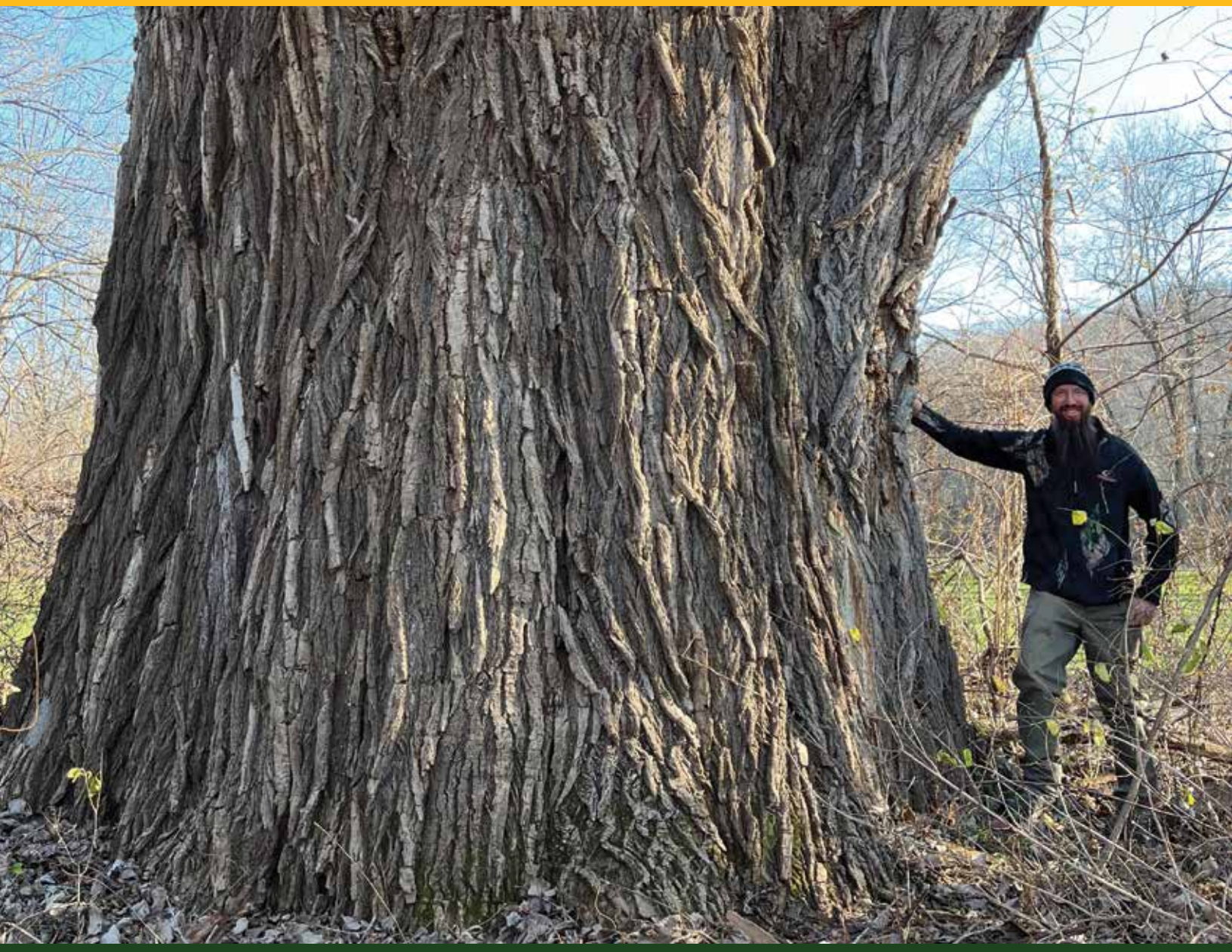
The New York Forest Owner

A Publication of The New York Forest Owners Association

For people caring about New York's trees and forests

May/June 2023



New York's Champion Trees

Volume 61 Number 3

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In This Issue . . .

The New York
Forest Owner

A Publication of The New York Forest Owners Association
Volume 61, Number 3

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The New York Forest Owner is a bi-monthly publication of The New York Forest Owners Association, PO Box 541, Lima, NY 14485. Materials submitted for publication should be sent to: ***Mary Beth Malmsheimer****, Editor, The New York Forest Owner, 134 Lincklaen Street, Cazenovia, New York 13035; Materials may also be e-mailed to mmalmshe@syr.edu; direct all questions and/or comments to jefffjosephwoodworker@gmail.com. Articles, artwork and photos are invited and if requested, are returned after use.* ***The deadline for submission for the July/August issue is June 1, 2023.***

Please address all membership fees and change of address requests to PO Box 541, Lima, NY 14485 or lgooding@nyfoa.org. 1-800-836-3566. Cost of family membership/subscription is $55.

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Cover: New York's new champion tree, an eastern cottonwood recently rediscovered in Schaghticoke, Rensselaer County. See story on page 4. Photo courtesy of Fred Breglia.

From The President

There are several great things happening with NYFOA as we get past winter. It's time to look ahead and support our chapter woods walks, seminars, commercial tours, and collaborative events with various organizations. We will continue to leverage the use of Zoom as appropriate to bridge longer distances and increase options for members to participate. This year, instead of one statewide members' meeting, the state board (in cooperation with the corresponding chapters) will organize regional events offering excellent programs, great food, and the opportunity to rekindle friendships. The idea is to have multiple regional meetings designed to be more accessible to a greater number of members by reducing driving distances. The state board has streamlined NYFOA's committee structure, and we are seeing tangible results on several fronts. On the legislative side, NYS lawmakers have enacted or expanded environmental legislation which stands to benefit the private woodlot owner. NYFOA's efforts to develop a closer alliance with NY Tree Farm has receded following the decision of Tree Farm's parent organization, the American Forest Foundation, to decline funding the joint proposal put forward by the respective NYFOA and Tree Farm steering committees for closer cooperation. Absent a full-on alliance, there remain many areas for continued collaboration between NYFOA and NY Tree Farm and we will keep members advised of developments.

March 14, 2023 proved to be an unusual day for those supporting NYFOA's Legislative Affairs committee. On this date NYFOA was going to participate in several in-person meetings in Albany with NYS legislators as part of Empire State Forest Products Association's (ESFPA) Forestry Awareness Day (FAD). As things played out, March 14th was also the day a major snowstorm hit many parts of NY and the NYS Legislature declared a snow day. With less than 24 hours' notice, our friends at ESFPA did an incredible job rescheduling most of the in-person FAD meetings to Zoom calls. All things considered, it worked out well as our representatives had the opportunity to meet over 40 legislators and staff members and highlighted the needs of the private woodlot owner in NY. At one point, DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos addressed all FAD participants, showed great support in important forest related areas, and fielded several questions. NYFOA board member Hugh Canham coordinated our participation in FAD, as he has ably done many times over the years.

