

# The New York Forest Owner

A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

May/June 2006



*Member Profile: Jim and Phyllis House*

*Volume 44 Number 3*



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VOLUME 44, NUMBER 3

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Please address all membership fees and change of address requests to P.O. Box 541, Lima, N.Y. 14485. 1-800-836-3566. Cost of family membership/subscription is \$35.

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[www.nyfoa.org](http://www.nyfoa.org)

**COVER:** Photo shows Phyllis and Jim House standing in front of fire wood generated from their property. Turn to page 21 to read the complete member profile article. Photo courtesy of Carl Wiedemann.

# From The Executive Director

NYFOA's members and partners are great people – they care deeply about forest stewardship in New York State, they actively seek information to become educated on emerging issues, and they eagerly offer assistance and share their knowledge with their neighbors. It has been my pleasure to meet many of you in the past couple of months.

I had the opportunity to welcome nearly 300 participants to the Western New York Rural Landowner Workshop sponsored by the Allegheny Foothills Chapter in early March. The Workshop agenda was packed full of informative and timely topics and exhibits of interest to NYFOA members and others. I was impressed by the incredible energy and enthusiasm of the event's

organizers and attendees.



Also in March, I enjoyed meeting with the high-energy chapter steering committees of the Northern Adirondack Chapter in Wanakena by the

still-frozen Cranberry Lake, and the Lower Hudson Chapter in Westchester County where spring bulbs and shrubs were already in bloom! Both groups are planning some wonderful programs and exciting special events for their members and other forest landowners this summer and fall.

In early April, I was the guest of the Western Finger Lakes Chapter at their woodswalk in Chuck Winship's Sugarbush Hollow forest in East Springwater. The event was held in partnership with the New York State Maple Producers Association. Bruce Robinson, consulting forester, led the walk that focused on forest management for maple production and stand improvement. Almost 50 NYFOA members, NYSMPA members, families, and friends took part in the walk; and were treated to pancakes and freshly-made maple syrup in Chuck's beautiful new sugarhouse after the walk.

Thanks to the thoughtful input of NYFOA's website redesign committee, the Association's on-line presence is about to have a facelift. In fact, by the time you read this, the transformation may already be underway. Committee members include Steve Teuscher (Allegheny Foothills Chap-

ter), Bob Manning (Southern Adirondack Chapter), Bob Coupal (Northern Adirondack Chapter), Geff Yancey (Western Finger Lakes Chapter), Anne Osborn (Lower Hudson Chapter), and Liana Gooding (NYFOA Administrative Assistant). The redesign includes streamlined navigation features and updated chapter-driven content. Also, the site reflects the overall focus of the organization – the central role of New York's Forest Owners in sustaining our state's heritage of working landscapes. The site had been hosted and maintained for the last several years as an important in-kind contribution to NYFOA by our partners at Cornell Cooperative Extension – a service that was greatly appreciated! Check out the new site at [www.nyfoa.org](http://www.nyfoa.org).

There's never a dull moment in Albany. We're seeing considerable movement, productive discussion, and well-informed statewide media and editorial attention to issues related to forestland taxation. In the last edition of *The Forest Owner*, I reported on several bills that were introduced in the state Assembly and Senate including A6638/S6818 that relates to excluding the value of trees for the purposes of real property tax assessments. Since then, Alan White (NYFOA President) has continued his tireless efforts along with other members of the Council of Forest Resource Organizations (of which NYFOA is a founding member) to develop possible amendments to this "tree tax" legislation that would meet the needs of forest landowners for predictable and equitable taxation while lessening impacts to municipalities' tax base.

While attending the Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) sponsored workshop "Caring for your Forest Land," in White Plains last month, I had the opportunity to meet Art Wagner, a volunteer in CCE's Master Forest Owner (MFO)/COVERTS Program. Art exemplifies all that is unique and powerful about the MFO program and its staff and volunteers. Art willingly offered the lessons he had learned as a steward of his forest; and his experiences served as an inspiration to the other landowners to get involved and take action in their forests. Thanks Art; and thanks Forest Owners everywhere across the state – you are really making a difference! I'm honored to work with you.

–Mary Jeanne Packer  
Executive Director

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# In The MAIL

Letters to the Editor are the opinions of the authors themselves and not necessarily of the New York Forest Owners Association. They may be sent to: The New York Forest Owner, 134 Lincklaen Street, Cazenovia, NY 13035 or via e-mail at [mmalmshe@syr.edu](mailto:mmalmshe@syr.edu)

## Forest Tent Caterpillar

In the New York Forest Owner March/April 2006. You wrote about how to manage the Forest Tent Caterpillar. But you don't mention what kind of spray kills this Caterpillar. You would make me very happy if you could tell me. Thank You Very Much.

-Gunther Krebs

*Editors Note: This response was provided from Douglas Allen, Professor of Entomology at SUNY-ESF.*

About the only material now used for a widespread defoliator such as the forest tent is the biological known as "B.t." or *Bacillus thuringiensis*. It is very effective when applied at the right time (very soon after leafout) and is very safe environmentally. It is not a "contact poison" like the synthetic organic insecticides but must be consumed by a caterpillar in order to work. Hope this helps.

Please note if you have to send anything to NYFOA the mailing address is:

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The forwarding order for the old Penfield post office box has expired and will not be forwarded.

What topics would  
**YOU**  
like to see covered in the  
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Contact the Editor at  
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# HOW TO: *Minimize Soil Compaction*

PAUL W. ADAMS

Soil compaction can happen whenever machinery, livestock, or people travel on the land. On forest land, soil compaction often is caused by logging equipment such as rubber-tired skidders or crawler tractors.

Typically, productive forest soils are loose and porous, which also means they're relatively weak when it comes to supporting heavy machinery. That's why when forest roads are built, topsoil is removed to expose deep soil that's harder and stronger, and even that soil often is compacted intentionally to strengthen it even more. Yet, while soil compaction may be good for roads, in growing areas it is likely to have an effect on site productivity. Studies from around the United States have shown that both seedling and residual tree growth can be substantially reduced where soils are compacted. And these effects are seen on a wide range of soil types (e.g., sand, clay, and ash soils) and commercial tree species (e.g., pine, Douglas-fir, hemlock, and true fir).

## Minimizing Compaction Problems

According to Paul Adams, a forest watershed specialist with Oregon State University Cooperative Extension, the best approach to minimizing soil compaction, is to "assume that most soils are 'compactable'" and then focus on techniques—rather than blanket operation restrictions—to minimize the degree, area, and depth of compaction. Among the techniques Adams suggests foresters and landowners consider to minimize soil compaction are the use of designated skid trails and soil tillage.

