The Western Finger Lakes Forest Owner

Summer 2014 Volume 28 Number 2

In Our Woodlot

by Ed and Wanda Piestrak

Another Squirrel Tale

From member feedback on our squirrel article in last fall's newsletter, it appears we had an impact. Here's another squirrel tale. The NYFOA meeting in Syracuse this past March had a speaker that discussed forest regeneration and all the problems that go with that important condition. I offered the squirrel as an important part in regeneration as they are overly involved in planting seeds and nuts of all types. The speaker indicated that squirrels do add to regeneration but are not consistent or effective in the process. I beg to differ.

In Pennsylvania we are allowed to feed animals and the squirrels frequent our birdfeeders and corn cobs alike. This past year we had corn growing all around the house and in our three neighbors' yards, which encompasses quite a large area. I have observed the squirrels eat the kernels for a short period of time during the day but most of the day is spent running off and planting the kernels. It appears to be in their DNA to perform all that work in the hope of finding the kernels when they need it. However, many kernels are never recovered and therefore we have

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Protecting Forest Regeneration with Deer Exclosure Fencing

by Jerry Michael (NYFOA Southern Tier Chapter)

I wrote an article for the March/April 2010 issue of *The NY Forest Owner* comparing the cost and effectiveness of protecting planted hardwood seedlings with tree tubes versus exclosure fencing. One of my conclusions at the time was that exclosure fencing is more effective when used to protect advanced regeneration than it is for planted seedlings, and four more years of experience with these exclosures has confirmed my earlier opinion. If your goal is to increase species diversity by planting desired seedlings, then five-foot tall tree tubes are probably the best answer. But if you are fortunate enough to have advanced regeneration of desirable tree species (even though it has been browsed) the most economical solution in terms of both time and money is probably exclosure fencing. That said, here are some tips for your project:

Photo credit- Jim Minor

WFLers Learning About Ed and Wanda Piestrak's 6 Year Old Deer Exclosure Fence

Location

My first experience with fencing was about fifteen years ago. It was an eight foot fence covering one acre, and it was a failure. The woodlot was inaccessible in the winter, we were not able to repair damage from falling branches in a timely manner, and the deer took advantage of their opportunities. Lesson learned: Locate your fence where it will be accessible for maintenance in all seasons. Another important consideration for the fence location is the nearby presence of desirable, mature seed trees, particularly if there is little or no advance regeneration.

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Another Squirrel Tale - continued from page 1

corn growing all over our area.

Squirrels are a regeneration experts and the same scenario as corn kernels would be applied to nuts and seeds. One of the problems with squirrels and regeneration is that the acorn placed in the forest with a closed canopy will grow but will not thrive due to the shade and hungry deer. Thus, to depend on squirrels one would need a somewhat open canopy and lots of luck!

Last fall my son and his two boys were in one of our elevated tree stands in Lindley, NY observing various animals. They noticed a squirrel coming up the mountain with an ear of corn in its mouth that was about the same size as the squirrel. The squirrel went right past them and continued out of sight. That ear of corn had to come from our corn field at 400+ yards away, the only corn field around. That squirrel had to cross a county road, a creek and travel up the mountain with its prize. I am quite sure the squirrel did not eat all the kernels on the ear since it's compelled by DNA to plant a portion.

For regeneration of our forest land I would give the squirrel an A+. The NYFOA speaker might disagree but seeing is believing.

Somebody Really Loves His Corn-on-the-Cob

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The Western Finger Lakes Forest Owner is published for members of the Western Finger Lakes Chapter of the New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) and is published 4 times per year. NYFOA was founded in 1963 and is organized to encourage the wise management of private woodland resources in New York State by promoting, protecting, representing and serving the interests of woodland owners. The Western Finger Lakes chapter was founded in 1988 and encompasses Genesee, Livingston, Monroe, Ontario, Orleans, Seneca, Steuben, Wayne, and Yates counties.

Membership is open to anyone interested in understanding how to manage a woodlot. NYFOA membership can bring returns in the satisfaction of growing quality timber, stabilizing forest industries and markets, providing permanent jobs, increasing the value of your woods, enlarging areas of natural beauty across the state, and leaving behind a monument in living trees to bless the tomorrows for the boys and girls of today. For information on becoming an NYFOA member, contact Liana Gooding, NYFOA Secretary, NYFOA, P.O. Box 541, Lima, NY, 14485 or at 1-800-836-3566. Annual membership is $30 for individuals and $35 for families and includes: subscriptions to this newsletter; to the bimonthly NYFOA state-wide publication, ***The New York Forest Owner***; attendance at chapter meetings; and at two statewide meetings. Membership at the Contributing level $50- $100 and Supporting level $101 & up) are also offered. For more information visit www.nyfoa.org.