NYFOA Executive Director Craig Vollmer and I had an interesting Zoom meeting on March 21st with the DEC including the DEC's Lands and Forests Program Coordinator Jason Drobnack and the DEC Director, Office of Climate Change, Maureen Leddy. It is clear that our political leaders in Albany will continue to support major programs which seek to improve the environment and mitigate climate change in our state. Of course, the forests represent a major environmental component and we expect there will be expanded cost share or grant

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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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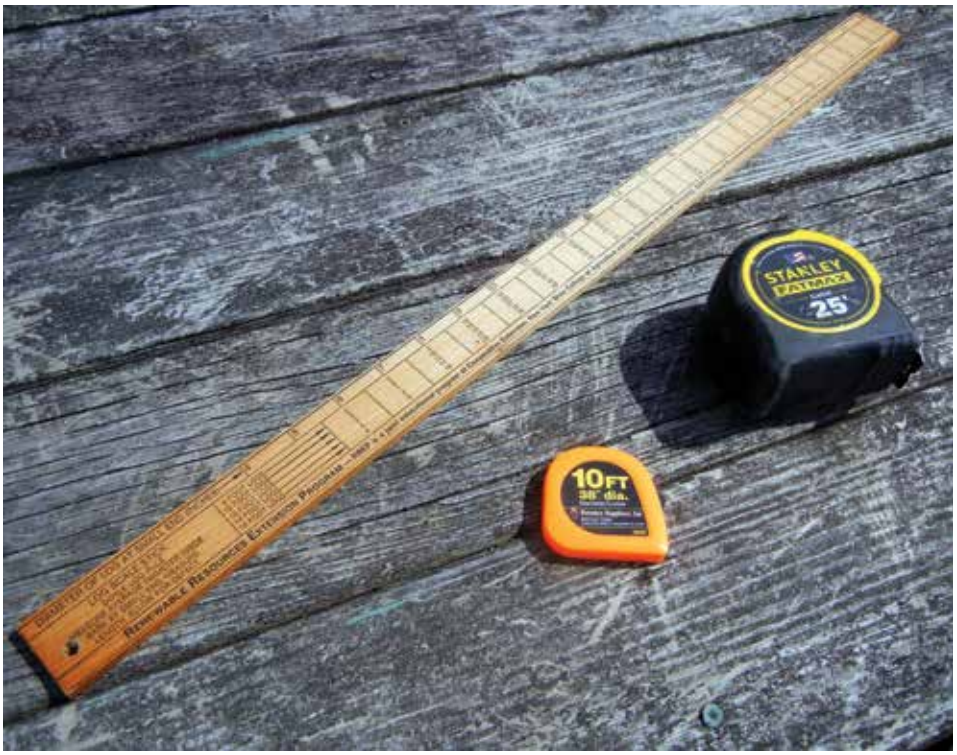
New York's Champion Trees

By Jeff Joseph

Do you have any *really* big trees in your woodlot? Trees with superior genetics, that grew in fertile soils with abundant water, and/or those that somehow managed to avoid the saw or axe over the years to live to a truly ripe old age? If yes, have you ever wondered how these giants might stack up against the biggest trees in the state? Or even if your woodlot does not contain such mighty specimens, have you ever wondered how big trees can actually get in our region, which species are the most impressive size-wise, and where the largest of any given species resides in the state? If so, you should definitely take a look at the New York State Big Tree Register, which is maintained by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), as it offers a wealth of information on the topic.

On the site there are links to two lengthy lists of "champion" trees, one listed by common name, and the other by scientific name. And they are quite comprehensive, as by my count the list of common names offers data for 229 distinct species, from our native trees, to introduced/naturalized species, to a wide range of ornamental trees. To be eligible, these champions have to have been both "measured and confirmed to exist within the last ten years," so what this list does *not* attempt to do is to note the largest trees ever recorded in the state, rather just those currently at the top of the list for each species. It is also important to note that this or any similar list is limited by the reporting that they receive, so this is likely not a truly exhaustive list of all the biggest trees in the state. One example of this is found in the results for the thickest and tallest trees in New York listed at *www.monumentaltrees.com,* which differ significantly from the results on the DEC champion trees page.

Sticking with the DEC list, to assess a potential champion tree, a formula involving three criteria is used, and points are added together to determine the victors in each category: **Total Point Score = Height in feet + Trunk Circumference in inches + 1/4 Average Crown Spread in feet**. Because of this three criteria system it may turn out that the overall champion is not necessarily the superior specimen in all three categories; however, in addition to the total points scored, each individual listing does include full data on tree circumference, height, and crown points, the county and DEC region where the tree resides, the individual(s) who nominated the tree, and the date it was last officially measured and confirmed to still be alive and well in the forest. As most of us are probably far more prone to evaluate a tree based upon its *diameter* (at breast height, or DBH) rather than circumference, an easy calculation can be made from the listed results by dividing the circumference



Big tree hunting toolkit: a Biltmore stick, diameter tape, and standard tape measure. Serious hunters may want to invest in a laser distance meter to accurately measure tree height.

numbers by Pi (3.14) to get to the DBH (while I'd like to say that I remembered that calculation from high school geometry class, yes, I had to look it up to be sure).

So, what are the specs of the biggest trees? A quick scan of the listing shows that the tallest tree on the list is an eastern white pine at 152', but again this shows the bias of utilizing a collective scoring of the three criteria (as well as some potentially outdated listings), as just this past summer a 174' white pine was found in Bolton, but this tallest specimen did not fare so well in either the circumference or crown spread categories, and was actually nicknamed "Little Foot Pine" for its less impressive girth by its discoverer, Erik Danielson.

The tallest hardwood on the list is a pignut hickory in Wyoming County at 151'. The largest circumference on the list is an eastern cottonwood in Livingston County at an amazing 353" (112.4" DBH!!!). And the tree with the most crown points is a Dutchess County sycamore with a score of 34 (calculated by determining the maximum + minimum crown spread in feet divided by 2, and multiplied by 0.25).

Yet the list is only updated once each year, and so these rankings will undoubtedly continue to keep changing, as there are countless billions of trees growing larger each year across the state, while others die and/or lose parts of their crowns as limbs break. Case in point: in doing research for this article I just ran across the news that Fred Breglia, the executive director of the Landis Arboretum in Esperance, NY, discovered in late 2022 what seems destined to become the new state champion tree, a cottonwood in Schaghticoke, New York (see cover image). It seems that this behemoth---with a DBH of nearly eleven feet, and scoring nearly 540 points—was previously acknowledged as the state champion in the 1970's but fell from the list when it was not remeasured per the register rules, and was forgotten until Breglia made inquiries after reading about its existence in an online search, and subsequently visited and measured the tree in its location in a Rensselaer County floodplain bordering multiple private properties along the Hudson River. It seems that it may not only be the New York State champion tree, but will likely be very close in overall ranking to the largest eastern cottonwoods (*Populus deltoides)* ever measured.

Wanting to include an image of this amazing tree in this story (which he graciously provided—that's him with the tree), I reached out to Breglia, and had the chance to ask him the following questions:

What inspired you to get involved in the hunt for big trees in New York?

My love of big trees began when I was a five-year-old. My mother spoke about a gigantic oak that overlooked Beard's Hollow in Richmondville. While the surrounding area had been cleared several times over many years, this lone tree somehow managed to survive. When I was finally able to hike to this ancient relic it made a profound—and lasting – impression on me. I have been hunting big trees for over 25 years, and have found many state and national champions. Family vacations, work, travel, hiking, and fishing trips have become a way to keep an eye out for potential champion trees.

Are there any tree species native to New York State that are of particular interest to you at the moment, or that you feel have not been adequately surveyed to determine the largest specimens?