Adams recommends the use of designated skid trails for minimizing compaction because it accommodates most types of logging vehicles and can

restrict compaction to less than 10 to 15 percent of the land area. With this approach, skid trails are clearly marked before logging and then trees are felled so they can be easily winched to tractors or skidders that remain on established trails. Designated trails can even be used successfully with highly mechanized harvester-forwarder systems, as long as there is allowance for some limited off-trail traffic by the harvester. These machines also are capable of placing slash in high traffic areas to reduce soil impacts.

"When combined with techniques like directional felling and line-pulling from vehicles that stay on the trails, it's fairly easy to restrict compacted areas to no more than about 7 to 12 percent of the harvest unit," says Adams. "The costs of designated skid trails also can be reasonable, often just planning and layout time. Some loggers use designated trails as a routine practice because they've found they improve logging efficiency."


A recent Oregon State University case study showed that compacted soils in designated skid trails caused no overall growth reductions in a residual conifer stand seven years after thinning. In fact, the trees that generally grew best after the thinning were those next to the skid trails, probably because only a fraction of their root zones were compacted and instead the new trails provided less competition and more light and growing space for the canopies.

In areas where designated skid trails are impractical or where widespread compaction already exists, Adams says tilling compacted soils is an option to help restore their productivity.

Moreover, he says that while specially designed equipment like

"winged subsoilers" can be most effective in loosening heavily compacted soils, even simple scarification can encourage plant rooting and soil organisms that help promote soil recovery.

Yet Adams notes that tillage may not be needed everywhere compacted soil is found—consider reusing existing skid trails if they provide a reasonable traffic pattern.

"If you're using a well-planned designated skid trail network from the start, you can think of it as part of the permanent access system for the land," he says. "With that approach, growth impacts shouldn't even be an issue and all you'll need to think about is controlling runoff on slopes with water bars or other trail drainage features." 

*Adapted from "Soil Compaction on Woodland Properties" by Paul W. Adams, a publication of Oregon State University Extension, <http://eesc.orst.edu/agcomwebfile/edmat/EC1109.pdf>. For more information, contact Paul W. Adams, forest watershed specialist, Oregon State University Extension, Department of Forest Engineering, 263 Peavy Hall, Corvallis, OR 97331; (541) 737-2946; [paul.adams@oregonstate.edu](mailto:paul.adams@oregonstate.edu).*

*This article appeared in the December 2003 issue of "The Forestry Source" a publication of SAF. It is reprinted with their permission.*



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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 affect 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](mailto:pjs23@cornell.edu) with an explicit mention of "Ask a Professional." Additional reading on various topics is available at [www.forestconnect.info](http://www.forestconnect.info)*

## Question:

What should I do on the finance and tax side to improve my profit potential?

## Answer:

As the tax season comes to a close, many forest owners want to consider if there are strategies to legally reduce the costs of forest ownership. For many forest owners, depending on their attitude about their forest, strategies exist.

Forest owners split along a divide of those who want or need money from their forest ownership and those who don't intend to use their property to generate revenue. Those in the later category would likely enjoy the financial advantages of forest ownership, but aren't willing or able to satisfy the requirements. Those forest owners who want or need money from their property may still have non-financial interests in the property, such as recreation and privacy. The requirements to qualify for federal tax advantages as a forest owner, such as deductions for expenses, have stiffened in recent years to eliminate the tax shelters that some forest owners previously abused. The answer to the question at hand has two parts, one related to how much you pay in property tax and the other related to your liability for taxes on income generated from your forest.

The amount that forest owners pay in property tax varies widely among townships and depending on the land use classification of your land. This issue has recently become publicly debated in newspapers and through listserves. Commonly, property tax assessments on forest land are based on the highest and best use of that land, rather than the current use of that land. Thus, a healthy and productive forest that provides innumerable and often immeasurable ecosystem services and requires little or no municipal investment as a recipient of services may be taxed at a rate associated

with, for example, a housing development or a rural estate. Unfortunately, the tax cost per acre often exceeds the potential for sustainable revenue. In NY, some towns have recently been including the value of timber in the assessed value of the land. This is a legal, but not traditionally utilized section of NYS real property tax law.

One way to reduce the tax burden is through the NYS Forest Tax Law 480-a. This law trades a lessened tax burden in exchange for a commitment to manage for forest products. This law requires



The USDA Forest Service and the IRS works with Cornell University and NYS DEC to deliver workshops to CPAs, tax preparers and foresters who can assist forest owners with the questions about the preparation of tax returns that include expenses and income related to forest management.

the forest owner to hire a forester to develop a management plan and the landowner (or people hired by the landowner) to implement the forest management plan. The forest owner also pays a yield tax at the time of a timber sale. Several other specific considerations apply and application into 480-a should be a deliberate and thoughtful strategy. More information on 480-a is available through the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation.

Your options for minimizing your liability for taxes on forest-based income will depend on your ownership structure as business, investment, or hobby. The structure of your forest ownership refers to how you define the relationship you have with your property for legal and tax reasons. The way you classify your ownership will affect how you handle annual management expenses relative to your annual income, whether your income qualifies for capital gains treatment, and other considerations. In some situations, your forest management expenses will be directly deductible from your non-forest personal income. Several characteristics will help you and your financial advisor make the correct classification. Characteristics to discuss include: why you own the land, the activities you conduct on the land, whether you have or will sell timber, and how you handle your annual costs of ownership. A business-minded approach to your forest will involve some additional tax forms, such as form T, but those are familiar among people who prepare taxes.

The most favorable structure for reduced tax liability among forest owners is to be "active in the trade or business". This requires that you materially participate in the management of your forest. Material participation can be defined in different ways, but essentially means that you and your family members are the primary people involved in the management. This tax structure affords specific advantages over investment and passive structures, such as a more favorable capital gains treatment, annual deduction of expenses from any income



A timber sale can generate significant revenue for a forest owner. Careful advance planning can help the owner to fully document the costs associated with a sale, depletion of basis, and assess the potential for capital gains treatment. These steps can save owners significant money. Also, remember that all timber sale revenue must be declared as income.

source, and the option to deduct up to \$100,000 in one year for equipment purchases.


Forest owners who have a business-minded approach to the management of their property (note the IRS has definitions for this) may have the opportunity to deduct the costs of materials purchased for the generation of a profit from their forest. An important distinction between other business activities and a forest as a business is that the forested property does not need to actually generate revenue each year, but only have the capacity to generate income. Thus, if your trees grow, which they most likely will, your forest can qualify as a business.

