

The Overstory

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New York Forest Owners Association Southeastern Adirondack Chapter

To Girdle or to Fell—That is the Question?

By Peter Smallidge, NYS Extension Forester and Director of the Cornell University Arnot Teaching and Research Forest

There are some situations in our woodlot or sugarbush when you might want to prevent a tree from competing with its neighbors for sunlight, but you don't want to fell the tree. Killing the competing tree is often done by girdling, but there are several factors to consider.

Girdling trees is the process where you disrupt the living connection between the roots and the leaves, usually by cutting or chopping away the outer bark and the inner bark or cambium. Technically you sever the phloem, or the vascular tissue, that carries the products of photosynthesis from the leaves to the roots. Therefore, girdling starves the roots of the tree and the tree will die over a year or more of time. In some situations girdling trees can be effective and useful, while in other situations, one would be better off felling the same trees. The costs and benefits of girdling and felling should be weighed out on a tree-by-tree basis. Here I provide some tools to help you decide which method of killing trees would work best for your particular situation.

Whether you girdle or fell, you will want to take all reasonable safety precautions and follow the label specifications if you use herbicides.

There are some situations when it may be advantageous to girdle. First, you may want to kill a large tree that is shadowing a group of small trees. Often this large tree is a former pasture or field tree with a large spreading crown. It has no merchantable value, but does have value as a large woody structure if you could leave it standing but reduce its shade impact on the younger surrounding stems. Felling the tree would likely damage many of the smaller stems. In this case, girdling will retain the tree for its wildlife value and prevent or reduce the damage to smaller stems when the large tree finally does come down. A second situation might be if the stand is very dense and the crowns are interlocking. Here, trying to fell would be complicated by the support the retained stems give to the cut stems. A felling cut would result in a "hung tree" requiring great work and added risk to bring it to the ground. Finally, you may want to leave some trees as dead stems for use by birds, such as wood peckers or birds that require cavities for nesting. Girdling can reduce the competition of the girdled tree with living trees and retain some of its wildlife potential. Girdling can be accomplished with an axe, a chainsaw, a flame torch, and

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Triple girdle with a chain saw.

Note: the bark has died away.

ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

INSIDE

- Annual Picnic & Woodswalk
- Remember When: Coltsfoot
- Upcoming Events
- NYFOA Silent Auction
- Volunteer Thank You

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Scott Prosser, New York, NY
William VanGorp, Olmsteadville, NY

ADIRONDACK STUMPAGE PRICE REPORT

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

To Girdle or to Fell, *continued from page 1*



Double chain saw girdle.

herbicides applied to the axe or saw cut or directly to the stem.

The primary disadvantage of girdling is that you are creating a hazard in the woods. When you fell a tree it becomes stable once it hits the ground. A girdled tree will die in place and will fall at some undetermined time. Thus, you would not want to girdle in areas that are used frequently or if you intend to have a commercial harvest in the next 10 to 15 years. In fact, under OSHA (US Dept. of Labor – Occupational Safety and Health Administration) guidelines for loggers {rule 1910.266(h)(1)(vi)}, danger trees must be felled in the work area or work must be conducted more than 2 tree lengths away from a danger tree. A woodlot full of recently girdled trees would create a significant and justifiable level of concern among someone working in that area. A second reason not to girdle is because the death of the tree can sometimes extend over several years. If your management objective needs a more timely response, simply girdling may not be sufficient. Further, some tree and some species, like beech and many maples, are notoriously difficult to kill by girdling. They often have an in-rolled strip of bark that isn't affected by the girdle. In these cases, even thorough girdling doesn't kill the tree for several years. Third, girdling often takes as much time to complete as felling by someone who is skilled with a saw. Fourth, some tree roots will graft underground with neighboring trees. In those cases, if a herbicide is applied to the tree, the herbicide may translocate to the adjacent residual tree with unfortunate results. Finally, dead wood on the ground has as much if not more ecological value as standing dead wood.

An often describe, but I think infrequent event, is the damage created by a tree that was previously girdled. Certainly a dead tree that falls selects a direction based on its own interpretation of the laws of physics; whereas directional felling of live trees can control the location where the stem lands. In my observation, dead trees typically fall in sections or as large pieces rather than as an entire stem. Thus, there is minimal or no damage associated with the gradual break-up of a girdled stem. In some situations, a girdle made by a chainsaw may be deeper than necessary and weaken the strength of the stem. In these cases, the tree is still alive, but destabilized and must endure winds with a full leafy canopy. These trees often fall intact.