There are only a handful of species in New York State that are genetically capable of qualifying as the overall biggest tree. Tulip trees, sycamores, cottonwoods, oaks, and willows all have that potential. For the past several years, I have focused on looking for these species. Prior to my "finding" the Schaghticoke cottonwood, I located another giant close to this size in Coeymans NY, visible from a Hudson River boat launch. It is remarkable that no one brought this tree to the public eye beforehand, which is often the case with many of these record trees. The key for a person or two to recognize the tree as a state champion and to get it officially measured and registered on the list. This is what keeps me searching, and why Landis Arboretum in Esperance, NY is sponsoring a 2023 Big Tree Search, offering cash and prizes for new state champions thanks to our sponsors Bill and Roberta Winsman.

Do you have any advice for anyone interested in searching for big trees in their locality?

Folks who are interested in looking for champion trees should first learn the characteristics of the trees they are looking for and the proper identification. This is particularly helpful, because sometimes champion trees are actually quite small in size and would not be recognized by the general public as a champion. For example, the state champion hawthorn is not a big tree, and the same can be said for the champion paw-paw and others. Recognizing those species when you see them at a champion size takes experience and it has given me an edge when looking for a new champ. Also folks can search areas that are often hard to get to. Things like hedgerows are great places because property line trees have often been left without being cut. Also historic houses or other historic sites often have historical plants associated with them and I found many champions that way. Steep ravines often have yielded big and old trees. Old cemeteries, old wood lots, and any old growth forests in your area would all be great places to start.

Many folks have discussed tree hunting with me over the years, and another common misconception is that these big trees are giants, so they theoretically should stand out and be fairly easy to spot. But that is not always the case, most of the time big trees tend to have lower heights than many of the companion plants that grow around them because they are older and the tops have broken out several times over the years of growth. This creates trees that are hard to find even though they have large trunks, which are often hidden by brush and blocked by other smaller trees around them. A tip I have given to people is to begin to recognize what big trees look like from a distance. Many have large horizontal branches which can be spotted by the naked eye from a long distance away and is particularly true during the dormant season. Train your eye to spot them. Looking for them during the winter is a good time because you don't have to worry about the leaves which hide lots of details. Also you don't have to worry as much about ticks, which is a plus in NY.

Beyond our borders here in New York, for those interested in big trees around the globe, Breglia created a Facebook group called "Big Tree Seekers," which currently has well over 200,000 members, and where you can find a constant stream of amazing photos and stories documenting the biggest

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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

Regenerating 100 acres of Mature Hardwoods – What about the deer?

Question:

I would like to offset some of the purchase price of my 106-acre woodlot that is mostly mature red maple, ash, oak, and cherry. Sustainability is a priority for me, and the lack of any seedlings suggests too much deer impact. I have seen big clearcuts in PA that have regenerated. I suggested to my forester a heavy regeneration cut to pre-salvage the ash and establish seedlings, but he wasn't supportive because beech and fern would spread. What should I do? (Jim, Southern Tier Chapter)

Answer:

It is unusual to consider a complex system, such as forests, where a single factor dictates all outcomes. Forests don't have a single dominating factor, but deer can have an overwhelming influence on how forests respond to openings in the canopy, such as by harvesting (Figure 1). Many owners want to generate revenue from their land and ensure the successful and complete regeneration of the forest, yet the process involves more than just cutting trees and hoping the deer won't eat the seedlings. A fact sheet on how to determine if the abundance of seedlings constitutes successful and complete regeneration is available here *https://blogs.cornell.edu/cceforestconnect/newsletter-content-for-educators/*

In mature hardwood forests dominated by maples, ash, oak, and cherry there are several factors that will influence how owners proceed with a regeneration harvest. These include working with a forester, selecting a regeneration system, the abundance of ash, the absence of established seedlings, limiting deer impacts, and limiting dominance by interfering species such as beech and fern.

An experienced forester is an important first step. The forester's knowledge and experience can help inform likely outcomes of various management options. Foresters will be able to explain why they think a particular course of action is better or not than other options (Figure 2). The forester may also be able to take you to locations where a particular management practice was used and allow you to see what your property might look like. Note that no two properties will respond similarly.

There are multiple forest conditions that might initiate a regeneration harvest. These include average diameter of trees (a surrogate indicator for stand age), the proportion of defective trees, if there are enough trees of good form to grow into the future and allow for multiple future harvests, and if ownership objectives warrant a young forest. An inventory that assesses the seedling and overstory layers is necessary to make informed decisions about which silvicultural practices to apply. The choice of whether to develop stands as even-aged

Figure 1. Harvesting provides increased sunlight and may stimulate sprouts that are more succulent than usual. These are typically some of the first stems to be browsed. Deer will preferentially browse some tree and herb species over others. The deer pictured is browsing beech sprouts, suggesting that there are few other species available. (photo credit M. Ashdown)

Figure 2. If the owner is in the area before or during the harvest, ask the forester to walk the harvest and explain the outcome of each of the planned management actions. In this picture, there is a high level of soil disturbance, known as scarification, that provides an exposed mineral soil seedbed needed by some species for optimum germination of seeds. (photo credit B. Chedzoy)

or uneven-aged depends on the owner's objectives, but also, and perhaps more so, the impacts of deer. In areas of high deer impact uneven-aged systems (e.g., group or single-tree selection) are seldom successful except for regenerating beech and other shade tolerant unpalatable species; some deer exclusion would be needed and for prolonged periods of time (Figure 3). In some large landscapes, the use of annual large juxtaposed clearcuts, greater than 150 acres or more per year, can overwhelm deer that are at relatively low densities. Few private family forest owners can operate at this scale. A key tenent of regeneration systems is the need to establish or allow the development of established seedlings. Clearcuts, seed tree, and shelterwood systems each might have the opportunity to establish or develop seedlings. Note though that none of the common, desired hardwoods, except maybe black cherry, will store seeds for more than a year or two in the leaf litter. Clearcuts must have

continued on next page

Figure 3. In stands managed for an uneven-aged structure, as in the picture, harvests might occur on a 15 to 20 year interval, and each harvest cycle might create dozens of group selection openings from 0.25 to 1 acre (sizes vary). If there are three age classes, the total area of each age class is one-third of the stand area. If deer pressure is high, each opening of the entire stand will need to exclude deer. If fencing, each fence will need to be inspected once or twice a month until a sufficient number of desired stems exceed 5 ft in height (about 7 – 10 years). Subsequent harvests may necessitate removal of fencing or skillful maneuvering among fences. Slash walls (www.slashwall.info) haven't been tested in uneven-aged systems, but seem infeasible due to limited availability of slash. Fencing is technically feasible, but seems impractical.

Figure 4. Once emerald ash borer (EAB) infests a tree, woodpeckers will try to peck into the tree to eat the larvae. This predation of larvae isn't sufficient to limit the insect populations, and the pecking creates a condition known as "blonding." Extensive blonding across the surface of the ash trees is a symptom considered diagnostic of the presence of EAB. Some sawmills are reluctant to accept blonded ash trees. (photo credit B. Chedzoy)

Figure 5. These red oak acorns were dropped the year after a harvest and landed on a mossy and coarse organic seedbed. Some of the acorns will sprout and find suitable soil for growth. Scarification can happen through the operation of logging equipment treads or tracks, or skidding of logs. Sequencing a good seed crop with logging activity is a challenge.

a reliable source of seedlings. Strategies to limit deer impacts are described below.

