In late August, the LeRoy Miller family from Ohio closed on the farm and have begun making their mark and memories on the landscape. But Dan and Jean did manage to take away one more chair and one last stool of their own building from the old homestead. 🏡

Dave Williams is a Master Forest Owner volunteer, a member of the NYFOA Board of Directors, and NYFOA’s Southern Tier Chapter.

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Bear Houses (continued)

already had a large amount of treated 4x4s and 2x4s from an enclosure we had to remove due to a gas line going through the property. We also had multiple rough cut hemlock boards we planned to use. We then contacted our sign builder and had four signs constructed.

It is now the middle of June and the four bear houses are completed. For each one we utilized six 4X4 treated posts that were anchored in concrete. The huts are approximately eight feet long, five feet wide and five feet high. We used hemlock planks for the sides and top. Then we painted the entire structure with high quality black paint. The inside was painted black as well and a bale of straw was placed on the floor.

We found four remote areas for the houses where we normally do not go and are away from any trails.

Below is a listing of the cost of the project:

- 13 bags of 50 lbs concrete: \$56.29
- 24 4x4x6 treated posts removed from an

enclosure that a pipeline cut through: \$0

- Screws and fasteners: \$8.00
- 60 hemlock boards 8' long cut from our property and air dried: \$0
- 5 gallons paint: \$40.00
- Labor: \$0

Total cost of project: \$104.29

A week after the construction was completed we visited the sites to take photos and noticed some signs of mud on two of the houses. Close examination revealed the bears had already visited them and placed their paw prints on all sides, as well as on the top. Hopefully they will remember the sites when it comes time for their winter nap. The famous saying, "build it and they will come" appears to apply to our various building projects.

Now the process of seeking a worthwhile

inhabitant will take place. During the winter months we will try to check the houses for any potential residents. With the sturdy construction we expect the houses to last for decades, thus we will be patient, but expect the houses to be occupied in the coming years.

We checked around and have not heard of anyone attempting to house bears for the winter; we find it very interesting to monitor and keep track of the project. ▲

Ed and Wanda Piestrak are members of NYFOA.



Ed in front of one of the bear houses.



Evidence of the bears visiting one of the bear houses.

Got Trees? Got Questions?
Visit the *Woodland Owners Forum* at:
<http://CornellForestConnect.ning.com>
to share ideas, information and questions with fellow woodland owners, foresters and other members of the forest community across New York



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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

BE ON THE LOOK OUT...FOR OAK WILT!

BY EMMA ROSENTHAL

The Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic at Cornell University is conducting a survey in conjunction with the New York State Department of Environmental

Conservation and the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets to determine whether oak wilt, a disease that can cause considerable damage to



Oaks losing color and wilting along a forest edge. Photo credit: Steven Katovich, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org.



Developed "scorch" on leaves, a foliar symptom. Photo credit: C.E. Seliskar, Bugwood.org.



Bark removed, revealing a fungal pad. Photo credit: Joseph O'Brien, USDA Forest Service, Bugwood.org.

our oak trees, is yet established in New York State.

The first identification in the United States was in Wisconsin in 1944, and since then the disease has been found across the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic. In 2008, a residential area in Schenectady County produced the first positive case in New York State, and in 2013 another positive case was found in the same neighborhood. It is unclear how the pathogen came to be in this remote location given that the closest known infection was approximately 180 miles to the southwest, in a community in central Pennsylvania. It is possible for the causal pathogen, *Ceratocystis fagacearum*, to survive for a long period of time on material from felled trees, so firewood may be the most likely mode of transport. In Schenectady County, extensive measures were taken to control the spread of the disease and so far, further testing has produced negative results. However, the pathogen can move slowly and may go undetected for years, so it is imperative that we keep up the search – and we could really use your help!