Forest owners wishing to take advantage of a reduced tax liability based on their business-minded approach to forest management should take the following steps.

(1) Visit with their financial advisor at the beginning of the tax year. Financial advisors, some of whom are specially trained in forest-income tax issues, can help you decide what expenses are acceptable, what purchases need to be depreciated, and what expenses you

carry until the property is sold. A list of CPAs and tax preparers, and foresters who have recently taken the USFS Timber Taxation course through Cornell University are listed at [www.ForestConnect.info](http://www.ForestConnect.info)

(2) Try to develop a basis for the value of their timber at the time the property was purchased by the current owner. Determining the basis is your way to document your initial investment and it is used to off-set the revenue generated through a timber sale.

(3) Begin a process of record keeping that will withstand scrutiny. Record keeping provides you the opportunity to document what you have done and why you have done it. Your forest management plan becomes part of your records and should explicitly describe your intention for operating your forest as a business. 

#### **Recommended Links**

##### ***Forest-base tax issues***

[www.timbertax.org](http://www.timbertax.org) **and** [www.fltc.net](http://www.fltc.net)

##### ***IRS information, publications and forms***

- [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)
- <http://www.timbertax.org/publications/irs/fip.asp>

*continued on page 8*

## Ask the Professional (continued)

### **Forest Service publications**

(frequently asked tax questions)

- <http://na.fs.fed.us/stewardship/pubs/FITOT2005.pdf>  
(tax tips for 2005)
- <http://na.fs.fed.us/temp/TaxTips2005.pdf>  
(the handbook for understanding the federal tax code)
- <http://www.timbertax.org/publications/aghandbook/aghandbook.asp>

### **Record Keeping**

- <http://pubs.cas.psu.edu/freepubs/pdfs/uh150.pdf>
- <http://msucares.com/pubs/publications/p2306.pdf>
- <http://www.utextension.utk.edu/publications/pbfiles/PB1691.pdf>
- <http://www.naturalresources.umd.edu/Publications.html#taxes>

### **The structure of your forest for financial matters**

- <http://www.timbertax.org/getstarted/structure/structure.asp>

### **Forest property taxes**

- <http://www.timbertax.org/statetaxes/property.asp>
- <http://www.dec.state.ny.us/website/dlf/privland/privassist/taxlaw.html>

*Response provided by Peter Smallidge, NYS Extension Forester and Director, Arnot Teaching and Research Forest. This response was adapted from a FAQ developed for the USDA Forest Service Northeastern Area State and Private Forestry web page.*

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# Kid's Corner

REBECCA HARGRAVE



Do you have a photo of you and your kids or grandkids in your forest? If so, *The New York Forest Owner* would like to see it! Send an electronic or hard copy to *Forest Owner* editor, MaryBeth Malmshemer, (address on page 22) and it may end up on this page!

Bill LaPoint sent this photograph in. It shows him with his son-in-law and 6 grandchildren on his property in the St. Lawrence County Town of Stockholm during an "introduction to forestry." Bill bought his 397 acres of young forest in 1984.

## Leaf Hunt

Leaves come in many shapes, colors and sizes. We use these characteristics to identify what kind they are. There are 4 basic words that describe the parts of leaves that you need to know: leaf blade, petiole, margin, and mid-rib. The leaf blade is the green (expanded) part of the leaf. The petiole is the stem of the leaf. The mid-rib extends from the petiole and is the main vein of the leaf. The margin is the edge of the leaf blade.

There are two basic leaf forms, simple and compound. In compound leaves the leaf blade is divided into leaflets (ash, hickory). Simple leaves

have a whole leaf blade (cherry, birch). The easy way to determine if your tree has simple or compound leaves is to look for the bud, which is always located on the twig at the base of the petiole- there are no buds at the bases of the leaflets.

Leaflets of compound leaves can be pinnate- in a row (ash), or palmate- fanned out, like your hand (horsechestnut).


Leaf blades can be lobed. Lobes are big divisions in the margin of the leaf, often looking like fingers (oak, maple). Lobes can have a pinnate or palmate arrangement, too.

The teeth on the margin of the leaves are called serrations (beech).

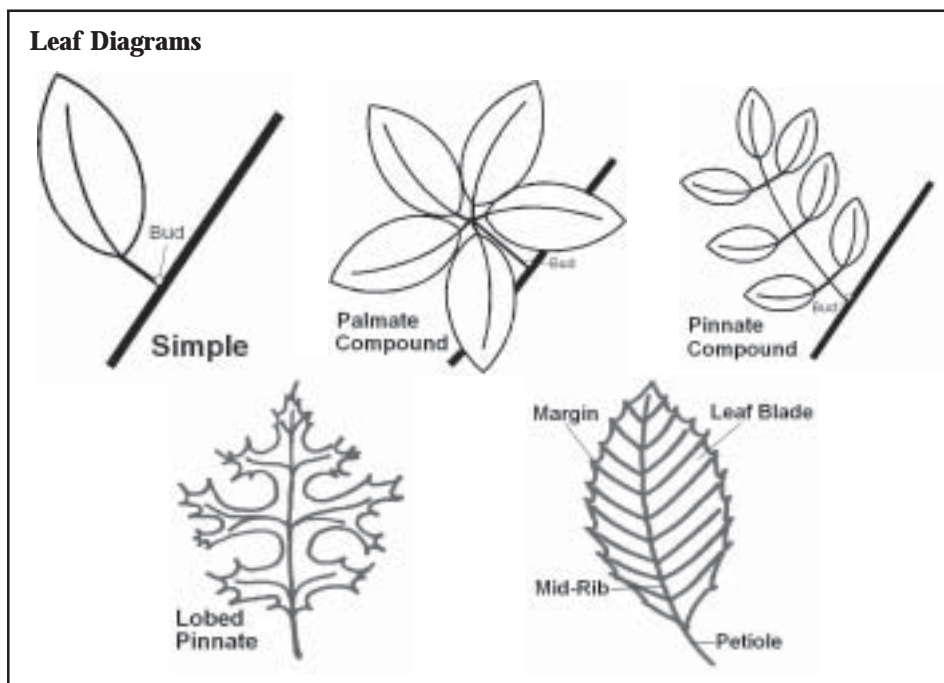
Go for a walk and see how many different leaf characteristics you can find:

- Simple Leaf
- Pinnately Compound Leaf
- Palmately Compound Leaf
- Pinnately Lobed Leaf
- Palmately Lobed Leaf
- Coarsely Serrated Leaf
- Finely Serrated Leaf
- Green Leaf
- Purple Leaf
- Yellow Leaf
- Small Leaf
- Large Leaf

What other characteristics do you see?