Readers are encouraged to submit articles for publication in this newsletter. Articles should be mailed or e-mailed to: Richard Starr at the address to the left. Electronic submissions are preferred. Any letters should be sent to the Chair for consideration.

For event reminders and late-breaking news, **subscribe to our email list** by sending a blank email to nyfoa-wfl-news-subscribe@npogroups.org

Note: The deadline for our Fall 2014 issue is September 1st.

Squirrel Proof Bird Feeder

by Ed and Wanda Piestrak

During the past year we related two incidents whereby squirrels removed nuts that we had planted and therefore we gave up nut planting. We have also encountered squirrel problems at our Endicott home whereby squirrels would raid our sunflower bird feeders and empty them out daily. At times we had as many as 23 squirrels feeding. How do you discourage the squirrels from overeating?

We decided to erect a 4x4 twelve foot treated pole and anchor it three feet in the ground. We then placed 7 foot 2x4s across the top to form a "T". We hung metal chains from the 2x4s and tried to place the feeders high above the ground but where we would be able to fill them as needed. Also we placed a 4 foot steel stove pipe over the main upright pole to prevent animals from climbing up.

After two days we noticed raccoon paw prints on the lower two feet of the stove pipe but they could not get any higher. However, the squirrels kept looking up at the feeders and finally one took a running shot and jumped high enough to reach the end feeder. Immediately we went out and raised that feeder another 15" and thus far we have been successful. The squirrels continue to look up at the feeders but have not figured a way to get to them.

photo credit - Ed and Wanda Piestrak

Squirrel Deterrence for Bird Feeders

We will continue to monitor the bird feeding station and feel the squirrels have not given up, only rethinking their plan of attack. How to get past that stove pipe? The birds really enjoy the feeders without the dominance of squirrels. Also the feeders do not have to be filled daily but rather every 5-6 days. Mark up a win for the birds and us and a loss for the squirrels. Current score is squirrels 2, landowner 1.

Fireplace Charcoal

by Dick Fitts

One of the benefits of being an active NYFOA member is in the connections you can make with others of similar interests. Some of those contacts can be made in meetings or at woods walks or from articles in NYFOA publications. In this case our Western Finger Lakes chapter newsletter.

An article by Dick Starr about making charcoal in the spring 2014 WFL newsletter caught my eye. I had been trying to make charcoal and had invested in two 50 gallon drums, with closable lids, for the process. I built a steel frame to hold the two barrels in a manner that suspended them above a fire pit. Each drum had a relief hole in the bottom to drain off gasses and liquids. I surrounded the contraption with a thin metal covering in an attempt to keep the heat concentrated on the barrels. (see photo) A lot of firewood and a bit of time were required to keep the fire going for a day or more until the destructive distillation was complete and the wood converted to charcoal.

photo credit - Dick Fitts

Charcoal Making with two 50-Gallon Drums

Then I saw Dick's article in which he used not 50 gallon drums but a 2 ½ gallon bucket with closable lid and handle. Dick gave me one of his 2 ½ gallon buckets which he obtained by purchasing exterior preservative. I loaded the bucket with small pieces of wood and placed it inside our fireplace after the fire had gotten a good start.

The first discharge was the white smoke of water vapor being driven off then flames coming from the half inch vent hole in the lid as volatile gasses escaped. In about 2 hours I lifted the bucket from the fire with a fireplace poker, let it cool down, removed the lid and voila, a nice collection of charcoal pieces.

By placing the bucket in the fireplace for the process I took advantage of the heat being generated by the fireplace. Now I have to figure out what to do with two 50 gallon drums and the structure I made before reading Dick's article.

Growing Big Timber: Free Help!

by Dean Faklis

Watching trees grow is exciting! You have to be patient, of course, but with the discovery of high-tech inspection tools (tape measure and clipboard), you can see your crop trees expand right before your eyes. So if you want to grow big high-quality trees and you have the spirit of adventure, there is FREE assistance available to WFL members.

Getting Ready to Enter the Timber-Growing Contest

In 2013, to help provide a fun environment for forest owners to grow nice timber, we started the Northeast Timber Growing Contest. It's a friendly competition with an even playing field where people work together to learn, grow sawlogs and focus on forest regeneration. There is a website which contains more information on the contest at www.timbercontest.com. There are several participants from WFL already involved and they are now submitting their results for the first year.

