

# The Overstory

Volume 25

Issue 1

Spring 2014

New York Forest Owners Association Southeastern Adirondack Chapter

## HIGHLIGHTS

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- Recent woodwalks
- DeWitt remembrance
- Planting seedlings
- Coming events
- Online forestry resources
- Letter from the Chair

### ADIRONDACK STUMPAGE PRICE REPORT

New York State Dept. of Environmental Conservation

[www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5259.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5259.html)

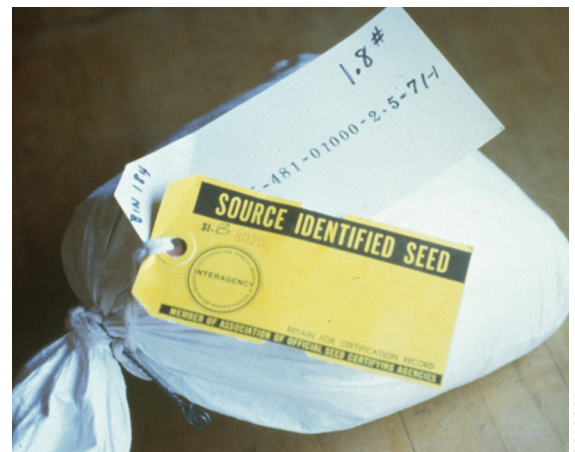
## SAC Annual Meeting

Kristie Edwards 🌿 Photos courtesy Forestry Images

**Our annual meeting** was again held at the Crandall Library in Glens Falls. 22 members were in attendance on February 1st when the meeting was called to order at 10am. Chairman, Kurt Edwards, facilitated the yearly business meeting, covering the usual departmental reports. A few new committees were formed. One to explore a new look for our fair display, something to draw more attention to the booth. Another committee will work with CCE of Saratoga County to continue discussion and organize construction of a deer enclosure fence, a project in conjunction with NYFOA's RNYW initiative.

During old business we voted to accept a revised version of our Operational Guidelines and in New Business we voted in a new slate of officers for the upcoming year. We welcome our new Chairman, Lou Inzinna and secretary Bill Burke. Thanks to Bob Manning for continuing as Treasurer, the position of vice chair is vacant for this term. The meeting concluded at 11:30 and we enjoyed a casual lunch at Davidson Brothers Restaurant.

A presentation open to the public began at 2pm on the topic of native seed collection. Edward Toth, Director Greenbelt Native Plant Center and Director of Mid-Atlantic Regional Seed Bank spoke on conservation and use of ecotypic seed as well as a bit of history and science behind the benefits of using local genotypes. He spoke about the ongoing efforts in Ash Tree seed collection. The Ash Tree alone offers a habitat for about 150 native species that solely need ash trees for survival. Their survival is threatened as the Emerald Ash Borer makes its way through New York State decimating Ash trees in its path. Mid-Atlantic Regional Seed Bank (MARS-B), in effort to support a nationwide initiative to collect and store Ash tree seed, has organized workshops designed to train individuals in the collection of such seed. One of the training workshops will be organized by the Capital/Mohawk Partnership for Regional Invasive Species Management (PRISM) and will be held in the Capital District area.



Above: Seed collected from a specific location in a particular year is called a "seed lot", and is identified by a numerical seed code. When the seed is sown, this seed code will identify the seedlings until they are shipped back to the same geographical location for outplanting. Left: White Ash seeds.

# In Memory of a Dear Friend

**Hebron** – Ronald DeWitt died peacefully, with his family by his side, Wednesday, August 28, 2013 at his home in Hebron, NY of gall bladder cancer. He was born May 19, 1932 in Kingston, NY, and was the son of Arthur and Anne DeWitt.

Ron graduated from Plattsburgh High School in 1949, then attended college at Associated Colleges of Upper New York in Plattsburgh for one year. He graduated from the General Electric Apprentice Course in Schenectady, NY in 1954 and continued his education through Union College and many courses offered by GE. He enjoyed a long career at GE, starting as a draftsman and retiring as manager of China projects at GE Power Systems. His last 10 years at GE were spent traveling the globe and working on international projects.

After retiring in 1989, he and his wife Judy moved to the family farm in Hebron, NY, where they spent many years restoring the old farm and home. During his retirement years, he was able to pursue his love of wood through his involvement with the International Wood Collectors Society (IWCS) and the Northeastern Woodworkers Association (NWA). He was one of the early members of the NWA, was president for two years and contributed more than 100 articles on wood and trees to their newsletter. He was regional trustee for the IWCS for seven years and was an associate editor of the IWCS magazine, *World of Wood*, authoring many articles for that magazine as well.

