



NYFOA

New York Forest Owners Association

SOUTHEASTERN ADIRONDACK

Memories, Courtesy of Mother Nature

By: Erwin Fullerton, 92 years young

The Overstory

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Chair: Bruce Cushing
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Secretary: Bill Burke
Treasurer: Bob Manning

NEWSLETTER

Editor and Design:
Kristie Edwards

To submit articles for publication,
please contact: Kristie Edwards, 411
Beech Street,
Mayfield, NY 12117
edwardsk922@gmail.com

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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Mark Hoffmann, Niskayuna, NY

Jim Lieberum, Warrensburg, NY

ADIRONDACK STUMPAGE PRICE REPORT

New York State Department of
Environmental Conservation
www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5259.html

I will never forget the hurricane of 1938. I watched as tree branches rolled down the driveway, like tumbleweeds. The next day we saw the sad sight of large maple trees in our sugar-bush lying in a tangled mess with roots tipped up twelve feet high.

I remember the ice storm of 1998. For two days we heard the breaking branches sounding like rifle shot, leaving a tangled mess in trails and then seeing the limbless skeletons of the trees against the cloudy sky.

The most recent memory was born on August 5, 2019, we experienced a fire at our tree farm in Warren County, NY. What a weird and odd feeling seeing an open landscape blackened with burnt sticks, ashes and bare ledges with thinned lonely white pine trees reaching into the hazy sky overhead where a thick forest grew a year before. This site, just harvested of white pine, was a smelly, smoky haze with little wisps of smoke rising here and there from burning embers on the windless overcast day. The only sound in the distance was the sound of the water pump running at the pond and the swishing of the fire hoe used by the New York State Rangers to wet down the ashes.

The day before, eight New York State Forest rangers used a 650 John Deere dozer to clear a fire lane along our trails around the fire to the wetlands on the south side. They made a fire by the fire lane burning and clearing brush on the west side and pumped water from our pond through one-half mile of fire hose laid along the fire lanes around the fire to hose it down.

It was an impressive experience to observe five Rangers with their ATV and firefighting equipment working for three days to insure the fire was all out before leaving. They hoed and hosed out all roots and stumps on the five acres.



Members Corner

Tinkle Creek at Bedrock Pond-Trials and Tribulations

By Eric Lawson

Early last fall, after receiving Beverly Lawson's endorsement of my plan to build a pond at Kindervolk, our forest retreat near Lincoln Pond, I naively thought the rest would be smooth sailing (Metaphor intended). After all, I only needed to dig a hole, wait for it to fill with water and then slip into my Speedo and bask beside gentle waters, right? Well, it didn't quite work out that way.

The site for the pond had several elevations, trees, large rocks and undergrowth among other challenges. But before tackling these matters and especially because the project is in the Adirondack Park, prudence suggested that maybe governmental permission was needed for the project. I started with DEC, who initially advised that they saw no problem but perhaps I should check with the Manager of Wildlife. Soon enough, the MW brought a critter called the Northern Long Eared Bat to my attention and advised that I shouldn't consider removing any trees until after November, a death blow to the project being finished before snow flies.

However, fueled with a singleness of purpose, I drilled down into the issue of habitat for the NLEB with the MW and, after confirming with him that none of the trees were dead and therefore not suitable NLEB habitat, I could proceed with tree removal. Whew, what a relief. But then there was the Adirondack Park Agency.

Initially, I convinced myself that there would be no problem with APA, especially since the pond site was some distance away from any lands designated as "wetlands". Dream on. I contacted the agency and initially, they replied, as I expected but they asked for a few photos of the site which I eagerly provided. As luck would have it, one photo showed a fern or two and that released from APA a demand for an onsite inspection. At the inspection, I protested the possibility that permitting would be required because of the presence of a "wetland" since no such designation had been attached to the area at issue. There followed quite an exchange of correspondence, including an analysis of the Freshwater Wetlands Act and another visit to the site by an APA biologist, prior to an APA determination that no permit was required because of the modest size of the wetland area at issue – Tinkle Creek. So, a second occasion for relief.



Filled Pond

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Memories from page 1



The Forest Ranger, Evan Donegan, told of how it was a “textbook natural fire during low humidity weather, probably resulting from a lightning strike.” Being near a highway with trails and water available was fortunate, preventing the burn from continuing along the log harvest area toward our out buildings.

They used a drone to show me an aerial view of the forest fire area, pond, and forest from above. They also discussed how fast plants will grow back into a wonderful place to hunt deer! Some damaged pine trees have been marked to remove as the log harvest continues once the ground freezes. This is our second harvest with a good crop now.

Learning from this forest fire has been a pleasant experience seeing the work done by the capable friendly Forest Rangers. It has now been fifty-two years of enjoying the help of foresters and other land owners, but none of them predicted a forest fires on our tree farm!