Some WFL members have heard about the timber contest by reading recent articles in NYFOA's Forest Owner magazine and have contacted me about the benefits and the work involved. The rules are pretty easy to understand but I have found that a telephone call or a visit really helps the forest owner hit the ground running. The first year requires a bit more time than subsequent years because the trees need to be identified and the sample plots created. Getting a personalized explanation on how it is all done makes it easier to get active and helps eliminate the guesswork.

Growing quality timber is fun and profitable but it takes physical effort and knowledge. Having a way to measure your progress in the woodlot is vital to your decision making process. Fortunately, the Northeast Timber Growing Contest provides a fun environment for understanding your forest and gauging timber growth on your trees. Please visit the timber contest website and review the information to see if you want to participate. Feel free to contact me (dfaklis@frontiernet.net) for tips on how to get started. It's all free and it's a great way to get the entire family engaged outdoors in the family forest.

Restore New York
WOODLANDS
A NYFOA Initiative

Welcome New Members

Peter V. Gardner	**Arkport, NY**
Harry McCue	**Lodi, NY**
Michael O'Lena	**East Rochester, NY**

Book Report Part 5
"The Man Who Planted Trees"
by Jim Robbins c 2012

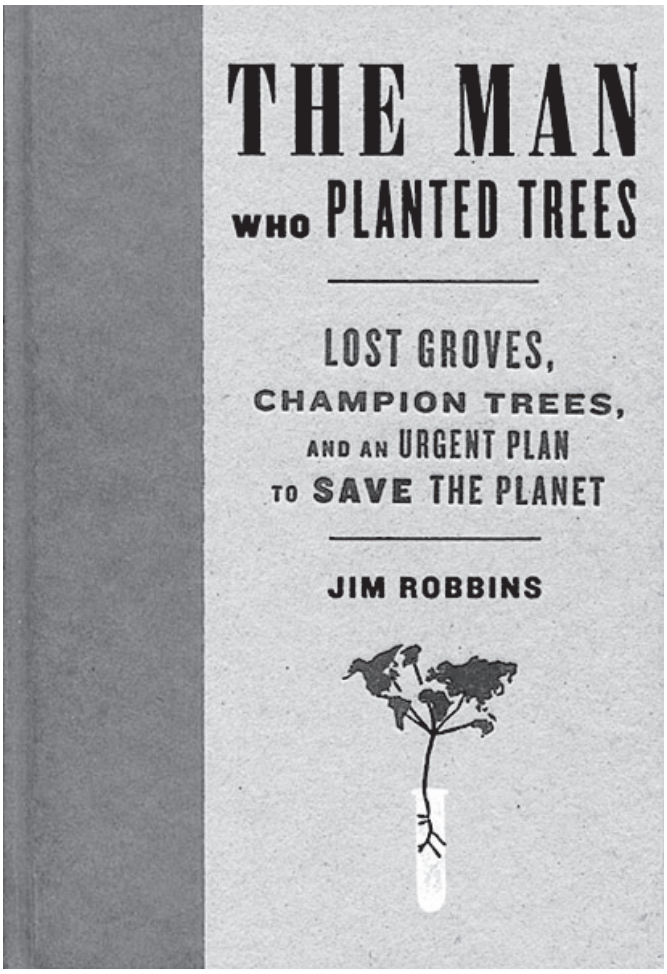
by Dick Starr

There is virtually no study of how the aerosols from trees interact with humans in the environment. Much study has gone into the chemicals that trees broadcast and whether or not they can be used for healing. The notion that forests hold a chemical secret to health is taken seriously in the Far East where "forest bathing", walking among trees, is a bona fide field of study. In 2000, researchers at the Nippon Medical School in Tokyo took 12 healthy men aged 35 to 56 into a forest. The first day they walked among the trees for 2 hours and then 4 hours on the second day. On day 3 blood and urine samples were taken. Analysis showed a significant increase in cells that prevent formation of tumors, an increase in anticancer proteins in the cells and a reduction in the concentration of adrenaline. The effects lasted for a week.

Other studies have shown that people who spend time among trees exhibit lower concentrations of the stress chemical cortisol, lower pulse rates, lower blood pressure, greater parasympathetic nervous system activity and less sympathetic activity – meaning the people are more relaxed. In 2001 a study was made in the crime ridden housing projects of Chicago. Those who lived in units with access to, and a view of, natural landscape settings had substantially fewer aggressive conflicts with family members than units where a natural view was missing. Fourteen percent of residents living in buildings without trees threatened violence against their family while only three percent did so in buildings surrounded by trees.