Ron was also an active member of the New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA). He organized the NYFOA exhibit at the Washington County Fair for many years. He enjoyed demonstrating cutting lumber from logs with his portable saw mill at various NYFOA gatherings. His enthusiasm for anything wood and life will be missed.

He applied his motto, “Always leave the place better than you found it,” to all aspects of life. Ron is survived by his wife Judy DeWitt, to whom he was married for 61 years. He also is survived by his three children, sons Chris and Craig DeWitt and daughter Carri Cady, and their families including nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Also surviving are his brother, Richard DeWitt; his sister, Patricia Scott; and many nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his parents and his son Clark DeWitt.



Ron & Judy De Witt demonstrate portable band mill operation during a woodswalk on Patty Kay & Ken Rayna's property in Galway, NY, in 1998.

## MEMBER'S CORNER

### My Other Life: Arbitrator, Forester

By Eric Lawson

**Since growing up** in a lovely, historic house with seven fireplaces, one or two of which were usually lit, early on I developed an intimate association with firewood and trees. At that time in the late 50s, the Dutch Elm Disease swept through upstate New York assuring that our raw fire wood supply would be populated with one of the most difficult species to saw and split, the latter being done with manual wedge and sledgehammer – no hydraulic splitters for us!

In college, at Syracuse University and as a married undergraduate – soon with a daughter, cutting and trimming trees became a way to supplement our income. And so as career plans were polished and I joined the NY PERB as a fledgling mediator in the late 60s, it was a time as well when we made the first of several purchases of forest land in the New York Adirondack Mountains.

Our property there, Kindervolk, now 156 acres, is managed under a real property tax law which permits tax forgiveness for eligible forest land that is maintained for sustained timber and saw log production. My nascent introduction several decades previously into firewood splitting now required further buffing into the area of silviculture, the management of invasive species, saw mill operation, timber grading, soil and water conservation and wildlife habitat. I've completed an extension program at Cornell and now, as a Master Forest Owner Volunteer, advise my neighbors in the utilization of their wood lots.

But our affiliation with trees, forests and wood has borne other wonderful benefits. Our son Scott was four years old when Kindervolk was created and like his dad he learned early the intricacies of chain saws. And he went on to obtain an advanced degree from Cornell as an entomologist, a career we can't help but think was influenced to some degree by his experiences at Kindervolk.

Indeed, Kindervolk was where he went with Darlene, his bride, for a grand wedding celebration and that is where they vacation with my granddaughter Madeline, who also developed a close association with flora and fauna.

We've been most fortunate for the benefits gained in my "Other Life" and look forward to the next harvest of timber this year.

This member's corner is open to anyone willing to share something with the other members. Submissions can be mailed or emailed to Kristie Edwards at [kedward1@nycap.rr.com](mailto:kedward1@nycap.rr.com) or 411 Beech Street, Mayfield, NY 12117.



# Annual Picnic at Harmony Hill

By Philip Di Benedetto 🍃 Photos by Kristie Edwards

**We were hoping for a wonderful crisp autumn day**, but unfortunately it was not to be, low clouds and threatening rain prevailed throughout the day. Somewhat typical for Bleecker in Fulton County. We hosted the SAC annual picnic at our 38 acre camp we call Harmony Hill. Guests, included Laurel Gailor from Warren County Extension Office, Kurt and Kristie Edwards, Barbara Henning among other, started arriving around 9 o'clock. Susan was preparing the breakfast goodies she made the previous day and had a delicious variety for all to enjoy. After our guests warmed up and couldn't eat any more, we began with a brief history of Bleecker pointing out the numerous sawmills that surrounded the area. Another interesting historic tidbit was that our southern property line was a portion of Chase's Patent boundary line, one of the numerous patents that made up the Adirondacks. We also outlined the TSI work that we began this year.

Luckily the weather cooperated the drizzle subsided. It was time to begin our woods walk. Our walk would take us through 3 stands identified in our management plan developed by the DEC. The first stop was the first stand, an east facing slope containing a mix of Ash, Beech, Maple and Yellow Birch. We slowly meandered discussing along our trails. The south facing second stand, mainly White Pine, Beech, and Hemlock was the second stop. We stopped to observe a few of the natural occurring vernal pools and the 2 huge Yellow birches. Our third stand, west facing, is a mix of Hemlock, Maple and Beech. Here we described the small test of Beech thicket we treated with Glysohate. It was 2 years since the last treatment and the thicket did not reappear. Moving toward the pond we also pointed out a patch of Japanese Knotweed that we also treated and cut and continue to cut yearly. So far so good! Laurel also pointed out another invasive we missed, Autumn Olive that was scattered around the pond. Add that to the to-do list!