There are a number of signs and symptoms that you can look for to identify the disease. Typically, in June or July the



Root grafts through which the oak wilt pathogen may spread. Photo credit: Ronald F. Billings, Texas Forest Service, Bugwood.org.

infected oaks exhibit significant wilting. Red oaks are more susceptible than white oaks and therefore tend to wilt more quickly, in as little as three weeks. Leaves often show marginal “scorch” or browning around the edges and vascular discoloration may be visible under the bark on the current season’s growth, though it should be noted that these two symptoms are not always present even in confirmed cases and so their absence does not rule out the disease. As a diseased tree nears death, a fungal pad will form beneath the bark that, over time, will expand and create cracks in the bark. These fungal pads have a somewhat sweet odor that is often described to be like rotting fruit or stale beer. Late in the season, it may be possible to observe these fungal pads on symptomatic oaks.

If you notice any of these signs or symptoms on oak trees within New York State, please contact your local Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) Office, the Cornell Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic, or the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. If you would like to submit a sample from your own property for testing or if you would like more information, please visit our website at www.plantclinic.cornell.edu/oakwiltpage.html. We are researching this disease under the Specialty Crops

Block Grant program and suspect samples submitted specifically for oak wilt testing will be processed free of charge. Please do not attempt to collect samples from other private property or any public property without consulting an extension agent or forester.

Thank you in advance for your help in protecting New York State’s oaks! Your assistance with detection is vital to our efforts—an early detection greatly increases the chances for successful

eradication. If you want to help inform others of the need to be on the lookout for oak wilt, the Clinic has produced an informational poster and postcards that contain contact information. You can view these items at the link provide above and can receive printed material by contacting Emma Rosenthal or Karen Snover-Clift at the address below for the Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic. ▲

Resources:

The Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic is located at 334 Plant Science Bldg, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14850. Phone (607) 255-7850.

Information for your CCE office can be found at: www.cce.cornell.edu.

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Forest Pest Information Line: (866) 640-0652.

NYS Dept. of Agriculture & Markets Phone: (518) 457-2087.

Emma Rosenthal is a Service Technician with The Plant Disease Diagnostic Clinic at Cornell University. She can be reached at err74@cornell.edu

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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Ask a Professional (continued)

or eliminated by cool weather logging from late fall through early spring (before the ground thaws). The added advantage of winter logging is that dragging logs on frozen and snow-covered ground will reduce dirt and rock in the bark that dulls chain saws and band saw blades. In the spring, roughly late March through mid to late June, the bark of trees is “loose” and more likely to peel away in large sections if bumped by a tractor or skidder. Also, soft and wet ground common in the spring can result in significant rutting.

The grade of logs along with an assessment of quality, may change depending on the duration and conditions of their storage before milling. Hardwood logs of light color (e.g., maple) cut during the summer will quickly start to lose grade because microorganisms will spread in the wood and change its color. In this case, the change in grade is based on wood color and not wood structure. For some owners the change in color is desirable and adds aesthetic complexity to an otherwise ordinary board. The volume of each log may decline as they lose moisture and shrink. Logs may also check, and split on the ends, which can reduce the usable length of the logs. Control of these concerns is accomplished by processing hardwood logs quickly, usually within a month, by keeping the logs under a sprinkler system as

done in many industrial log yards, or by coating the ends of the logs with an end-grain sealant.

Felled trees should be bucked into log lengths that optimize straightness and reduce taper. Skidding shorter logs typically causes less damage to residual trees than skidding long logs. Regarding taper, there might be a straight 16 foot log, but the log’s diameter may change by 2 to 4 inches or more and cause a significant loss of lumber in slab wood. By convention, logs are usually cut 4 to 6 inches

longer than the final product to allow for end trimming after the boards have dried. Logs can be sawn immediately; there is usually no advantage to wait, although some logs may sit for several weeks or months before being sawn. Logs should be stacked on a pair of sacrificial logs to allow for air circulation, reduce dirt in the logs and increase the ease of movement of the logs.

Adequate space for storage of logs after harvest is necessary. A commercial sale will require a landing that can be accessed by a log truck. If logs will be milled on-site, plan for the location of the portable sawmill, for moving logs onto the mill, access with trucks or wagons to move lumber, and for how slab wood and sawdust will be disposed of.

Storing and using lumber

Select a custom sawyer who has experience. An experienced sawyer can help you fully prepare for the sawing and storage of lumber. Use your local personal networks, or resources listed below to find a sawyer. Consult with the sawyer before harvesting to make sure any special needs are known, how the logs should be arranged, and to ensure the sawyer is available.