Make a collection of the different leaves you have seen. Press and dry your leaves for a few days, then glue them each to a piece of paper. Label each leaf with the all of the characteristics it has, and the name of the tree it came from, if you know. You can use your collection to help your categorize any new leaves you find. 

*Rebecca Hargrave is the Community Horticulture and Natural Resources Educator at Cornell University Cooperative Extension in Chenango County.*



# Wild Things in Your Woodlands

KRISTI SULLIVAN

## RING-NECKED SNAKE



The ring-necked snake (*Diadophis punctatus*) is a slender, small to medium-sized snake that grows to an average length of 15 inches. Females are sometimes longer than the males, but not significantly so. The head of the ring-necked snake tends to be wider than its neck and flattened in appearance. Its sides and back are brownish-gray or bluish-black, with a yellow to orange ring just behind the head. Smooth scales give the ring-necked snake a slightly glossy appearance. Its belly is bright yellow or yellowish-orange, typically without spots, or with just a few small black spots down the center.

As summer approaches and the weather becomes warmer the ring-necked snake, having emerged from hibernation in April, becomes most active in May and June. Generally found in or near moist, shady woodlands, the ring-necked snake is common in New York State in locations where appropriate cover is available. Specific habitat sites are varied and include mature or second growth forests, old fields, rocky hillsides, grassy fields, and the borders of streams and rivers. Forest edges, roadside cuts, and forest openings such as log landings and skid trails also provide attractive, sunny sites.

It takes around 3 years for these animals to reach maturity, and ring-necked snakes often will live longer than 10 years. Most adults mate in May and June, and egg-laying occurs

at the end of June or early July. Females usually lay 2 to 10 oblong eggs, each about 1 inch long, in nest sites inside logs, under rocks, or in old burrows. Because females often share their nest sites, it is common to see many eggs incubating together. Young snakes 4 to 6 inches long hatch out around 6 weeks later, and begin to feed and grow rapidly before the winter begins.

Ring-necked snakes seldom are seen moving about during the day. Even where abundant, they tend to be secretive, and can usually only be seen by lifting up rocks or boards during the day in the summer or early fall months. While searching for ring-necked snakes, it is common to find two or more ring-necked snakes under the same cover object. Once these snakes begin to use a cover object

they often return to it, using their sense of smell to relocate the site.

Although docile, when handled ring-necked snakes often exude a pungent, unpleasant-smelling musky substance. This defense mechanism probably provides some protection from predators. Likely predators of this animal include animals that can enter burrows or dig, such as the Eastern milk snake, black racers, shrews, weasels, and skunks. Other animals, such as owls, hawks, foxes, and domestic cats may occasionally prey on ring-necked snakes when they venture out to feed. The snakes, in turn, may feed on a wide variety of items including salamanders, small snakes, frogs, slugs and worms. However, salamanders are often the most common food item eaten, followed by earthworms.

As the days grow colder in September and October, ring-necked snakes move into deep rock crevices, anthills, or burrows made by other animals. Ring-necked snakes have preferred locations where they retreat to hibernate during the winter. Often the same sites are used year after year by the same individuals. They often share their winter den sites with other ring-necked snakes as well as other species.

To enhance habitat for ring-necked snakes on your land, maintain any open slopes with exposed rocks for cover and basking areas. If you have a timber harvest, ask your logger to push the butt ends of the logs that are usually left behind into piles at the edge of the landing. These piles provide excellent nesting and resting cover for ring-necked snakes and other snakes too. Leaving logs on the forest floor and along the woodland edge will provide habitat not only for the snakes but also for the salamanders they feed on. 🐸

*Kristi Sullivan coordinates the Conservation Education Program at Cornell's Arnot Forest. More information on managing habitat for wildlife, as well as upcoming educational programs at the Arnot Forest can be found by visiting the Arnot Conservation Education Program web site at [ArnotConservation.info](http://ArnotConservation.info)*

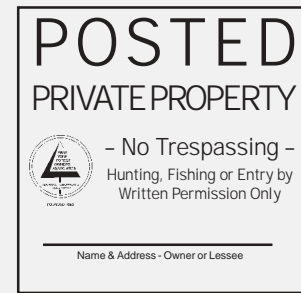
# NEWS & NOTES

## Cornell Study Finds Camping, Hiking and Fishing as a Child Breeds Respect for Environment in Adults

If you want your children to grow up to actively care about the environment, give them plenty of time to play in the "wild" before they're 11 years old, suggests a new Cornell University study. "Although domesticated nature activities — caring for plants and gardens — also have a positive relationship to adult environment attitudes, their effects aren't as strong as participating in such wild nature activities as camping, playing in the woods, hiking, walking, fishing and hunting," said environmental psychologist Nancy Wells, assistant professor of design and environmental analysis in the College of Human Ecology at Cornell.

Wells and Kristi Lekies, a research associate in human development at Cornell, analyzed data from a U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service survey conducted in 1998 that explored childhood nature experiences and adult environmentalism. The findings will be published in the next issue of *Children, Youth and Environment* (Vol. 16:1).

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# Germinating and Growing White Oak Seedlings

JIM ENGEL

*The White oak family is a large and diverse group of trees. White oak (Quercus alba), Swamp White oak (Q. bicolor), Overcup oak (Q. lyrata), Bur oak (Q. macrocarpa), Swamp chestnut oak (Q. michauxii), Chinkapin oak (Q. muehlenbergii), Dwarf Chinkapin oak (Q. prinoides), Chestnut oak (Q. prinus), Post oak (Q. stellata) are all members of the same family and have similar botanical characteristics. Each of these species have large natural ranges but may be locally common or uncommon in New York State and in your specific locality.*

White oak (Q. alba) is the most wide spread and common oak in this group found growing throughout New York State and most of the eastern United States. All of the information in this article for germinating and growing oak trees is specifically related to this species but can be applied to the other species.