If an owner has timber revenue as an objective, and there is a high abundance of ash, that owner should plan for a harvest in the near future. Once the trees start to "blonde" by the action of woodpeckers, some loggers report limited markets, and they are reluctant to remove these trees (Figure 4). The emerald ash borer has spread throughout this region. If EAB symptoms are absent on an ash tree which is surrounded by infested ash, I suggest retaining that tree. In general, close inspection will reveal that the majority or all ash are vulnerable to this insect. Owners who wait to see if they have resistant trees may lose their window of opportunity and forfeit the value in their ash.

Seedling establishment is an essential step in forest regeneration. Each species has different life history attributes that dictate what conditions are needed to promote seed production, germination, and seedling development. The seeds of some species germinate better on soils disturbed by a harvest, known as scarification (Figure 5). Your forester will know what is necessary for desired species to regenerate. Previous low-intensity harvests, such as for firewood or thinning, may have established some seedlings. Details to help establish seedlings of a variety of species can be found in the US Forest Service "Silvics Manual" available here *https://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/pubs/misc/ag_654/table_of_contents.htm*.

Tactics to limit deer impacts to forest seedlings depend a bit on scale. A fact sheet on this subject is available at the link in the first paragraph of this article. Hunting can support efforts to limit deer impacts, but except in unique circumstances is seldom sufficient to allow for desired species to regenerate and grow. For harvests on multiple acres to create even-aged stands, the two primary options are fences and slash walls (*www.slashwall.info*). The latter was developed at Cornell's Arnot Forest and offers a significant cost savings over fencing for installation and avoids the necessary inspection and maintenance of fencing.

Beech and ferns can quickly dominate a forest after harvesting. These species will typically become problematic if deer browsing is significant; neither beech nor ferns are typically browsed by deer. Other potential interfering species include striped maple, hophornbeam, and more. Inside slash walls, control of beech begins with cutting all stems at the time of harvest. Cutting is less expensive than herbicide treatments. Beech remains abundant inside slash walls, but the absence of deer allow other species to gain height and remain competitive. Ferns can have significant detrimental effects on the establishment and growth of tree seedlings (Figure 6). A relatively small cover of fern, as little as 30% of the stand, can signal a probable fern dominance after a harvest. Little has been published about fern response in the absence of deer. Ferns are more abundant where deer have access.

Anecdotal reports note that fern is less abundant in the presence of blackberry and raspberry (*rubus* spp.), though it is unclear if the briars cause the reduction in fern (Figure 7). While largely speculative, because deer browse *rubus*, excluding deer might allow for more *rubus* and perhaps less fern. *Rubus* can inhibit hardwood seedling growth, but enough seedlings emerge above the *rubus* layer by approximately years 5-7 to reduce its cover and allow remaining seedlings to develop.

Successful regeneration on other properties is worth inspecting for the example and optimism it provides. However, generalizing from another

Figure 6. New York and hay-scented ferns spread by underground rooting structures called rhizomes. This allows these ferns to dominate a site when there are canopy openings and/or soil disturbance, especially where deer pressure is heavy.

Figure 7. In the absence of deer, blackberry and raspberry (rubus spp.) can become abundant. Ferns are seldom abundant where rubus is dominant. Deer will browse rubus and allow for increased abundance of ferns.

Figure 8. This young forest is densely stocked with red oak, red and sugar maple, and other desired species. What isn't obvious is that it had been surrounded by a fence for about 10 years, until a year prior to the picture. Without that information, it would be tempting to assume that successful regeneration only requires an extensive overstory removal.

location to your property isn't straightforward. The differences between location that might not be immediately apparent include pre-harvest stand conditions, previous management actions, presence of established regeneration, coincidence of seed crop with harvest and scarification, local weather patterns, deer abundance, harvest system, herbicide treatments, fencing, and more (Figure 8). Ideally, the owner or forester or both can describe the history of events that resulted in the success. Thus, if organizations host woodland tours to showcase successful regeneration, those occasions allow for questions to determine how to replicate the success on your property.

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Wild Things in Your Woodlands

Kristi Sullivan

Chestnut-sided warbler (*Dendroica pensylvanica*)

The chestnut-sided warbler is a small songbird, about 4-5 inches in size. Male chestnut-sided warblers have a yellow crown, a black eye-line and moustache, and a chestnut-colored streak along their sides. Females look similar, though they have less black on the face, and less pronounced chestnut streaking along the side.

May is the month of return for many birds, like the chestnut-sided warbler, that call New York's forests home during the summer. Each year, this easily recognizable bird spends its winters in mixed-species flocks in the moist, tropical forests of Central America. In the spring, the chestnut-sided warbler leaves its sunny paradise, making the long journey back to the eastern United States and Canada to breed and raise its young.

Once here, the chestnut-sided warbler prefers to nest in young, deciduous forests resulting from timber harvests or natural disturbances, overgrown pastures and fields, and other brushy areas. In the midst of dense vegetation, this active bird searches the underside of leaves for insects, hopping among the branches and repeatedly cocking its tail up above its back like a wren.

Once a rare bird in the northeastern United States, the number of chestnut-sided warblers increased dramatically in the 1900s. Following widespread deforestation and subsequent re-growth of new, young forests, suitable habitat became abundant. Today, it is one of the most common warblers breeding in New York State. However, its numbers are slowly declining as our forests mature and the availability of early successional habitats becomes limited.

The best way to create habitat for the chestnut-sided warbler is to provide young, brushy forest growth. Landowners can create optimal habitat through timber harvesting. Clearcuts, or even light to moderate thinning of the forest, can open up the canopy enough to allow light to reach the forest floor and encourage the necessary understory growth. Maintaining deer populations at low enough levels to prevent over-browsing of the understory, and allowing for the regeneration of new trees, can also can prevent unfavorable effects on this bird's habitat.

Kristi Sullivan directs the New York Master Naturalist Volunteer Program and Co-Directs the Conservation Education and Research Program in Cornell's Department of Natural Resources and the Environment. More information on managing habitat for wildlife can be found at New York Master Naturalist Program (cornell.edu).

From the President (continued)

programs to promote forest heath, such as the DEC's Regenerate New York initiative. A key point here: Regardless of the politics involved in climate change legislation and adhering to our core values, NYFOA is well positioned as a statewide educational association to promote sound environmental stewardship and to help advance the rights of the private woodlot owner in our state. Our DEC interlocutors welcomed continued input from NYFOA members on the various NYS initiatives under the environmental/climate change rubric, so please continue to speak up.

Here are some highlights from our March 22, 2023 state board meeting:

NYFOA's participation in the February 23-25 NYS Farm Show reached hundreds of attendees. Hugh Canham organized a series of seminars over the three-day event which were well received. Thanks also go out to Kristina Ferrare and Craig Vollmer for coordinating our booth presence and to several NYFOA volunteers who staffed our booth.

NYFOA Awards: Greg Lessord is serving as the focal point to receive nominations for two statewide awards — the Heiberg Memorial Award and the Outstanding Service Award. Any member can nominate peers for these awards by contacting Craig Vollmer at *cvollmer@nyfoa.org* or Greg Lessord. (Craig will share Greg's contact information separately to reduce our exposure to email scammers.)

Fundraising: Craig is leading the charge in our fundraising efforts. He has sent several letters to potential industry donors and will follow-up each mailing with a phone call. We discussed forming an ad hoc working group to help in this effort. If you are interested in supporting this important initiative or have recommendations of businesses or potential individual donors, please contact Craig or me directly.