To girdle or to fell – that is the question. The answer depends on the use you plan at the location where you are working, your skill with a saw or axe, and the objectives that you have for the stand. But regardless of whether you girdle or fell, you will want to take all reasonable safety precautions and follow the label specifications if you use herbicides.

Think, be safe, and have fun.

MEMBER'S CORNER

Shared by Jane Jenks

Dark Pine

By Robert Service

If my life-force, by death decree,
 Could find green haven in a tree,
 And there in peace untroubled years
 Could dream, immune from toil and tears,
 Though I'm a lover of all trees
 I would not favour one of these.....

I would not chose a brittle palm
 Beside a sea of senile calm;
 Or willow droopily adream
 Above bright babble of a stream.
 No cypress would inhibit me
 With dark and dour austerity;
 Nor olive, shattering the light,
 Nor poplar, purple in the night.
 The sanctuary of my search
 Would not be oak, nor ash, nor birch:
 Ah no! Their comfort I decline,
 Let my life-force pervade a Pine.

Aye, when my soul shall sally forth
 Let it be to the naked North,
 And in a lone pine desolate
 Achieve its fit and final fate;
 A pine by arctic tempest torn,
 Snow-scourged, wind-savaged and forlorn;
 A Viking trunk, a warrior tree,
 A hostage to dark destiny
 Of iron earth and icy sky,
 That valiantly disdains to die.

There is the home where I would hide,
 If trees like men had souls inside,
 Which is, of course, a fantasy
 None could conceive but dolts like me...
 Let others vision Heaven's gate,
 Dark Pine, I dream for me you wait.

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



Coltsfoot: A Soft Soothing Step

By Dr. Jane Sorensen Lord Reprinted from the *NYFOA Forest Owner* Sept/Oct. 1993



“You know about herbs, don’t you? You’re an herbalist?”

Tim Noga of the Cayuga County Federation of Conservation Clubs spoke on the hoof while exiting the County’s Environmental Management Council Meeting.

I turned to face him, “I’m supposed to know. I’m a naturopathic doctor. But there are so many. And each book says different things. I try.”

“Do you know about Coltsfoot?”

“Yes, it’s good for sore throats.”

“No I mean for wound healing.” He looked at me earnestly.

“We use it in pieces directly on the open cuts to speed up healing. I’m Polish and I think it may be an old Polish remedy, because I’ve always known about it.

“We tried an experiment some time ago. A friend had abdominal surgery with a two foot long surgical wound stapled up; it was oozing in spots and he had to change the bandages all the time. I told him about Coltsfoot and he wanted to try it.

“We drove around ‘till we found a good patch. We went home; washed, dried, cut it in strips; laid it across half the scar and bandaged it. We only did half to see if it made a difference. I saw him the next day and he had covered the whole thing. He said the Coltsfoot made such a difference overnight that he didn’t want or need to test anymore!”

Coltsfoot (*tussilago farfara*) is one of the weeds I introduced to my Tree Farm. In fact I collected it along Route 23 in the Catskills on the way to the 1992 Annual Spring New York Forest Owners Meeting! In early spring, from waste, clay soils up pops dime size yellow dandelion type flowers on white scaly stems, similar to Indian Pipe. They grow in clusters connected by underground creeping root stock. After a few weeks they

puff up and blow away and the leaves come out.

Leaves grow on individual reddish stalks, maybe 10-12” from the ground. In good conditions, the leaves grow saucer-size and look like a hoof print from a Clydesdale rather than a colt. They are dark green on top and downy greenish-white on the bottom. They feel like fine, thin soft leather that you want to smoother over your cheek (and should).

The fresh flowers or the fresh leaves can be used for coughs and sore throat. Simmer one cup of torn crushed plant in two cups of water. Reduce by half a cup, strain and you should have one cup of extract. Add a cup of sugar, you have cough syrup, two cups, you can make cough drops.

You can dry the leaves and make tea. Or, like Mullein, another preferred plant for respiratory conditions, you can smoke it to clear up mucous.

Tim’s use of Coltsfoot was new to me and short of self-mutilation I was rearin” to try it.

After wearing a part polyester suit and blouse for three days in Washington, DC heat and humidity, my armpits had a nasty reaction in the form of a raised red, sting rash (bi-lateral axillary dermatitis). My chance was here! And I could even experiment!