The acorns of White oaks are produced in one growing season unlike the acorns from Red oak (Quercus rubra) whose acorns develop over a two year period. Oak flowers are wind pollinated and are dependant on favorable weather conditions for successful pollination. Unseasonal wet cold weather may interfere with pollination reducing acorn production or even causing a total crop failure. Oak flowers are small, inconspicuous and open in the spring at the base of the new leaves on twigs from the previous seasons growth. Pollen is released from the male flowers (catkins) to pollinate the female flowers. If the female flowers are

successfully pollinated the acorn begins to develop. The acorn remains as a small immature acorn for most of the summer months. If extreme dry, hot conditions persist over the summer these embryonic acorns may abort causing the loss of that years crop. About late summer/ mid August the acorn begins to rapidly enlarge to reach its maximum size in just a few short weeks. There is great variability in size and shape of white oak acorns between individual trees depending on their specific genetics and local growing conditions.

Oaks are a masting species, meaning that they produce large crops of seed intermittently. All the trees of an oak species may go from a couple to several years without producing many acorns and then suddenly produce a large abundant crop of acorns. Amazingly all of the trees over a large geographic area are synchronized in this cyclical reproduction event. The mechanism for this synchronization remains a mystery.

The acorn undergoes a physiological change as it reaches maturity. Like the umbilical cord of a baby being severed at birth, the connection to the living tree is shut off between the acorn and the cap. A permanent round mark is visible on the end of the nut called the cap scar, where the acorn and the cap are connected. The acorn changes from a bright green color to a dark chocolate brown color and the acorn begins to dry and shrink slightly. Shortly after the acorn changes color they begin to loosen from their caps and fall to the ground.

In late August and early September, when the acorns mature, they can be collected from the tree or picked up off the ground. When collecting from a tree the acorns should easily separate from the cap or the acorn is probably not viable. Acorns that fall to the ground begin to germinate immediately. A white root radical emerges from the growing tip of the acorn, the end opposite from the cap scar. The emerging root will root into the ground if in contact with the soil,

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otherwise the root will gradually shrivel, desiccate and die.

The window of opportunity for collecting acorns is very short, lasting about 2 weeks. Wildlife of all types seek out White oak acorns at this time of the year and can eat every one to the very last acorn. Wildlife relish the acorns because they are low in bitter tannins which makes them a preferred food. The White oak has no need to produce tannins to protect its acorns because the acorn germinates immediately upon falling from the tree and quickly converts its stored energy into new roots. The acorn quickly loses its nutritional value, which is changed to living plant tissue.

Acorns that germinate underneath the parent tree seldom grow to any size in the shade of the parent tree. Acorns are heavy and cannot be wind dispersed as is common with most other tree seed. An oak requires a mechanism to disperse the seed away from the parent tree. As the majority of common wildlife species such as Deer mice, chipmunks, squirrels, turkey and deer feed on acorns and destroy them, how will the acorn be transported and survive?

Blue Jays and Gray squirrels have developed a symbiotic relationship with oak trees. These two species play a key role in acorn dispersal for oaks. Jays and squirrels both depend heavily on acorns for the majority of their diet, but they both are species that cache food for the winter. Both species cache or store acorns for a food supply during the long winter months. Their method of caching acorns is key to the reproduction of oaks. Jays and squirrels transport acorns away from the parent tree and seek out individual locations to bury the acorn in contact with the soil. Each acorn is placed in its own location and placed in the soil in a way that is ideal for survival and germination.

Blue jays have an extraordinary ability to remember the exact location of hundreds of individually cached



Branch with acorns of a White oak (*Quercus alba*).

acorns and retrieve them by creating a spatial map of the exact location. Research has shown that Jays use triangulation between large permanent objects in their environment to relocate the exact cache site to within a few inches or a few feet. Squirrels tend to use their extraordinary sense of smell to relocate acorns buried in the ground. Fortunately for the oaks not all of the acorns are retrieved and when a jay or squirrel falls prey to a predator or dies, its acorns remain unclaimed and are in a perfect condition for germination.

For people interested in propagating and establishing White oak from seed the process is as simple as mimicking what squirrels and jays do in nature.

Acorns are collected in late August and September when they mature. Float the acorns in a pail of water to test for viability, sound seeds will sink to the bottom, unsound seed or weevil infested acorns will float to the surface or only partially sink. Discard the floaters. The easiest method of handling is to plant the acorn immediately in soil 1 to 2 inches deep. Place the long dimension of the acorn

*continued on page 14*

## White Oak (continued)

horizontal to the soil surface. If in doubt as to which end is which, place the acorn on a flat surface, plant the acorn the way it naturally rests. Nature will do the rest, but many acorns will be discovered and eaten by animals during the long winter months or fail to germinate for various reasons.

To store and grow acorns under controlled conditions, collect acorns and place them immediately in moist potting mix, soil or peat moss to maintain the correct seed moisture level and protect the emerging root radical. As the root emerges from the acorn, plant the acorn in deep flats or individual pots with the root pointing down. The deeper the pot the better to allow the root room to grow without interference. A pot six or more inches deep is required.

Acorns cannot be stored for longer than the few months until spring. To stimulate the shoot to emerge in the springtime, the acorn must go through a chilling period. Outside temperatures normally satisfy this

requirement, or subject the acorns to temperatures just above freezing for approximately one to two months time by placing the acorns in a refrigerator. Do not put acorns in the freezer as this will kill them.

White oak seedlings are shade intolerant and will not survive for long in too much shade. White oak seedlings will grow in full sunlight to slight shade. They grow in a range of soil types but require well-drained deep soils for best growth and long-term survival. Wet, poorly-drained soil is lethal to seedlings. White oak seedlings grow slowly the first few years. They invest most of their energy and growth into establishing a deep root system, but once established, growth picks up and becomes fairly rapid during the adolescent years.

Oak seedlings are best adapted to sites that are in transition from grassland or old field to shrubland and young forest. These sites provide suitable sun exposure and habitat where the herbaceous vegetation has

thinned and there are gaps in the vegetation for seedlings to get established.

White oak is long-lived, but slow growing compared to other tree species. It holds an important place in our forest community and provides valuable wildlife benefits for hundreds of years. Peoples' biases towards faster-growing oak species and its difficulty in transplanting by bareroot seedlings has limited its widespread planting and encouragement. The process of growing oaks from seed is simple, easy and cost effective. This knowledge should encourage more widespread planting of White oak. Hopefully our present and future landscapes will be graced with many more of this majestic tree. ▲

*Jim Engel is owner of White Oak Nursery a native plant nursery, located in Canandaigua, NY. He is an expert plant propagator, and is involved in native plant conservation and restoration activities. [www.whiteoaknursery.biz](http://www.whiteoaknursery.biz)*



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# FOREST OWNER FACES

*The People That Make NYFOA*



NYFOA President Alan White (left) moderating a panel discussion on forest taxation issues at March 13 Forestry Awareness Day in Albany. Panelists (from left to right): Assemblywoman Aileen M. Gunther, Kevin S. King, Executive Vice President Empire State Forest Products Association, and Senator Catharine M. Young.