Board Positions: Congratulations to Nick Jensen, our newly elected treasurer. Nick brings a wealth of professional experience in accounting, financial planning, and management. Board members thanked outgoing treasurer Peter Tonetti for his excellent service to NYFOA. Also, the board voted favorably for Mike Arman to serve a three year term.

President's Tenure: My tenure on the board had gone beyond NYFOA's term limit and required a special vote by the board to carry on. I agreed to remain as president of NYFOA for up to one year and will work with my replacement once a suitable candidate comes forward (i.e. someone motivated and better looking). It is an honor to serve our association and there is much to do. I am a lifer in NYFOA and will continue to help wherever needed. I genuinely believe in term limits as detailed in our association's bylaws. Term limits help ensure we have fresh thinking in managing our limited organizational resources and avoid falling into the rut of doing the same things or developing cliques. All of that said, it looks like you'll have to put up with me for a bit longer — and I encourage members to consider board positions or take on a chapter steering committee role. It is rewarding and important work.

The Membership Committee under the leadership of Tracey Testo has been making excellent progress in assessing member retention issues while considering various measures to increase our numbers overall. An interesting finding: Tracey's group (to include Tracey, Mike Gorham, and Tony Rainville) has been making calls to several members who had let their NYFOA membership lapse after one year — the most common point when a member drops out. A recurring theme we heard from lapsed members is that they simply forgot to renew and most said they planned to re-join. Based on these initial results, we are considering an automatic renewal option for members paying annual dues by credit card. The committee team also suggested some positive follow-up contact with new members at the chapter level, with details to be worked out in cooperation with our chapters.

Communications: Mike Jabot now serves as the committee chair and will be the coordinator for NYFOA communications, including the website, the reconfiguration of the e-newsletter, and our social media presence. Craig mentioned that we are upgrading NYFOA's website using credits which have accrued with our website administrator Vibrant Creative.

I would like to end this column on a personal note. Here goes:

Leo Kazacos, a prospective NYFOA member building a snowman.

Our son Stefan is a medical doctor and US Army officer now serving in Germany. Recently he was called to support earthquake relief efforts in Türkiye. This unexpected deployment put his family in a pinch for childcare as our daughter-in-law was just starting a new position at the military base and there are two kids under 7 years old in the picture. They did what many younger couples do in similar circumstances: Call 1-800-Grandma. My wife Jeannine headed to Germany a few days later to help out. At the last minute the Turks asked the US to stand-down on sending the medical team. A few days later, Stefan was tapped to go to Poland to support the president's visit. After two weeks of this back and forth, Jeannine returned to the U.S. and brought our 4-year-old grandson Leo to our upstate NY home for a visit. Leo loves the snow and 'helped' plow, move firewood, tap a few maple trees, and build a snowman. Based on his heartfelt interest in the outdoors, I suggested he join NYFOA. Leo is now back in Germany and promised to consider the option.

It feels good being in the woods, observing wildlife, enjoying nature, and breathing fresh air. Have a great spring.

–Stacey Kazacos
NYFOA President

Combatting Invasives: A Guide to Some Alternative Landscape Plants to Replace Japanese Barberry

By Gay Thistle

Gardening season is coming upon us once again. Woodland owners should be aware that many popular landscape plants can escape into the wilds of our woodlands and replace native plants. You may have Japanese barberry (*Barberis thunbergii*) growing in your woods. Japanese barberry has been known to "hop" into the woods from landscape plantings. Barberries are prolific seed producers, and birds like to eat them; deer do not. If you have a Japanese barberry problem in your woods, most likely it was started by birds depositing the seeds from a nearby source.

Plants that are not native to an area and easily repopulate in the landscape, blocking light for native plants to germinate are called invasive species. Japanese barberry is categorized as an invasive in many states. The problem with invasive species is that they did not evolve in this environment so they have no predators to keep their population in check. In the case of Japanese barberry, deer do not eat it and there is no insect that munches on its leaves, roots, or stems to keep the plant populations in balance. Biologically, invasive plants adapt and grow well in a variety of conditions. Besides the spread of seed by birds, Japanese barberry will spread vegetatively and form a dense mat blocking sunlight from reaching the forest floor. A mat of invasive species will not allow a hardwood seed to germinate because of this. Or if the seedling does germinate, it will likely be deprived of the water and nutrients that it needs to survive.

A mat of Japanese barberry is very difficult to walk through. The stems are covered in fine thorns, so handling these plants requires a thick pair of gloves. Invasive species are a major problem economically because many woodland owners spend most of their forest management hours on combatting them, rather than engaging in more beneficial work like crop tree release, harvesting, planting, etc.

Japanese barberry.

Landscapers and homeowners use Japanese barberry because it has some endearing traits. It is easy to grow because deer do not prefer to eat this plant and there are no known pests in the U.S. It also thrives in a variety of environmental conditions- from full sun to moderate shade. Barberry is deciduous and can be purchased in a variety of foliage colors, from light green to burgundy red. It forms a bright red berry in the fall that persists through winter.

Every chain restaurant, shopping mall, and housing plan has at least one- usually more. As woodland owners, we need to help educate our neighbors and community planners about the problems with this plant and others like it. My friend and fellow woodland owner Arlyn Perkey has nicknamed Japanese barberry "tickberry" because recent studies link higher populations of ticks to this plant. This is an idea and a common name that we should spread far and wide so that "Joe" or "Josephine" homeowner will stop planting this pest in their yards and nurseries will stop selling them. Another way to get this pesky plant off the market is to replace it with alternatives. Here are a few suggestions that one can use to achieve similar landscape effects without harming our woodlands.

Plants from the holly family offer alternatives. ***Ilex glabra* (inkberry holly)** is a broadleaf evergreen plant with small shiny dark green foliage and black-blue berries (make sure you buy one plant of each sex to get the berries on the female). Leaf coloration is not as dramatic or varied as barberry, but the green broadleaf leaves form a more natural silhouette in the landscape. Deer do not prefer this plant. Like barberry, this shrub has an erect but much branched rounded shape. It tends to sucker and form colonies. This plant will

withstand heavy pruning so you can keep in the shape and size desired for the space.

Another suggestion is ***Buxus spp*.** **(boxwood)**. Boxwood is a slow grower and does not have to be pruned but can be if you want a more formal garden look. It is a broadleaf evergreen whose foliage shows variable greens with the new foliage being a bright lighter green and the undersides of the leaves being lighter in color than the topsides. Deer will eat boxwoods so they would have to protected during the winter. Boxwoods are a classic choice for a formal garden, but can also work in a more informal cottage garden.

One of my favorites and a native to Pennsylvania is **Northern bayberry (*Myrica pennsylvatica*)**. It is another broadleaf semi-evergreen shrub that has interesting fall color due to its persistent grey-green berries that amass on the stem. The wax from the berries and leaves is used to produce bayberry scented candles. The pleasant odor is apparent when leaves or berries are crushed. Northern bayberry is a little taller than barberry and has a dense, irregular shape. The shrub tends to sucker. Very easy to grow in dense clay soils.

Daphne variegata is another evergreen shrub that can offer a variety of texture to a garden. This variety of daphne has a variegated green and cream colored leaf that could replace the light green variety of barberry. An added bonus is that it has a rose-pink fragrant flower that blooms twice in a season-spring and summer. This is a low spreading shrub that works well in rock gardens and is fairly easy to grow. It is a bit temperamental to grow successfully, preferring limestone soils that are fairly loose and rich. There are many varieties of *Daphne* shrubs that would work in gardens; I chose the variegated species because of its color and landscape interest. I recommend any of them as replacements to barberry.