I ran out, picked a large Coltsfoot leaf, washed it, patted it dry, then ran over its center with a meat tenderizer (this pierced it but left the shape—just like an arm shield!) I put hydrocortisone ointment on the right, then put on an old tee shirt. I slid the Coltsfoot leaf under my left arm with the underside next to the skin.

Overnight the coltsfoot-side improved observably more than the other. I repeated the same procedure and by the second night the Coltsfoot-side cleared completely. The commercial healing ointment took three days!

Thanks Tim! Now I will make a healing oil so I can have Coltsfoot all year ‘round.



Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org



Jan Samanek/Phytosanitary Administration/Bugwood.org



Visiting Buttermilk Hill Farm

By Joe Tennyson 🌿 Photographs by Larry Burks

A cool, foggy morning on September 24th quickly turned into a glorious, sunny day to remind us all how fortunate we are to live in God's paradise called the Adirondacks.

About 30 members and guests of SAC gathered at the home of Joe and Kathy Tennyson for a woodswalk and annual picnic at Buttermilk Hill Farm on Art Tennyson Road in Chestertown.

After a nice repast of coffee, cider and doughnuts, Joe gave a brief history of the farm. He stated that his grandfather bought the farm from a widow in 1919 for quite a large sum for that time of \$2000. The land comprised of about 500 acres bordering Pack Forest to the south and included two abandoned farms called the Ben Wood place and the Barrett lot.

Our resident member and retired state forester, Steve Warne, explained that the two farms could very well have been abandoned in the early part of the century as the great expansion of the west took place.

Steve also gave a very insightful explanation of the tax abatement plan called the Fisher Act and its later version, the 480A Plan. Joe stated that his family could never have afforded to keep this land without the foresight of his father's enrollment of most of the timber in the Fisher Act.

We then proceeded to the sawmill area where Joe gave a demonstration of the theory and technique of quarter sawing of an oak log to expose the beautiful rays and grains hidden within the log.

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Top: The Lawson's checking out Joe's saw mill. Above: Senator Betty Little answers questions posed by SAC members.



Online Forestry

Trees for Tribes

A Program of the State Tree Nursery at Saratoga

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/77710.html>

Big Tree Register

What is the Big Tree Register?

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/5248.html>

Young Forest Initiative on Wildlife Management Areas

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/104218.html>

Adirondack Forest Preserve

<http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5263.html>

Coming Events...

February 11th

SAC ANNUAL MEETING

Crandall Library, Glens Falls

Business Meeting begins at 10am

Presentation by Dick Nason at 2pm

“Old Time Logging and River Driving”

February 25th

(rain date March 4th)

SAC WINTER WOODSWALK

This event is re-scheduled from last winter,
we will hike into the state forest to see unique

500+ year old Black Gum trees

*Complete details for both events will be available
on the NYFOA website, emailed and mailed
as the events come nearer.*

Buttermilk Hill Farm, *continued from page 4*

Chris Gearwar, the forester who worked closely with Joe throughout the logging process obtaining their goals of reforestation, gave a very educational explanation of turning a large acreage of very mature pine trees into a new generation of forest.

Joe emphasized several times the importance of working with a professional forester to obtain your goals for your land.

We enjoyed a relaxing barbecue by the pool including a great lunch and fellowship of friends. Chapter member, Senator Betty Little, joined the group for lunch. We enjoyed light conversation with her afterward she spoke briefly about different areas of interest to us that she has been working on. She then answered any questions posed by our members in attendance. We were all pleased to have her join our event.

We look forward to future woodswalks and gatherings where we always seem to gain more knowledge and understanding of our beloved woods.



Left: Joe Tennyson reveals the exposed grains of quarter sawing an oak log. Below: Joe and his forester Chris Gearwar explain their objective for the pine tree cut.



Get Ready for NYFOA Silent Auction 2017

by Dean Faklis

Get ready for some fun while doing some good! NYFOA's Membership Committee has rekindled the tradition of having a silent auction coincident with NYFOA's annual meeting in the springtime. The auction's beneficiaries for 2017 are being selected from worthy forestry-related organizations and events. The rotund list includes several youth programs, scholarships, internships and conservation programs. Choosing will be difficult, but we have our best minds on it and you will certainly be pleased! Stay tuned to www.nyfoa.org and Facebook for details.