Our woods walk concluded just in time as the rain became steadier. We dodged the raindrops to cook some picnic fare on the grill. The day concluded with the raffle where all went away happy thanks to the generosity of guests and other contributors. We are looking forward to hosting again soon.



Pond area with Autumn Olive and Wild Grape.



Stand 1: Ash, maple and birch.



Eastern White Pine blowdown.



Treated area of Japanese Knotweed.



# Planting Seedlings

by Jim Ochterski, Cornell Cooperative Extension, Regional Natural Resources  
Extension Educator 🌿 Photos Thomas D. Landis/Forestry Images

**Seedling trees are often poorly planted,** and when this is the case, they require more intensive care while struggling to survive. But this need not be the norm. Planting seedlings can be a rewarding activity if it is done right. If seedlings are poorly planted, they may look hopeless amid a field of tall grasses and weeds by mid summer. When vegetation competing with our seedlings gets out of hand, we often go out with a mower, weed trimmer, or tank of herbicides to beat back the rival plants. Inevitably, some new seedlings get chopped by errant blades or scorched by chemicals. Weeds are seen growing inside tree tubes to heroic proportions, stifling the seedling tree inside. Much of this work and loss is unnecessary if the site is prepared properly before the seedling planting begins.

Though many forest owners fall into the habit of starting tree planting projects only when the new catalog or tree order form arrives over the winter. You should make an effort to break this habit. Imagine going to plant trees next spring where each site was ready and weed-free. The spacing is laid out and you know exactly how many trees to order when the order form arrives. Take time this growing season to plan your spring tree planting, and to correctly prepare your site.

Preparing a tree planting site properly can reduce the use of herbicides (expensive and often avoidable), lead to better tree growth, increase the success rate, and make it easier to get the bare root seedlings planted before they lose their vigor. Site prep involves mowing, scalping, furrowing, or the judicious use of herbicides before the trees are planted.

When you mow or brushhog a site to be planted, time the mowing to ensure minimal re-growth of competing vegetation before tree planting. For an April planting in New York, mowing in October or November is adequate. The existing vegetation should be cut as low as possible. This will make it easier to plant your trees and reduces the cover of rodents that will chew on seedlings. It is not necessary to clear the entire field, just the zones where trees will be planted. Mowing will need to



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be repeated as the competing vegetation starts to grow, but if you are starting with a cleaner slate, you will be less likely to mow down your seedling investment.

Scalping can be done by hand, or by using a sod cutter – anything that removes the layer of vegetation, but not the top soil, around the planting site. By hand,

**Container (“plug”) seedlings are grown in small capacity containers in special growth-promoting environments that can produce a shippable seedling in as little as 9 to 12 months.**

*continued on page 5*



*Planting Seedlings, continued from page 4*

use a flat spade on a low angle. Kick the blade just under the vegetation to scalp it off from the roots. You should then have a dish-sized patch of bare soil where the seedling will be planted. A sod cutter has an adjustable horizontal blade that slices of the sod layer in long strips. To use these machines, your site should be somewhat smooth. Once the sod is cut, it can be flopped over, rolled up, or just cut away from your planting site. Rolls of sod are very heavy, so don't plan on moving them very far on your own. Once the tree is in, prevent weeds from re-emerging with mulch or a weed mat.

Furrowing is a practical way to improve drainage and create weed-free planting areas simultaneously. A furrowing attachment on a tractor gouges into the soil and flips a layer of topsoil over, on top of the sod. This ridge is ready for planting immediately. The narrow trough will collect water while the new tree seedling is raised above the existing soil surface. Use caution to avoid creating unmowable areas when future vegetation control becomes necessary. It is difficult to operate mowing attachments over the furrow's ridge.

To kill vegetation that might compete with seedling trees, you can use weed flaming devices, available through organic farming sources. A weed flamer burns living vegetation with a blue-hot flame, like a propane torch. The idea is to kill the "crown" of the weed, where it emerges from the soil. The nozzle pattern is adjustable, giving a fan-shaped flame that covers a wider area with each pass. They are not meant to be used on dry or dead vegetation (fire hazard) that is abundant in the spring. Use caution with all tools, but especially flame weeders and herbicides. Of course, flaming weeds means hauling around the 20-lb. propane canister, which is done with a dolly cart. Keep a few buckets of water on hand in case the surrounding vegetation beings to burn.