In a study of 345,000 people, Dutch researchers found the amount and proximity of green space to a person's home was a reliable predictor for generally improved mental and physical health. Depression rates were also reduced. Green spaces, the researchers wrote, create a halo of improved health around them. President Thomas Jefferson "…relished long walks in the woods…" (Time magazine November 26, 2012) Did he recognize the calming affect of forest bathing?

The big question about the possible role of using forest aerosols as medicine is the dosage to be used. If breathing microscopic amounts of pollutants can give us lung or other cancers is it possible that tiny amounts of other chemicals can make or keep us well? Or there might be a chemical in the human



body that activates these substances because we have, as a species, existed in close proximity to trees and other plants.

In all of this I see no mention as to whether forest bathing, like personal hygiene bathing, is more effective if done au naturel. Who can say if it's only what we inhale that's effective? Our skin is porous to some degree, so might exposed skin take in a helpful aerosol? Perhaps we should arrange a workshop to test the notion, probably during warmer weather. This concludes our review of "The Man Who Planted Trees."

A Gift

A gift membership to NYFOA is a wonderful way to introduce a friend or family member to the wonders of the woodland. Send a check for $30 individual or $35 family to NYFOA, PO Box 541, Lima, NY 14485. Now you can also enroll on-line at www.nyfoa.org .

Deer Exclosure Fencing - continued from page 1

Site Preparation

The site should receive several hours of direct sunlight each day, so the surrounding canopy should be 50% - 60% open. If it is too shady, some cull trees may have to be cut, favoring healthy seed trees of desirable species. Also cut down any standing dead trees that are near enough to the site to threaten the fence by falling or dropping dead branches on it.

If the site is compromised by invasive or interfering vegetation, deal with it using mechanical and/or chemical means, according to guidance available on ForestConnect.com or references listed on the RNYW pages of the NYFOA.org website. If browsed seedlings of desirable trees are present, exercise care when treating invasive vegetation with an herbicide.

Fence Materials and Installation

A five foot tall fence is adequate when deer pressure is low to moderate. Consider a seven and a half foot fence if deer pressure is high. Economical, heavy-duty polypropylene plastic fencing material is available from the Gempler's catalog (1-800-382-8473) (gemplers.com). A roll 7 ½' by 100' can be purchased for $118.95 plus freight (Item # G51923) A 7 ½' by 330' roll is $270.95. The most economical way to purchase this fence material is to buy a roll 10' by 330' for $317.95 and cut it in half with your chain saw, which gives you 660' of five foot high fence at a cost of 48 cents a linear foot. I have been using this material for exlosures on my woodlot for the last ten years, moving it from place to place as regeneration was established, and it is still holding up.

Fence posts, or a handy tree will be required for every 10 linear feet of the fence. For a five foot fence, posts could be white oak or locust 2"x 2"x 7', or commercially-available steel posts (expensive), or ½" by 7' rebar. I use rebar because it is easier to drive into my rocky ground and is infinitely reusable. For a 7 ½ foot fence, you will have to use a combination of trees, commercial steel or pressure-treated wooden fence posts.

If you decide to staple the fence to a standing cull tree, consider cutting the tree off above the top of the fence if it will be providing excessive shade over the area. If you want to attach the fence to a future crop tree, attach a 1" x 4" batten strip to the tree with two aluminum nails and staple the fence to the batten strip. The fencing can be stapled to trees or wooden posts, or attached to rebar with zip ties. If using rebar posts, attach the top of the fence with tightly-twisted baling wire to keep it from sliding down.

If you are not able to eliminate risks of falling branches damaging the fence, consider adding a single strand of high-tensile wire one foot above the top of the plastic fence to protect it.

Maintenance

After the fence is in place, if browsed regeneration was present on the site, it can be "rehabilitated" to speed up visible results. After leaf drop in the fall, use pruning shears to remove all but the straightest, most central branch of the browsed seedlings, making sure to leave at least one live bud below your cut. The seedlings should have developed a well-established root system and will respond more quickly than new regeneration from a seed source. Patience will be required if advanced regeneration is absent. Mature trees may only produce a good seed crop every 3 to 5 years.

The fence should be inspected on a regular basis and any breaks from falling limbs repaired immediately. Until the regeneration exceeds five feet in height, deer can wipe out the results of your efforts in one night.

No Advance Regeneration?

If your woodlot lacks advance regeneration of desirable tree seedlings, you can create the conditions necessary for germination and establishment of seedlings by completing the Site Preparation steps above. Then wait for a good seed crop to establish advance regeneration before erecting your fence. If a good seed crop does not occur within two or three years, you may have to exercise additional control over interfering vegetation.