(Left to right) Bruce Robinson, consulting forester, Chuck Winship, owner of Sugarbush Hollow in East Springwater (and NYFOA and NYSMPA member), and Dale Schaefer, past president NYFOA's WFL Chapter during an April 1 woods walk. Bruce is describing a commercial thinning operation that he oversaw in Chuck's sugarbush that helped to improve the stand quality for maple production.



47 NYFOA members and friends participated in the Western Finger Lakes Chapter's April 1, woods walk in Chuck Winship's, Sugarbush Hollow forest in East Springwater. The event was held in partnership with the NYS Maple Producers Association.

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# Pond Maintenance 101

JIM OCHTERSKI

A pond, no matter how well built, requires sufficient maintenance in order to meet the land owner's objectives. Even if a pond's main purpose is to enhance the appearance of rural property, it should be monitored for various problems. Ponds constructed for fishing, swimming, irrigation, wildlife, or fire suppression all require regular inspection for emerging trouble. Like other structures, ponds serve as an important function for some land owners and require a higher level of maintenance.

Pond maintenance means inspecting different areas of a pond on a regular basis for signs of erosion, water quality decline, wildlife damage, and aquatic weed control. This article offers a list of important structural considerations for pond owners and suggestions for resolving problems.

## Spillways

The most significant feature of a well-constructed pond is a proper spillway - the point at which excess water exits a pond. All ponds require some type of spillway, yet dozens of New York ponds fail each year because of insufficient spillways. The spillway guides water to an area where flow can occur without compromising the pond structure. In many farm ponds, the spillway is a grassy dip in one corner of the pond. Newer ponds use pipes to collect water and discharge it at the base of the dike. Spillways and emergency spillways should always be kept clean and free of woody vegetation.

## Pond Bank Erosion

Erosion of soil in or near a pond can create a very serious hazard for pond owners and neighbors downhill. An unexpectedly heavy rain or spring thaw can intensify a small erosion problem

without warning. Steep shores without vegetation can erode to cause cloudy water conditions and pond silting. Pond owners should check the dike and sides of ponds carefully several times a year. Check especially for unusually soggy ground near the base of the dike, muddy water seeping through the dike, rills (long channels in the soil), soil slumping down the dike, and washouts.

Grass helps prevent erosion on the exposed areas near a pond. Fill eroded areas and re-seed or place sod over bare soil. The roots will retain and stabilize the soil. If it is not clear where the eroded soil is coming from, contact your local Soil and Water Conservation District office. The interior of dikes can erode if loose material or wood has been used as fill to create the dike. Also, water can seep along the outside of a spillway pipe, carrying away soil and creating a hazard. Complex problems, such as a leaking pond, may require the assistance of a licensed engineer.

## Water Clarity

Many pond owners strive for relatively clear water no matter how the pond is used. Pond water clarity can be measured with a black-and-white disk called a Secchi disk, which is lowered under the surface until it disappears from view. The depth of disappearance is a measure of water clarity. Suspended particles are present in healthy ponds, so it is reasonable to expect several feet of underwater visibility. Depending on the location, pond water will have a natural green, olive, or brown color.

If you are concerned about cloudy water, it is important to determine the cause. Possible causes include shore erosion, pond construction or modification, silty runoff entering the pond,

algae, or plankton. Fill a tall jar with your cloudy pond water and inspect it closely under bright light. Algae or plankton will appear as green flecks or tiny moving organisms. If the cloudy conditions settle in the jar after a few days, the pond likely has a siltation problem.

Several substances can be used to hasten the settling of silt particles, including agricultural lime (1000 pounds per surface acre), hydrated lime (1000 pounds per surface acre), aluminum sulfate (250 pounds per surface acre), or agricultural gypsum (300 - 500 pounds per surface acre). DO NOT use quicklime (calcium oxide). Pond supply dealers often sell bottled pond clarifiers, but these are typically too expensive for use in a large pond. Gypsum and aluminum sulfate may increase the acidity of the pond water, rendering the pond less suitable for fish. To reduce the risk of harming aquatic organisms, apply only one-fourth of the recommended amounts at a time. Wait two weeks to assess whether the desired effect can be achieved at a lower rate. You can make the most of an application by mixing the substance with clear water to form a slurry, which can then be sprayed and mixed evenly across the surface of the pond.

Discoloration in pond water can result from decomposition of vegetation, tannin (a compound that leaches from forest trees), or algal blooms caused by nutrient runoff. Many times, discoloration is caused by nutrients like nitrogen and phosphorus, which enter from fertilizer, septic beds, and manure. Make sure the runoff areas feeding the pond are free from these chemicals. If runoff is inevitable, build a smaller settling pond upstream from the main pond to catch and retain





Rural pond

nutrients. This settling pond will generally appear as a shallow, swale-like feature, with lush vegetation like cattails or reed grass — about 10 percent of the surface of the main pond. It should be positioned to capture as much nutrient-laden runoff as possible.

### Wildlife Damage

Muskrats can burrow holes in pond dikes, creating erosion and stability problems. Muskrat holes in non-dike areas are seldom a problem. If muskrats are damaging a dike, cover the area above and below the shoreline with tight fitting rocks or non-rusting fencing. Nuisance muskrats can be trapped out-of-season with a permit from the NY Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC).

Beavers sometimes block pond spillways and pipes with limbs and mud. These blockages can cause serious problems if the pond level rises above its intended level. A DEC permit is required to remove a beaver lodge. Beavers creating a nuisance can be trapped with a wildlife nuisance permit, also obtained from the DEC.

### Aquatic Weeds


Pond plants provide many benefits, including prime fish habitat, shading, erosion control, oxygenation, and scenic beauty. Pond owners should become familiar with the plants in their ponds and determine if or when a plant

is overabundant. If plants are interfering with common uses of a pond (fishing, swimming, irrigation), then they should be identified and treated accordingly.

Many methods of aquatic weed control are now available. Before resorting to a treatment, determine if excess nutrients are entering the pond from a septic area, agricultural operation, or treated lawn. Substances like nitrogen and phosphorus create algae blooms and excessive plant growth. Nutrient sources should be controlled before implementing aquatic weed treatment.