Broad-spectrum herbicides also kill vegetation in your proposed tree planting site. Most herbicides will not work in cooler weather and should be used the growing season before tree planting starts. There are many types now available to consumers. If you use an herbicide, follow the label instructions carefully. Choose an herbicide labeled for the plants you are



trying to control. Contact an educator at Cornell Cooperative Extension for herbicide guidelines and precautions.

If you are serious about having as successful a planting project as possible, sample the soil acidity (pH) before deciding which seedlings to purchase. Most trees thrive where the soil pH level is 6.2 to 6.8. Soil amendments are often beneficial for seedling trees. If possible, find out if pH levels at the nursery are recorded and make adjustments to your soil accordingly using lime, peat moss, or other soil conditioners. Technicians with the

**This bareroot Ponderosa pine seedling take from 1 to 3 years to produce.**

Soil and Water Conservation District and educators Cornell Cooperative Extension can give you guidelines on adjusting your tree planting zone soil pH. Any changes you make to the soil will be limited, and will serve mostly to help the seedling tree survive the stress of transplanting.

The old adage of the 5 P's is worth remembering when planting seedling trees: *Proper Preparation Prevents Poor Performance!*

# Online Forestry resources

**Forest Health** The DEC Forest Health program is responsible for monitoring the ecological health and function of all of the forests of New York State. The program gathers, analyzes, and reports on tree pest and disease information for forest land owners and managers both public and private.

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/4969.html>

**Leaflets** is an online newsletter produced periodically by the Division of Lands and Forests that provides subscribers with updates on programs, activities and recreation opportunities associated with Division responsibilities.

<https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/NYSDEC/subscriber/new>

### Insect, Plant and Disease Identification

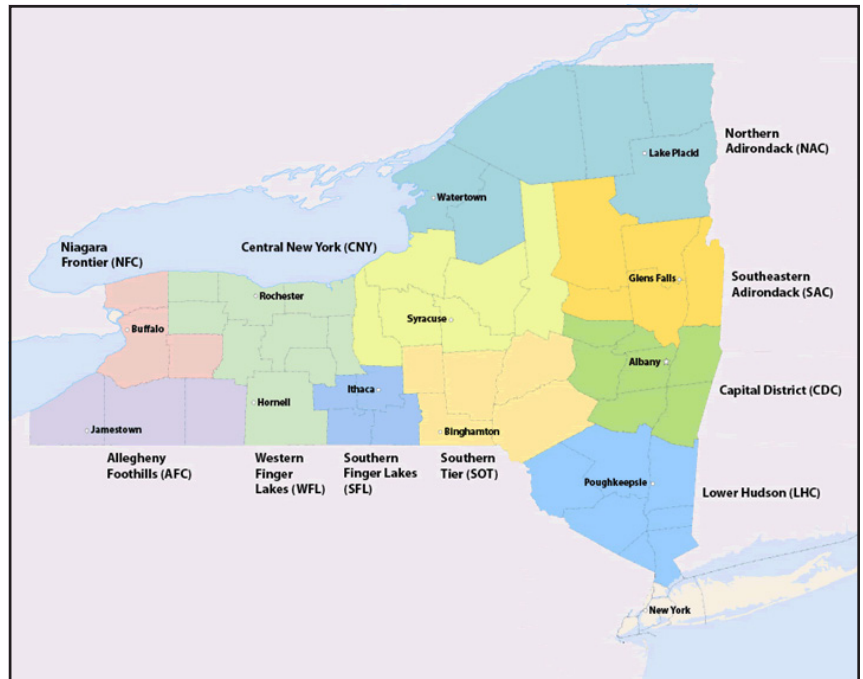
The Forest Health Diagnostic Lab is committed to helping the citizens of New York resolve their troubles with insects and plants. We are available year-round to identify your insects, plants, and plant and tree diseases.

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/79716.html>

### Cornell Cooperative Extension - Forest Connect

A great website for additional information for forest land owners.