Summary

There are many options for construction of deer exclosure fences. Eight foot woven wire fences are common on state forestland in Pennsylvania, but they cost about $3 per linear foot in materials to construct. Some have had success with simple electrified fences powered by solar chargers. The fence described above can be installed for a materials cost of less than $1 per linear foot and has worked well for me. I observe deer tracks around the perimeter of the fence all winter, but they have never jumped over it. Give it a try !

Upcoming Events

Woods Walk

Dave & Colette Morabito

On Saturday August 2, 2014 we are proud to host both the AFC and WFL chapters of NYFOA to a "different" kind of woods walk which will be held at the Morabito Camp located in Belfast, Allegany County. There will be coffee/tea, juice and pastries from 8:30 to 9:30. Thereafter we will commence our tour of a recently built logging/truck road under the tutelage of Bruce Robinson, Forester extraordinaire. The woods walk will feature truck road building for hauling forest products.

We will be discussing wildlife features associated with this type of construction such as vernal ponds, water management and vegetation enhancement at costs significantly less than generally constructed truck roads. The methods recommended by Bruce Robinson can solve those perennially impossible situations on existing roads and skid trails.

Comfortable walking shoes, binoculars, cameras and lots of questions are all necessities for attendance! Please be our guest immediately following the walk for lunch over an open fire with hot dogs, s'mores and drinks. RSVP: 585-248-0654 or cmorabito2@rochester.rr.com to let us know how many will be in your group. Thanks.

Woodlot Management Program and Woods Walk

Join us Saturday August 16, 2014 from 9 AM to 12:30 PM for our woodlot management program. We'll start at the Wayne County Cornell Cooperative Extension office in Newark with a presentation from NYS Forester Mark Gooding on ID and control of invasive plants and beech trees. Then we'll go to a nearby site for a woods walk where a consulting forester from Future Forestry Inc. will highlight work completed including invasive plant control techniques and thinning for woodlot health and more.

After the woods walk the site owner will demonstrate operation of his high efficiency wood boiler system. Those with more questions about the boiler system installation and technology differences compared to traditional outdoor boilers will be able to discuss these with the owner. Additionally, Wayne County Master Forest Owner (MFO) volunteers will be available for questions about the MFO program and free on site visits.

$10.00 registration required by August 1st. Mail name, phone number and payment to Cornell Cooperative Extension of Wayne County, 1581 Rte 88 N. Newark, NY 14513. Call 315-331-8415 or email mgwayne@cornell.edu for more info. Please let us know of any special needs when registering.

Annual Meeting

October 28, 2014 is our annual meeting at the Monroe County Cornell Cooperative Extension at 249 Highland Ave, Rochester. Marty Dodge, retired FLCC Conservation Professor, will present "Tiny Home at the Top of the World." Marty spent the summer of 2013 in Alaska building a small home carved by chain saw and hewing axes from traditional lumber and forest trees. Further details in the fall issue.

Still Looking

We thank Dave & Colette Morabito for taking over as Refreshments Coordinator for our general meetings. Also, thanks to Pete Muench for taking on Outdoor Activites Coordinator. If you have ideas for outdoor activities Pete's contact info is on page 2.

We're still in need of someone to head up general meetings. This involves identifying topics and speakers. If you can help in this important role contact Dick Starr per page 2.

Classifieds

Tree Tubes for Sale - Member(/Non-Member) price: 4' ($4.50/$5.00); 4' w/ stake ($5.50/$6.00); 5' ($5.00/$5.50); 5' w/ stake ($6.50/$7.00). Proceeds benefit WFL chapter. (585) 367-2847.

PLEASE NOTE: SPACE PERMITTING, THE WFL STEERING COMMITTEE ALLOWS MEMBERS TO PLACE FREE CLASSIFIED ADS IN THIS NEWSLETTER PERTAINING TO GOOD STEWARDSHIP PRACTICES. HOWEVER, ADS PRESENTED HERE ARE NOT AN ENDORSEMENT BY WFL.

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Photo credit- Cathy Gardner

WFL Vice President Dale Schaefer presenting the 2013 WFL Service Award to Jim Minor at WFL's March Steering Committee meeting.

Mark your Calendar

- **August 2. Morabito Woodswalk***
- **August 5 – 7. Empire Farm Days in Seneca Falls**
- **August 15 – 17. NYS Woodsmen's Field Days in Booneville**
- **August 16. Wayne County CCE Woodlot Management Program and Woods Walk***
- **October 28. WFL Annual Meeting***

*** See inside for details.**

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