I was told there was a forest fire on a bank by a wetland in 1941 as shown by a ring on a stump. Pine trees are still growing, left because of damage on the up-hill side caused by the fire.

At least five white pine, two hemlock trees were killed and a dead basswood was blown to pieces by lightning. Lightning hit our well and destroyed the control box on June 1, 2001. Our well-driller said we should ground the well, which we did, with no problems since.

I hope I live to see the “fire opening” regenerate and see the wildlife that will inhabit the site.



Continued from page 2

But, “we were not out of the woods” (Sorry about that) yet. I quickly engaged an excavation contractor who promptly showed up with his Doosan, a 22-ton excavator that could – it seemed to me- “move mountains”. That, in addition to an operator who was so intimately engaged with the machine, almost as though it were a prosthetic device, that he could extricate huge tree roots and nimbly place boulders weighing several tons with the same gentle touch a mother uses to calm a crying infant or a Lothario to demolish his love’s resistance.

But then we hit bedrock about 4 feet down and I reluctantly concluded that my powers of persuasion, which had served me well earlier in the project, would be unavailing against the bedrock. In desperation, the pond site was shifted to the south about 20 feet in the hope that the bedrock would run out and also in the hope that once covered in four feet of water – rather than the anticipated 8 feet- at least it would not leak. And so, it came to pass that the bedrock did run out and did not leak; but alas, all was still not yet well.

The east side of the pond bordered the woods road going north and so in what proved to a futile gesture, we tried to build the pond berm too narrowly, disregarding the advice of the Essex County Soil and Water Conservation Department that at least a three to one ratio is needed for the berm (Three feet of base for every foot of height). The result was that the pond filled very quickly and held for three weeks before the east berm gave out. At that point, despite my indomitable will, I retreated for the winter, wiser in pond building then before for sure, but with a commitment to persevere next spring when the woods road will be raised to become part of the east berm and the pond will fill and my Speedo will be put to the test.



Did you know....



The first known tree was a leafless, fern-like plant from New York.

Upright stumps of fossilized trees were uncovered after a flash flood in Gilboa.....

Source: <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2007/04/070418130435.htm>
(read more here)

Coming Events



174 Lape Road, Esperance, NY

Wednesday, May 20th

Tour the Landis Arboretum

- ◆ Arrive 9:45 — tour begins 10:00am
- ◆ Around noon we will eat a bag lunch in the picnic area— bring your lunch and beverage.
- ◆ Anyone who wishes to tour more can do so after lunch. Check out the Landis website: <http://landisarboretum.org/>

NYFOA partners with Audubon

Saturday, June 20th - 9:00am

Kunjamuk Young Forest Demonstration Forest

Speculator, NY

This program is part of Audubon's Woods,

Wildlife and Warblers Project

This will be approximately a 2 hour drive along the forest trail with stops to see the different habitat and will include a bird banding demonstration.

<http://lymetimber.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/KunjamukYoungForestFactSheet.pdf>.

SAC Annual Picnic— plans are underway for the Fall Annual Picnic. We will be going to the Fullerton Tree Farm in Athol, NY to view the damage and regeneration from their August forest fire.

More details will be in our next Overstory.

SAC Steering Committee Meeting

Usually scheduled for April will be scheduled at a later date

Internet Resources

Healthy Forests / Audubon New York

As the leading voice for birds in New York State, we protect, conserve, and steward the most critical habitat for birds and other wildlife. We also reduce threats to birds and foster bird-friendly communities in rural, suburban and urban areas. ***Please help us speak out for birds!***

<https://ny.audubon.org/conservation/healthy-forests>

American Forest Foundation/ Family Forests Provide Wildlife Habitat

Thriving forests are not just for good people, but also for the ecosystem and wildlife that make up our planet. If you care about wildlife, you need to care about what's happening across America's forestland, particularly the family and private owned forestland.....

<https://www.forestfoundation.org/wildlife-habitat>

SAC Annual Meeting

Mother Nature again this year brought down her wrath to temporarily disable the north country. Last year our annual meeting was canceled due to weather and this year although we were able to have the meeting as planned many of our dedicated SAC members were unable to attend. Wide spread power outages and snow removal were the priority of the day. Those in attendance conducted a successful business meeting including officer reports, committee discussions and the current slate of officers were voted to continue in their positions for the coming year. A potluck lunch was enjoyed by all, followed by our afternoon presentation. Zack Boerman, Forest Program Associate, Audubon New York spoke to our group and some additional community members about "Managing Sugarbush for Birds." Meeting minutes have been distributed, if you are interested in a receiving them please contact anyone on the steering committee.