Special attachments for ATV and tractors, shown here with a winch, increase safety and productivity. Care is needed if these types of machines are used for small scale logging.

Sawn lumber needs to be stickered as soon as it is cut. Drying the lumber in a stable rack will reduce twist, cupping, and splitting of the boards. Stickered is the process of stacking the lumber in a pile with several small wooden strips, usually about 1 x 1 inch, between each layer of boards. Spacing between stickers is usually 18 to 24 inches. Stickers are an inexpensive investment in a potentially high quality product. Piles of stickered lumber should be elevated on a sturdy foundation of block about 12” to 16” above ground. Usually, boards of different thicknesses and lengths will be stacked in different piles. Position those stickers near the ends of the boards, as close to the end as possible, to reduce end checking. Cover the piles of lumber with old metal roofing or plywood. Plastic coverings tend to collect water and may not allow adequate air flow.

The utility of a species will depend on the project. In many utilitarian projects, the lumber that is available is the lumber that is used. One consideration is the strength of the wood, especially for structural or load bearing uses. Internet resources are available to guide the type, quantity and dimension of lumber used for rafters and joists. Your local building code officer may also have resources. A second consideration is durability. If wood is kept dry, the board will resist decay. Other than rot resistant wood such as black locust, white cedar, white oak or larch,




A corduroy base in a low spot in the trail reduces jarring of the machine and lessens impact and wear on the trail.



Lumber should be stickered immediately after sawing, ideally as the boards come off the mill. Indoor storage, as illustrated, is ideal if space is available.

wood exposed to the elements will benefit from a preservative. Several preservative treatments are commercially available

and owners should consult online reviews and with local vendors and builders for suggestions on brands. 

Other resources

1. Numerous publications are available via www.ForestConnect.com. A social network is also accessible for owners at www.CornellForestConnect.ning.com and includes an events page, blogs, questions and answers, and a place to post pictures of what you are doing in your woods.
2. Some of the manufacturers of portable bandsaw mills maintain lists of sawyers. Look on the Internet for sawyers in your area from company webpages for Woodmizer, Baker, Timberking, or Norwood and others.
3. The discussion boards at www.forestryforum.com have numerous topics related to small scale harvesting, sawmill operation, lumber handling and timber framing.

Response by: Peter J Smallidge, NY Extension Forester, Cornell University Cooperative Extension, Department of Natural Resources, Ithaca, NY. Pjs23@cornell.edu, 607/592-3640. Support for ForestConnect is provided by USDA NIFA and the Cornell University College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.



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Bob & Pat Glidden

BRIANA BINKERD-DALE

As a child, Bob Glidden spent time during the summers on his great uncle's farm, which left him with a lifelong love of wildlife and land. Born and raised in North Tonawanda, NY, he worked with the City of N. Tonawanda in the building maintenance field for 33 years, and currently works part time as the Town of Newfane assessor. When he and his wife Pat started thinking about retirement, they knew that they wanted rural land close to their work and family members. At the time, they owned land in Chautauqua County, but that was too far away. When they found 30 acres in northeastern Niagara County in the Town of Somerset, about 3 miles south of Lake Ontario, it was the perfect site to settle down on.

Bob and Pat purchased the Niagara County land in early 1997 with the help of a realtor. They built their retirement home there with the help of Bob's brother in law, who is a general contractor, and have lived there since November of 1997. Surrounded

by active farmland and wooded areas, their parcel is relatively flat agricultural land abandoned in the 1970s, part of which must have been an orchard at one time judging by the abundance of old pear and apple trees. There are 7-10 acres of mixed hardwoods: red and white oak, shagbark hickory, ash, maple and declining elms along with some red and Scotch pine. This complements a six acre section that is aspen, cherry, cottonwood, willow, box elder and the old fruit trees. Grass and brush areas consist of sumac, more old fruit trees, wild grapes, raspberries, multiflora rose and viburnum.