Floating weeds like duckweed and algae masses can be skimmed off the surface with a skimmer or rake. Bottom barriers, hand-pulling of root systems, and grass carp can be used to reduce submerged plant growth. Additionally, most ponds can be drained partially in the winter to kill aquatic weeds near the shoreline without disrupting fish and wildlife.

Some pond owners seek quick remedies for pond plant problems. Aquatic herbicides are available for this purpose; however, pond owners should consider herbicides a last resort. The disadvantages of chemical treatments include high cost, risk of deoxygenation, the need to obtain permits, impacts to fish and swimmers, and limitations based on pond characteristics. Aquatic “shades” labeled as algaecides also require a permit for their purchase and use in New York State.

If you are concerned about pond weeds or would like to have your weeds identified, contact Cornell University Cooperative Extension or your County Soil and Water Conservation District. Refer to Extension aquatic weed management publications for more details on pond weeds. 

*Jim Ochterski is the Extension Resource Educator, South Central New York Agriculture Team. Additional information about pond maintenance in New York is available at <http://pond.dnr.cornell.edu>*

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# Looking for a Few Good Volunteer Forest Owners

GARY GOFF

It's all about stewardship; "the responsibility to manage property with proper regard to the rights of others." NY State is blessed with forests covering 62% of its area. Private land owners (individuals and forest industry) own and manage 93% of the commercial timberland in the state; over 15 million acres.

That huge resource is hugely valuable to us all. We all enjoy and benefit from the scenery, fresh water, wildlife, commerce, ecology, forest products, tranquility, and recreation that forests provide. Yet, just 500,000 private landowners own and manage 86% of the commercial forest land in the state.

The goal of NY Master Forest Owner/COVERTS Volunteer Program is to provide the private forest owners of the state the information and encouragement necessary to manage their forest holdings wisely. As of 2005, there were over 200 forest owning volunteers, representing 53 counties, ready to help their friends and neighbors find the assistance needed to meet their forest stewardship objectives. The focus of the program is having Master Forest Owner (MFO) volunteers arrange for on-site visits to interested forest owners. The typical visit consists of a ½-day walk around the woodlot, during which time the forest owner shows the volunteer various aspects of the forest and asks advice as to how to achieve various objectives. The volun-

teers are not professionals and they do not provide any service beyond helping the owner sort through some options. The volunteers back up their years of experience with training provided by Cornell Cooperative Extension.

2006 is the 16<sup>th</sup> year of the MFO Program and we are looking to fill up two regional training workshops with a total of about 40 new volunteers.

Delaware County Regional Training:  
Camp Shankitunk, Delhi, NY  
Weds. evening June 7 to noon Sun., June 11

*Application deadline: May 22, 2006*

Arnot Teaching and Research Forest:  
VanEtten, NY  
Weds. evening Sept. 13 to noon Sun., Sept. 17

*Application deadline: Aug. 28, 2006*

Lodging and board are provided. The cost is \$50 for each volunteer.

The workshops consist of a blend of indoor presentations and outdoor exercises delivered by a variety of forestry and education professionals. Topics include tree identification, compass use, forest



Peter Smallidge, NY Extension Forester, explains results of forest management practices at Arnot Forest

ecology, sawtimber and wildlife management, agroforestry, forest economics, sources of assistance, and visits to managed forests and a local sawmill.

To get a better idea of the program objectives and to see a previous agenda, visit [www.dnr.cornell.edu/ext/mfo/](http://www.dnr.cornell.edu/ext/mfo/). There is also a listing of current MFO volunteers and you may wish to give one or more a call to get their impression of the program. All new volunteer candidates must arrange for a visit from a local volunteer to your woodlot and meet with your County Cooperative Extension Educator, prior to applying. Application forms are also on the website.

We can send you an application packet if that is more convenient. Write or call: MFO/COVERTS Program Application, Rm. 108 Fernow Hall, Cornell Univ., Ithaca, NY 14853. Ph. 607-255-2115. For more information regarding details of the program, call or write Gary Goff, Program Director at 607-255-2824, [grg3@cornell.edu](mailto:grg3@cornell.edu).

*NY's MFO/COVERTS Volunteer Program is conducted by Cornell Cooperative Extension with funding provided by: The Ruffed Grouse Society, The Robert Wentorf, Jr. Foundation, Inc., The NY Forest Owners Association, USDA Renewable Resources Extension Program, USDA Forest Service, State and Private Forestry. With cooperation from: NYS Department of Environmental Conservation. Gary Goff is the Program Director for the MFO/COVERTS program.*

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# Why Did That Tree Die?

## *An Introduction to forest pathology*

BOB BEYFUSS

Most forest landowners care a great deal about the health of their trees. For many, the woodlot is an extension of their personal landscape. When a tree dies in their forest they want to know why it died and what will be the consequences to the rest of the forest.

In some cases the cause of a particular tree's demise is pretty easy to determine. There may be a conspicuous scar from a lightning strike or a pileated woodpecker may have literally chopped the tree into fragments.

Often times the tree may be seriously deformed from insect or disease attacks.

In order to find out exactly what happened, several important questions need to be answered. The first question is "what tree species is this?" Most tree diseases and many insect pests are quite specific in their choice of victims. Most diseases that affect white pine trees rarely if ever bother oaks or maples. Sometimes the diseases are even more specific. For example, there are diseases that attack pines which have two needles per bundle such as red, Scots or Austrian Pine that do not bother the 5 needled white pine. Once you know the affected species you can begin the detective work in earnest! There are some excellent reference books that discuss specific diseases and insect pests according to the species affected. "Diseases of Trees and Shrubs" by Sinclair and Lyons and "Insects that Feed on Trees and Shrubs" by Johnson and Lyon are two that I use often.

A related and very important question is "Are other species of trees

in this general area affected by this same disorder?" If several different species are involved the problem may have more to do with environmental conditions than any specific disease. A change in grade that leads to a change in soil moisture or a general site disturbance such as construction may adversely affect all the trees present on a given site. If the pines, maples, oaks and hemlock are all dying on a site the problem is not likely caused by a specific disease or insect.

Finally, it is important to realize that the fate of a single tree is not necessarily an indicator of the overall health of the forest. As a field reverts to forest there may be as many as 7,000 to 10,000 tree stems present per acre initially. In 80 to 100 years that same acre of what is now a forest will have perhaps 200 stems left due to natural mortality. All those other trees have to die for some reason or another because any given acre of land only has so much nutrient and growing capacity! In order for the average tree diameter to increase just one inch within a forest, 22% of the previously existing trees must die.