Boxwood.

Japanese Pieris (*Pieris japonica)* is another evergreen shrub that offers a variety of color and texture that is better than barberry. It is a more upright shrub whose dense rosette-like foliage shows a rich bronze color as new growth. Its flowers are long lasting cascades of cream from March-April. It does well planted in semi-shade to full sun. It does need a fairly rich, well-drained soil to grow. Add peat to the soil mix when planting, and don't plant it in a wet spot.

So spread the word about the perils of planting "tickberry" (Japanese barberry) and offer suggestions for replacement plants. I would rather spend my forest management hours tending to my crop trees, harvesting, or planting new trees than combatting invasive species. Another tactic is to encourage local representatives to pass laws like that of Maryland, which requires that invasive plants be identified as such in plant nurseries so that the public might educate themselves and choose more benign alternatives.

Pieris japonica.

Sources:

Japanese Barberry Fact Sheet: http://www.paflora.org/original/pdf/INV-Fact%20Sheets/Berberis%20thunbergii.pdf. Accessed 4/4/18

Dirr, Michael A., "Manual of Woody Landscape Plants" 5th edition. 1998.

DCNR Invasive Plant List: http://www.docs.dcnr.pa.gov/cs/groups/public/documents/document/dcnr_20033302.pdf Accessed 4/4/18

Gay Thistle is a retired science and horticulture teacher who recently moved from Pennsylvania to Whitesville, NY, where she owns and manages 150 acres of woodland with her husband Harold. They are members of the Allegheny Foothills chapter.

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

With Forest Insects, Spring is all About Timing

By Mark Whitmore

I'm always in awe at the changes wrought by the onset of spring. Perhaps I should be more matter of fact about it considering how many times I witnessed spring, but I'm not. I was pruning in the orchard the other day and came upon a precocious golden russet, one of the oldest American apples, hailing from the Hudson valley in the 18th century. The buds were just opening, and sure enough there were aphids already feeding on the nascent leaves and not far away was a small inchworm in search of its first meal. It wasn't by chance that those bugs were there, they have evolved precise timing to take advantage of the availability of this first juicy food source in spring. Defoliating caterpillars are particularly well known to take advantage of these first young leaves. Timing the hatch of their eggs is important so that the young caterpillars can sink their tiny chewing mouthparts into tender new leaves before they have a chance to get tough and accumulate chemicals that may deter feeding.

Unfortunately, it's the feeding on young leaves that is most damaging to trees. Trees use their stored food reserves to produce this first spring flush of leaves, and if they are eaten, the trees will not be able to replenish these reserves and can be seriously damaged. Trees experiencing spring defoliation often put out another flush of leaves later in the growing season, but this is energetically costly, especially if defoliation occurs over consecutive

Figure 1. Spongy moth killed by nucleopolyhedrosis virus. Photo by Steven Katovich, Bugwood.org.

years. It's in these circumstances where the infamous spongy moth (formerly gypsy moth), *Lymantria dispar*, can kill trees. Insects that feed on leaves in late summer, like fall webworm (*Hyphantria cunea*), can be a nuisance and cause unsightly defoliation, but have little impact on a tree's health because the trees have had their leaves long enough to store food for the next year.

I'm still perplexed about why, suddenly, after over 30 years the spongy moth populations exploded in upstate New York when it is an annual event further south in Pennsylvania. But they did. It now appears that populations have collapsed in areas where I found the heaviest defoliation over the past couple years. Evidence of caterpillars killed by the fungal pathogen *Entomophaga maimaiga* and the nucleopolyhedrosus virus was common. However, it is important to consider the natural control of these defoliators as an additive impact of all natural enemies. Besides the numerous insect parasitoids and predators released since the early 1900's, the impact of the white-footed mouse deserves special mention. Mice eat spongy moth pupae in the leaf litter and research has shown that when mouse populations increase in response to mast years of acorns, predation on the pupae can be significant. One of the sad take home messages from the recent spongy moth outbreak is that they like hemlock trees. I found that they would even defoliate hemlocks that had been treated for hemlock woolly adelgid. The most disturbing part is that contrary to hardwood trees that can withstand two or even three years of defoliation, hemlocks are killed with just a single year of defoliation.

Another early spring defoliator is the forest tent caterpillar, *Malacosoma disstria*. This widely distributed indigenous moth has outbreaks with widespread defoliation every 10 years or so in New York. By this calculation, an outbreak is overdue. The last time I saw an outbreak I was struck by the first defoliation starting on sugar maple growing on well drained, rocky soils. Defoliation gradually spread to more mesic sites and many maple syrup producers were quite rightly concerned.

Figure 2. Spongy moth killed by the fungus, Entomophaga maimaiga. Photo by Steven Katovich,

Just one year of heavy defoliation can impact syrup production. The drill is to look for their characteristic egg masses laid on twigs in the canopy to determine if populations will be damaging. If the indication is for high populations then an aerial application of *Bacillus thuringiensis* (Bt), a bacteria that produces a toxin in the gut of the caterpillar, is the best way to effect control over a large area. Bt present on the surface of a leaf must be consumed by the developing caterpillar to be effective. The problem is that Bt can be washed off a leaf by rain and will be degraded by UV radiation, so timing of the application is critical. It must be done early in the season, as the tender young leaves are being consumed by the caterpillars and in a time window

continued on next page

without rain. Timing and planning is everything with this project. Lining up a contractor for this needs to be done months in advance, and a volume discount can be achieved by including neighbors.

Two common early feeding caterpillars are the spring and fall cankerworms, *Paleacrita vernata* and *Alsophila pometaria*. These are moths in the family Geometridae, commonly known as inchworms, spanworms, or loopers. These cankerworms are native to North America and have a broad host range but are most known for their defoliation of elm, apple, oak, basswood, and beech. Their common names are derived from when they lay their eggs. Spring cankerworms lay their eggs in early spring and the fall cankerworm lays in late fall, yet both feed on the early emerging leaves in spring. I think this is the inchworm that was fixing to feed on my golden russet apple. Feeding by the caterpillars causes small holes that gradually enlarge until all you see are the veins in the leaves. Yes, these caterpillars are picky eaters. It is interesting to me that there are over 1200 species of moths in this family, but we only hear about the few that are pests. Will this change as native trees become more stressed? It's also interesting that cankerworms have been known to go outbreak, causing significant defoliation in the past, yet have not done so for many years. Some researchers speculate this is due to the reduction of elm, a favored food, in our forests.

Of course, all is not exactly wonderful in the world of inchworms and birds, and we may be witness to a change in this dynamic with climate change. Bud break in trees and subsequent hatching of inchworm eggs are closely tied to temperature. On the other hand, migratory birds adhere to strict schedules often dictated by celestial events or perhaps changes in climate far removed from the areas they migrate to for breeding. These birds have adapted to time their arrival in spring to nest when the first leaves are appearing, and the inchworms are beginning to grow. Egg hatch just happens to coincide with peak caterpillar abundance. A problem occurs when there is a disconnect with this timing and food is unavailable or diminished for developing young. Researchers in North America looked at 48 species of migratory birds and found that as spring green up of the trees became earlier, the arrival of birds lagged behind. Although some of the birds have been able to shift their arrival, it still lags behind the shift in green up. The more troubling news is that nine of the 48 bird species have been unable to keep up with the change in green up.