Frequently asked questions about the NYFOA Silent Auction:

How does it work?

Kind and generous members donate items and services and kindred members buy them. All of the proceeds go to the auction's beneficiaries. There is no "auctioneer." The donations are made available for inspection both in person at the annual meeting and online. Prospective buyers place bids either online or in person. The highest bidder is the winner! Payments go directly to NYFOA.

What can I do to help?

That's an easy one! You can make a donation and make a purchase. We're trying to raise \$5,000 this year to benefit people that care deeply about woodlands.

What kinds of items and services are welcome?

It's important to have a nice selection of donations across a range of prices. Some members will like to spend \$25 and some might like to spend \$1,000 to help the beneficiaries. Here are some examples, but please don't let this be limiting:

1. Member offers to give a Timberframing Workshop. Participants learn history, materials, tools, techniques. ~20 people, \$50 each, \$1,000 value. What kind of fun workshop could you provide?
2. Member offers handcrafted items from their studio or workshop. Wood, glass, metal, paintings, sculptures, etc. \$25-\$500 value. We love creativity!
3. Member donates portable sawmilling services. Perhaps another member will donate time to cut and gather logs from your woodlot for the sawyer.



4. Member offers their cottage or condominium to another member for a weekend stay. \$200-\$500.

When would you like to have the donations in hand?

Sooner rather than later! The online portion of the auction will likely start in February and we'll want to have the items before then. We'll collect them as soon as you can provide them!

Is my donation tax deductible?

Yes. NYFOA is recognized by the IRS as a 501c3 non-profit organization. Limitations certainly apply so please check with your accountant beforehand.

I really like the idea and have more questions, who can help me?

Me! dfaklis@frontiernet.net... or feel free to use the auction email address: auction@nyfoa.org.

I have a few hours to spare over the winter, does the Auction Team need any help?

Silent auctions are FUN and they really bring the membership together to help advance the mission. The Auction Team needs a bit of help before/after the auction and at the auction to help the bidders. If you can help, please let us know. The "jobs" are easy and you'll likely meet some new friends.

Thanks to our Volunteers!

With the warm weather behind us and winter looming we can take some time to reflect on the busy time that has just passed. Summer was non-stop pace for most of us; we are all so busy with vacation plans, reunions, parties and just enjoying the sun, water and our woodlots. There are those among our chapter that spent numerous hours organizing or working our booth for the Saratoga and Washington County Fairs. They all deserve our thanks! First we want to thank the organizers, for their time spent scheduling workers to staff the booth and also for setting up our display, this is a huge undertaking. Our appreciation goes out to Bill Burke and Jane Jenks for taking the lead again this year. Lou Inzinna deserves our thanks for his role in the set-up of our new TV and video system; it was a big hit and did draw much attention. Last but not least, all the volunteers that worked the booth. Having someone behind the tables to field questions, hand out information or distribute free tree seedlings is so important. An empty booth has no face or voice! So thanks to all the following members for volunteering their time: Ed and Donna Welch, Ethel Lesh, Dave and Jane Jenks, Jack and Gail Phelan, Bob and Tomoko Manning, Peter and Betty Gregory, Eric and Beverly Lawson, Lou and Jean Inzinna, Bill Burke, Kurt and Kristie Edwards, Jill and Larry Burks, Rosemary and Paul Thomas, Tom and Diane Denny, Bob Sheedy, Ruth Anspach, Jim Allen, Bill E. Berle, John Farrar, Ray and Estela Johnson, Chuck Fedler and John and Peg Underwood.



Officer Nominations

At our next annual meeting we will have our membership vote for new officers.

A nomination committee will be formed to secure candidates for all offices. The position of chair and vice-chair will be open and need to be filled. We welcome and encourage chapter members to get involved with our board operations. All offices are open to any member wishing to become more involved in our organization.

We also welcome members to become involved with the steering committee. This could include coordinating events, updating our county fair booths, member education, member recruitment, community outreach, chapter archives, chapter representative to the state organization, etc... Your new ideas and participation are always welcome. If you have interest in any office or committee, please contact

Lou Inzinna at (518) 257-2807 or at louinz.sac@gmail.com

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Owners Association**



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Chair: Vacant

Vice-Chair: Vacant

Secretary: Bill Burke

Treasurer: Bob Manning

**NYFOA/Southeastern
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