<http://www2.dnr.cornell.edu/ext/forestconnect/index.html>



## Southeastern Adirondack Chapter (SAC)

- Fulton County
- Hamilton County
- Saratoga County
- Warren County
- Washington County
- Small Community of Members - 196

## Coming Events...

**March 29 & 30th**  
**SARATOGA WOODWORKERS**  
**SHOWCASE**

Saratoga Springs City Center  
 10 am – 5pm

*NYFOA booth co-staffed by  
 SAC and CDC*

**Tuesday, April 29th**  
**SAC STEERING**  
**COMMITTEE MEETING**

CCE Office of Saratoga County  
 50 West High Street, Ballston Spa

6:30pm

*All members are welcome!*

**May 10th – June 8th**  
**RNYW INITIATIVE**  
**CONTINUES**

*To find a scheduled woodwalk  
 in your area check out the  
 RNYW webpage.*

**July 22 – 27**  
**SARATOGA COUNTY FAIR**

*NYFOA SAC booth staff will be  
 organized Bill Burke*

*If you would like to volunteer  
 to work the booth please email  
 liamsb46@gmail.com*



*Lou and Jean Inzinna raffle winners!*  
 Long reach pruners were donated by  
 Braley and Noxon Hardware, Warrensburg



# Reflections from the Chair

**As I write this**, it seems the hard cold winter of 2014 is taking a short break. The below zero weather has given way to above freezing temperatures. We can go outside and enjoy the outdoors and start thinking about our new projects.

I also am thinking about the new season and my new roll as SAC Chairman. I would like to thank my many supporters during a long hard fought campaign... Seriously I would like to welcome Bill Burke as our Secretary. Also, many thanks to Bob Manning who has agreed to continue as our Treasurer. We still have one position open, the Vice-Chairman. We welcome members to consider this position.

A big thanks should go to our past chairman, Kurt Edwards for a job well done. Kurt and Kristie put in many hours keeping our organization heading in the right direction. When you see them, please thank them for all their efforts.

We would like to thank Barbara Hennig for her many years of dedicated service. Barbara began in 2006 as the SAC secretary. She continued through 2013. We appreciate her hard work and commitment to her position and our organization. Thank You Barbara!

Kristie Edwards has agreed to continue as our membership committee chairman, as well as, SAC Newsletter Editor. Together with Jill Burks, they put together one of the best Newsletters in all of NYFOA.

Donna Welch has agreed once again to organize our chapter's woodwalks. We look forward to some fun and interesting visits to sites across our area. See details about the upcoming woodwalks later in the newsletter. Your suggestions for woodwalks are always welcome.

Later this year we once again will be setting up displays at the Saratoga and Washington County Fairs. The organizers for these fair booths will once again be Bill Burke for Saratoga County and Jane Jenks for Washington County. Please support them by volunteering your time during the fairs.

We have an opportunity this year to team with the NYFOA Restore New York Woodlands to support a "Demonstration Deer Exclosure Fence" project. This project is designed to inform the public about the need for adequate management of deer populations. A committee will investigate a site at the 4-H Training Center in Saratoga County as well as possible grants

to cover the costs. There will be more information coming once we work out the details. Our committee will need volunteers later this year to help get this program started.

I look forward to working with the New Board and getting to know and learn from You, Our Membership Body. Our organization is a Volunteer Organization. We learn from each others experiences, both good and not so good. Our common thread is our Love of the Out Doors, Our Forests, and The Nurturing of the Wonderful Things that Nature Provides.

Finding ways to share and learn from each other is sometimes challenging.

How Do We Do This? "What has the board come up with for us to do?"

It's not that simple. We need ideas that YOU the membership would like to see, do, learn, etc. We Need Volunteers to Organize, Participate, Share, & Help.

We would also like our members to give us feedback. We will be putting together a SAC Member Survey in the coming months to get your ideas and comments. Please take a few minutes to respond.

In the meantime please e-mail with your thoughts, ideas, and concerns. (I am not Facebook Friendly.) [louinz.sac@gmail.com](mailto:louinz.sac@gmail.com) I look forward to hearing from all of you.

We always welcome new members and look forward to our members spreading the word about our organization to their friends, neighbors, and family.

*Lou Inzinna*

*DEC'S Saratoga Tree Nursery kicks off annual tree & shrub seedling sale*

**The 2014 Tree and Shrub brochure can be found on the DEC's website at**

**[www.dec.ny.gov/animals/9395.html](http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/9395.html)**

**or by calling the Saratoga Tree Nursery at (518) 581-1439.**



**New York Forest  
Owners Association**



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**Chair: Lou Inzinna**  
**Vice Chair: Vacant**  
**Secretary: Bill Burke**  
**Treasurer: Bob Manning**

**NYFOA/Southeastern  
Adirondack Chapter**

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