Mark Whitmore is a forest entomologist in the Cornell University Department of Natural Resources and the chair of the NY Forest Health Advisory Council.

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

trees on earth. And Landis Arboretum, one of only three arboreta in the U.S. to contain acreage of old-growth forest, is currently hosting a "Big Tree Search" contest in New York, looking for the largest overall single-stem tree in the state, as well as the largest living specimens of each of the 229 tree species on New York's Big Tree Register. Entries will be accepted thru November 1, 2023, and prizes will be awarded for those reporting trees that are verified as "champions."

As for the question of where all of these champion trees tend to reside, I was disappointed to see that no trees from my home county of Tioga made the list, but a quick scan of the results show that Livingston, Dutchess, Wyoming, and particularly Monroe Counties are very well represented.

Since our trees are perpetually growing, aging, and dying, and since we have over 19 million acres of woodland here in New York, the Big Tree Register requires regular citizen participation, as big trees can be hiding out in woodlots, hedgerows, fields, and even yards statewide. If you have (or know of) a potential champion tree, the DEC page concludes by offering contact information and guidelines for nominating trees to be assessed for inclusion in the register. The New York Big Tree Register is maintained in cooperation with American Forests, which also maintains the National Register of Big Trees.

If you're thinking of hunting for some big trees in your area, a basic toolkit might consist of a diameter tape measure, which can be found online for under $20, though a regular carpenter's tape measure will work fine if you don't mind making the calculation to convert tree circumference to diameter. To measure tree height (a trickier proposition prior to the digital age), a quick search on Amazon showed me numerous models of laser measuring devices starting as low as about $30. So not a particularly expensive endeavor. A Biltmore stick may also prove handy for estimating the diameter and height of some of our smaller tree species.

What got me thinking about all this in the first place is that I have a spectacular 34" DBH white oak at the top of my woodlot, in what used to be a hedgerow between my parcel and my neighbor's fields back when my timber stands were open pasture in the late 19th century. While I have seen many really large red oaks in this neck of the woods, this one is one of the largest white oaks I have seen locally, so I wanted to see how it stacked up against others across the state. Well, the currently largest known white oak in New York is in Dutchess County, and has a circumference of 251", which makes for a diameter of just under 80". So much for my delusions of grandeur, but who knows what the future holds, as white oak is an extremely long-lived tree, with specimens up to 600 years of age having been recorded.

It took a series of landowners over the past 150+ years deciding NOT to harvest my hedgerow oak for it to still be present here today. As it is also most likely the seed source for the number of smaller sawtimber-sized white oak that are scattered throughout my woodlot, its value has extended far beyond itself. So in addition to spreading seed with superior genetic traits, big trees across our landscape remind us of the primeval majesty of the original forests in our region prior to the spread of agriculture across the state in the 1800s. They also remind us of the *potential* productivity of our forestlands today, and perhaps most importantly, they remind us to take the long view in the management of our woodlots. Future generations may not know anything about *us*, but they will appreciate our efforts if we leave a legacy of big trees for them to experience as well.

What's the biggest tree in *your* woodlot?

Resources:

- NYS Big Tree Register: *www.dec.ny.gov/animals/5248.html*
- *www.monumentaltrees.com/en/records/usa/newyork/*
- *www.adirondackexplorer.org/stories/a-new-giant-tree-found-near-bolton*
- *www.timesunion.com/news/article/New-York-s-largest-documented-tree-discovered-in-17640480.php#photo-23249835*
- *www.nyvtmedia.com/2023/02/21/big-tree-register-contains-some-local-trees/*
- *www.dailygazette.com/2022/12/09/esperance-arborist-finds-potentially-largest-tree-in-new-york-state-in-schaghticoke/*
- *www.landisarboretum.org*
- Landis Arboretum's Big Tree Search: *landisarboretum/events/landis-arboretum-big-tree-search*

Jeff Joseph is the managing editor of this magazine.

Would you like to see an article about a particular topic we haven't covered?

Please send your suggestions to: Mary Beth Malmsheimer, editor at mmalmshe@syr.edu or Jeff Joseph, managing editor at jeffjosephwoodworker@gmail.com

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
Thomas Ayers	WFL	Daniel Marino	LHC
Brooks Forestry	CNY	Loren Muldowney	WFL
Jerry Brown	AFC	Dietland Muller-Schwarze	CNY
Kelly Burke	CNY	Davies Nagel	WFL
Kurt Charland	WFL	Mike Odell	WFL
Virginia Cox	AFC	Annette Pyszczynski	NFC
Zachary Dewar	SFL	Andrew Stowell	NAC
John Donnelly	WFL	Michael Talbot	CDC
Katherine Dorn	CNY	Daniel Tanski	NAC
Matthew Harding	CDC	Scott Van Roy	CDC
Ralph Hoch	NAC	Woodwise Land Company LLC	WFL
Lane Jones	CDC	Glenn Wygant	SOT
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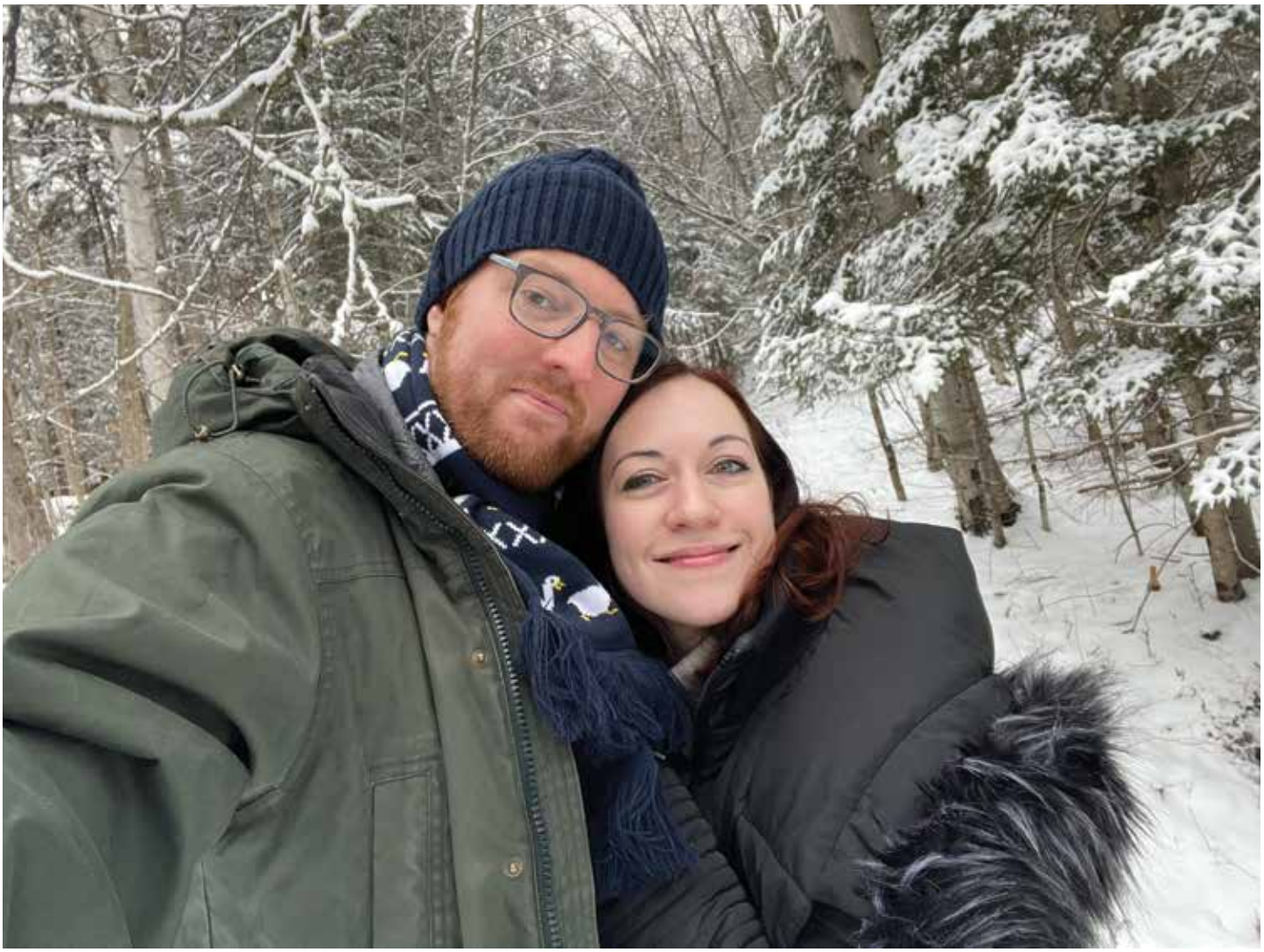
UNDER 40—The Next Generation of Woodland Stewardship: Kat Hargrave & Gareth Price