Bob and Pat wasted no time developing their land stewardship plan. Bob had become a certified Master Forest Owner volunteer in 1995 and was impressed by the presentations he had seen forester Bruce Robinson give at several MFO workshops and conferences, so they asked for Bruce's assistance in developing a stewardship plan focusing on wildlife



Bob and grandson Alex repairing a duck nest tube.

conservation. That same year, they enrolled in the NYS Tree Farm Program, started a trail system, and hosted a NYFOA woods walk.

Bob knew he wanted to add a fish pond to the property, so after consulting a soil conservationist and digging some test pits, they dug a $\frac{3}{4}$ acre pond in 1998, and stocked the pond with bass and koi. The following year Bob's friend Joe dowsed for water; this allowed the Gliddens to drill a well to ensure a supply of water to the pond. A windmill was also installed to pump and oxygenate the pond water—it can pump 500 gallons of water in an hour with 20 mph winds. They have a permit from the DEC for 5-7 grass carp to help manage algae, as well as a permit for the aquatic herbicide Cutrine—but the windmill and the carp keep the filamentous algae in check most of the time.

In 2000, Bob and Pat established a 3 acre duck and goose marsh along with 3 acres of grassland under the USDA's Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP), now known as EQIP. The cost sharing aspect of the program allowed for improvements to the land sooner and more affordably than would have been possible otherwise—WHIP covered 80% of the cost of installing the pond, and 75% of the cost of installing the marsh and grassland area.



Winter fun on the trails with the family.

continued on page 22



Master Forest Owner refresher training with consulting forester Bruce Robinson.

There can be a waiting list for EQIP, so Bob recommends that those interested get their land stewardship plan written, sign up as soon as possible, and to be patient. If you don't already have a stewardship plan, EQIP can assist you in writing one.

Bob has been very active with 4-H, and was Key Leader on their pheasant raising program for 15 years, raising 1500-2000 birds a year and releasing them into the wild in conjunction with the DEC. His

appreciation of birds inspired him to cut about three acres of aspen to encourage grouse habitat. Bob also "topped off" 17 box elders, cottonwoods and willows in the cut aspen area; topping off cuts the stem at the lowest fork to leave a living stubby snag. Rotational mowing enhances cover for the song birds, turkeys and pheasants. He also established a 22 house bluebird trail on the property in 2009.

The Gliddens have established a variety

of food plots geared towards wildlife, totaling approximately 2 acres. For the birds, Bob annually plants rooster booster, which is a mix of corn, buckwheat and sorghum and has planted flat pea that comes up year after year with no maintenance. Additionally, he cultivates perennial sunflowers, several different types of clover, sorghum and chufa. He will often consult with his neighbors to see what they are planting in surrounding fields that season and plan the food plots accordingly. Bob also takes advantage of the old fruit trees, releasing and fertilizing them to provide additional food for wildlife, and has a bumper crop of apples this year. In addition to the planted food plots, he removed about 80 scotch and red pines that were unstable in windstorms due to the high water table to create openings for hardwoods that are more beneficial to wildlife. Joe, who put up the windmill for the pond, took the lumber from the pines in exchange for his help with projects on the property.

Pat and Bob can clearly see how the transformation from abandoned agricultural land to managed wildlife areas has enhanced the diversity and abundance of wildlife on their property. He loves to see all of the animals living on their land, and knowing that he and his family are making a difference in their lives. Their family uses the land for wildlife observation, bird watching, hiking, fishing, some hunting, winter activities and family get-togethers. Their trail system supports hiking, snowmobiling and cross country skiing... and hay rides!

Bob and Pat have now been NYFOA members for over 20 years—Bob says that the amount of knowledge they have gotten from the *Forest Owner* magazine, chapter newsletters and meetings, and woods walks is neverending. He is currently the NYFOA Niagara Frontier Chapter (NFC) chairman and a state delegate, while Pat is secretary and newsletter coordinator. Bob's advice to other forest owners is to have a plan, set a time frame, go at a pace that works for you, but above all to enjoy your land. 🌲



Bluebird houses and windmill pumping fresh water to pond.

Briana Binkerd-Dale is a student in Environmental Biology and Applied Ecology at Cornell University. If you are interested in being featured in a member profile, please email Jeff Joseph at jeffjosephwoodworker@gmail.com



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