American Ginseng in New York

By: Robert L Beyfuss, reprinted from Forest Owner Nov/Dec 1991

American Ginseng (*Panax quinquefolium*) has been cultivated in New York since the early 1900's primarily because of the high prices historically paid for the wild roots which have been gathered here since the 1700's. In fact, a New Yorker, George Stanton, who lived in Tully, New York, about 25 miles south of Syracuse is recognized as the first commercial ginseng grower. In 1904, Liberty Hyde Bailey, then director of the Cornell University Agricultural Experimental Station wrote "New York State is one of the leading states in the growing of ginseng. Considering the value of the New York product and the attention given to the plant, it is not improbable that New York leads the states." Unfortunately, widespread disease problems, particularly *Alternaria* blight, wiped out most commercial operations by 1910. However, in the last few years there has been a renewed interest in herbal medicines, remedies and substance that may prevent disease. This has led some growers to once again consider commercial ginseng culture.

Most of the ginseng grown in North America is exported to Hong Kong. A permit is required to export either wild or cultivated ginseng from New York State. Permits may be obtained from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Additional rules and regulations regarding gathering of wild ginseng are also available from Department of Environmental Conservation.

The costs associated with ginseng production are directly proportional to the intensity of the culture. The least expensive way to grow ginseng is to broadcast the seed in a natural forest in adequate shade. American ginseng plants must be grown in an area that is at least 75% shaded. It is important to select a suitable site, preferably a moist, but not wet or poorly-drained, north or north-eastern facing slope. A mature oak, sugar maple or mixed hardwood forest without excessive underbrush is best. Areas to avoid are wet spots or places where shallow rooted trees and shrubs are dominant.

The nutritional requirements of ginseng are not well documented, nor are the pH preferences well understood. Many growers incorporate bonemeal or some other phosphorus source into the growing area and some may adjust the pH to 6.0 or higher.

The procedure for planting seed is not complicated although it is important to make sure that the seed has been properly handled prior to sowing. Ginseng seeds have an immature embryo at the time the berries ripen (usually August in New York) and the seeds require a cool storage period followed by a warm storage period followed by another cool treatment before they will germinate.



Ginseng plant, seed and root

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The seed must also be kept moist during this 18 month stratification period and cannot be stored for any appreciable length of time after the second cold treatment.

Some growers simply rake back the existing ground cover of leaves and decaying organic matter and broadcast seed at rates of ten to twenty pounds per acre. There are approximately 8,000 seeds per pound. The plants are then left to grow on their own for a period of seven to ten years. Other growers form raised beds in the forest that are fenced in. Large stones and stumps are removed to facilitate harvest and growing operations.

Forest cultivation involves many risks since the seed and plants may be eaten by rodents, (chipmunks, squirrels, mice, voles, woodchucks, etc.) deer or birds (grouse, turkeys, etc.). Although insect pests are not considered a serious problem, slugs often damage or destroy seedlings plants. Certain diseases, particularly root rot caused by *Phytophthora cactorum*, can wipe out entire beds within a few weeks. It is also important to note that there are virtually no pesticides registered for use on American ginseng here in New York State.



Ginseng may also be cultivated in well-prepared raised beds in fields using artificial shade made from wood lathe or plastic fabric. Costs associated with this type of intensive culture may run \$10,000 or more an acre for shade structure and land preparation alone. These intensive operations may use up to 150 lbs. of seed per acre with average seed prices ranging from \$50 - \$75 per pound. The roots are usually harvested after four years of growth at which time individual roots will weigh as much or more than 8 to 10 year old forest grown roots. Yields from intensive, field grown average about 2,000 lbs. per acre under the most optimum management conditions. The prices paid for field cultivated American ginseng roots in 1988 in Wisconsin (the major growing area in the U.S.) ranged from \$30 to \$60 per pound depending upon the shape and general condition of the roots as well as the prevailing market demand. Prices paid for roots gathered in the wild ranged from \$160 to \$250 per pound. These prices are all based on dry weight and the large differential between cultivated and wild roots reflects the time required to grow the plant and perhaps the quantity of the active ingredients within the root.

Current resources: <https://news.cornell.edu/stories/1997/02/ginseng-growers-hope-new-yorks-forests-are-enchanted>

<https://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7130.html>

Are you interested in hosting a woodswalk?

Do you have a suggestion for a chapter event?

If so please contact Kurt Edwards, event coordinator,

at 411 Beech Street, Mayfield, NY 12117, or at edwardsk922@gmail.com



New York Forest Owners Association

SOUTHEASTERN

PO Box 541
Lima, NY 14485
1-800-836-3566

SAC Officers:

Chairman :
Bruce Cushing
becushing@gmail.com
(518) 695-9207

Vice Chair: vacant

Treasurer:
Robert Manning
bobmanning@frontiernet.net
(518) 251-4638

Secretary:
William Burke
liamsb46@gmail.com

Steering Committee Members:

Kurt & Kristie Edwards
edwardsk922@gmail.com
(518) 661-5685

Dave & Jane Jenks
janejenks.adkmts@yahoo.com
(518) 532-7595

Ed & Donna Welch
trautwei@gmail.com