Compiled and Edited by Jeff Joseph

Please provide a brief background on yourself, including your age, and how your life and family relate to your property (where you're from, family, current occupation, etc.):

Kat: I'm 35, and grew up in the Houston area of Texas where my family bought and built a house on a lot full of old live oaks. Working outside to help my parents as a child felt like a chore at the time, but looking back it was a great way to grow up. After college, I moved to New York and now work primarily remotely as a creative director.



Gareth Price and Kat Hargrave.

Gareth: I'm 39, and am an immigrant from the UK, where I grew up a short walk from the woodlands of the South Downs. I manage software engineering teams at a tech company based in NYC. We live in Kingston full-time since the pandemic.

How much land do you own? How much of the land is wooded?

10 acres, 100% wooded.

Where is the land (county, town)?

Hamilton County, Long Lake NY.

When did you take ownership of your land? Was it from within the family or outside the family? If outside the family, what attracted you to purchase that particular parcel?

We began the process in July 2021 and closed in January 2022, purchasing the land through Zillow. We were looking for a woodlot, driving around the Adirondacks and loved the welcoming atmosphere of Long Lake even though our original thought had been to find somewhere more remote. The lot itself immediately felt like "the one", with a good mix of terrain, tree diversity, and privacy.

What motivated you to become a woodlot owner? What motivates you to engage in the active management of your woodlot?

Kat: I grew up in a rural part of Texas, and though I definitely love city life and my time in NYC, going back to nature and more wooded areas feels like going home. Learning more about nature through actively caring for the native systems has been great in the small scale of a garden, and taking this kind of conservation to the next level has felt like a natural progression. What motivates me most of all is the ability to offer refuge and habitat for the variety of beautiful plants and creatures that call our state home. In a world that lacks permanence, this gesture of kindness to nature fills me with purpose. Seeing the details of nature while we work from small colorful fungi to charming birds is the ultimate entertainment and encouragement to continue.

Gareth: Having a long-term environmental impact by conserving and managing our woodlot. We started reading about what we could do as individuals to make a difference and it turns out that maintaining forests and planting trees through ownership of a well-managed woodlot is about the most effective way for individuals to have a direct, large-scale and long-term positive impact on climate and biodiversity. Our 10 acres will definitely not fix the problem on a global scale, but with 84% of the US's 527 million acres of forest owned by private landowners, as a combined force, woodlot owners will have a key part to play in climate solutions.

Land is a historically proven hedge against inflation and a valuable part of a diversified investment portfolio. We were very lucky with timing given the inflation of the past 12 months!

Who participates in the management decisions and the actual work? Where do you obtain information to guide your decisions?

We share work equally, from calling and scheduling meetings with consultants on bird habitat to pulling up invasive stilt grass.

Information comes from internet research as well as a few books on native plants of the northeast. Finding great resources — NYFOA, DEC, Audubon Society — is key.

Describe the overall makeup of the land, the topography, water features (ponds, swamps), surrounding landscape, etc.…

Luckily for us our land is heavily sloped so is very hard to get lost in---just keep going downhill! It has many little streams that end in more boggy areas near the low points. It has many large rocks as well as some interesting moss covered quartz formations. Our parcel is adjacent to the lakefront lots around Long Lake, and was probably clear-cut agricultural land in the 1800s, as we have found a few man-made catch basins for either erosion control or hydration for livestock.

Describe the land's vegetation. Types of trees that dominate? Presence of and type of understory vegetation?

It's a middle-aged forest of eastern hemlock, white pine, American beech, birch, and some maple species. The beech and hemlock dominate, and part of our long term forestry plan is to thin some of the beeches to encourage more young trees of other species. There are many ferns and grasses as

well as ephemeral flowers, though not many bushes, currently which we are looking to change to provide more cover and food for wildlife.

Provide a summary timeline of your experience with the land since you bought it. What have been your major projects? What did you learn during those projects?

Our first project has been clearing some of the streams of many years of debris to enable them to flow more strongly. This led to some fun experiences with wildlife from salamanders to a black bear who decided to have a look at what we were doing. After that bear, bells became part of the outfit. The next thing we did was remove invasive plants where we could before they went to seed in fall. In the spring we look forward to replacing these with more native choices to help preserve the biodiversity of the land. We also installed a wildlife camera to note what animals are present on the land.

How has the land changed since you bought it?

Since we recently bought the land, it has not changed too much, the front has been cleared of beer bottles for sure though.

What is your biggest challenge when it comes to managing the property and the woods?

Probably trying to fit in all our goals for the land and its habitat restoration while still taking things slow and enjoying the little moments. Having a full time job also takes up time and we both are already eager for the day when we can devote more time to being in nature.

What are some things you have done to learn how to understand and manage your land more effectively?

We've consulted experts to get their advice on how best to achieve our goals regarding habitat creation. There are so many great free educational resources.

What advice would you give to other young woodlot owners, or to those considering buying woodland?

Kat: Be thoughtful about what your goals are and think about them as you survey the options. Goes without saying but always see in person, as images are deceiving or don't show the full situation. Listen to your gut about what feels right as well as what your head and logic are telling you.

Gareth: The land market is the wild west compared to the more structured housing market for single-family homes. Don't be afraid to make offers. Land financing is unusual, most deals are cash. Expect things to move slowly.

What do you enjoy the most about being a forest owner?

Walking in the various seasons and seeing how it changes so dramatically. Hearing a new kind of bird song and learning to identify what it is. Learning more about hobbies like mushroom foraging and identifying plants has also been rewarding.

In what ways, if any, do you interact with your neighbors or community as it relates to your woodlot?

We've spoken briefly with a few people down the road; everyone is friendly and seems to value the quiet of the area.

Which NYFOA chapter are you affiliated with? How has membership in NYFOA benefited you as a woodland owner?

We are affiliated with the Southeastern Adirondack (SAC) chapter but are also following the re-activation of the Lower Hudson chapter as our primary residence is in Ulster County. Finding resources from the magazine and realizing a like-minded group of people are out there. Looking forward to attending some of the in-person events!

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