So, the bottom line is that any isolated case of a tree dying in a forest is not necessarily a cause for concern. With a little training and knowledge of common tree disorders, the exact cause of death may be determined or maybe not! It is more important to focus on the entire forest and not just specific trees. 🌲

*Bob Beyfuss is with the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Greene County.*



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Don't Pick a Side!

# DEC Announces Indictments of Members From a Timber Theft Ring

## *Six People Indicted in Relation to a Timber Theft Ring After a Two and Half Year Investigation*

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation today announced the indictment of six people involved in a timber theft ring. The arrests are the culmination of a two and half year investigation that was initiated and led by DEC Environmental Conservation Investigators and Officers.

The six people were indicted on a total of 125 felony charges including scheming to defraud, grand larceny, possession of forged instruments, falsifying business records and forgery. Indicted were Denise Dickinson, 25, of Hudson Falls, NY, with 31 counts; Ronald Sharrow, Jr., 44, currently residing in the Warren County Jail, with 28 counts; and Anthony Morse, 25, of Lancaster, NH, with 19 counts. The remaining three sealed indictments are currently being sought.

Denise Dickinson and Anthony Morse were arrested on Tuesday, April 11, and arraigned in Washington County Supreme Court before the Honorable Judge Phillip Berke. They were sent to Washington County Jail pending bail of \$100,000 cash or \$300,000 insurance bond each.

Additionally, Shannon Dickinson, 34, a seventh member of the alleged timber

theft ring, had been arraigned last month on felony grand larceny charges.

The investigation into the alleged timber thefts, which occurred on properties in Washington, Warren, Saratoga and Dutchess Counties, began after DEC received a complaint from a landowner. Over the course of the investigation it was documented that 8 separate landowners were cheated out of approximately \$77,000 from the sale of timber from their lands.

Numerous law enforcement and government agencies assisted in the investigation including the New York State Police, Warren County Sheriff, Washington County Sheriff, City of Glens Falls Police Department, Cambridge-Greenwich Police Department, U.S. Social Security Administration, Inspector General, Washington County Department of Social Services, Vermont State Police, New Hampshire State Police, and the Washington County District Attorney's Office, which is prosecuting the case.

Most of the victims were absentee landowners. The defendants allegedly would log a parcel of land and provide the landowner with false information on


the amount and value of the timber removed. The defendants allegedly would also provide false personal names, false business names, false references and false insurance documents.

DEC Environmental Conservation Investigators expect that other landowners may also have been victimized. If you have been a victim of timber theft please contact DEC Environmental Conservation Investigator at 518/897-1326 and be prepared to provide complete information about:

- Who was involved?
- What was taken?
- Where and when the theft occurred? and
- Other relevant facts.

Landowners must take the responsibility to prevent trespass and timber theft on their property and avoid being cheated by unscrupulous buyers. Prevention is the best defense. Landowners should:

- Clearly mark property boundaries and monitor logging activity on their property;
- Communicate with neighbors about activities on their properties;
- Use Cooperating Timber Harvesters or Certified Loggers;
- Check references and be sure the reference is a landowner and past customer of the logger proposing to harvest your land;
- Execute sound sales contracts; and
- Monitor timber harvests - check the number of loads taken, the names on the trucks hauling the timber and the license plates of trailers.

Always get professional help before agreeing to a sale. Ask a Cooperating Forester or a DEC service forester for advice. It will be time and effort well spent. 

Contact the NYSDEC Regional Forestry office, your local Cornell University Cooperative Extension office, or the New York Forest Owners Association (1-800-836-3566) for advice on timber sales.

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# Member Profile: *Jim & Phyllis House*

CARL WIEDEMANN

## They Took To The Woods

No, the House family does not live in northern Maine, but its not hard to imagine that you're in Maine while standing on their back deck. There is a good chance to see wild turkey, deer or other wildlife species that depend on the forest for their survival. Jim and Phyllis own 110 acres of woodland which they purchased in 1987. Their property is located in Rensselaer County, just a few miles east of the Hudson River and twenty miles from the city of Albany.

Jim has always been at home in the forest. From early childhood, he enjoyed time with his grandfather on a farm near Rouse's Point, New York. His Dad, an avid fisherman and golfer, taught Jim to love the outdoors. Jim's uncle introduced him to hunting and conservation. In his youth Jim fished and hunted every chance he got and was also active in scouting. Being a forest owner was a life-long dream, and, after a 35 year career with New York State Electric and Gas Corp, he retired and was able to make the dream come true. A few years ago, Jim completed his Master Forest Owner Training. Others are now benefitting from the months of experience he has garnered in the management and conservation of forest land.

Phyllis, on the other hand, appreciates the beauty of nature but remains a "city girl at heart." She is content to let her husband spend time in the woods building roads, cutting firewood, and occasionally selling sawlogs and even cherry burls which are highly prized by wood turners. Phyllis offers what she can to the Capital District Chapter of NYFOA in volunteering for various functions. Jim and Phyllis were recognized for their efforts at the 2006

annual meeting. A quilter, budding artist, scrapbooker, and genealogy buff, she also enjoys making silk and dried flower arrangements and other creative works. Phyllis also writes poetry and has the ability to write verse after just a few moments of thought. The following poem was recently composed over a lunchtime conversation at the kitchen table:

### Our Forest

by Phyllis Lovelace House

*In the dark and sheltered forest  
One can shed life's cares and woes  
There is wonder in the findings  
Of the seasons long ago  
If the trees could tell the story  
Of the world beyond the berm  
Would the willow truly weep  
Would the beech and maple squirm  
No they stately hold their features  
Tall protectors of the land  
How I love the forest fathers  
And the worthy timber stand*

Most of the trees on House property were cut about 70 to 80 years ago in order to make charcoal. Millions of acres of marginal farmland in New York State were being abandoned by the early twenty century, and charcoal was a source of income for many Rensselaer County landowners. Trees that otherwise had little timber value could be made into charcoal, although not much

was left after a charcoal cut. There is still evidence of the charcoal "bottoms" in the House woodlot, where tree trunks were stacked and partially burned to make charcoal.

Today, it is hard to imagine how much the landscape has changed from the early 1900's. The forest has returned and, in the House woodlot, is rapidly approaching a point where thinning will be necessary to keep the most desirable trees growing vigorously. With the help of a new Kabota tractor, Jim has developed a woods road system for access because, as he says; "All of the wood in the world isn't worth a dime if you can't get it out."

Jim and Phyllis are the parents of three grown children, who have also learned to love the land and enjoy all it has to offer. 🌲

*Carl Wiedemann is a member of the CDC of NYFOA. He and his wife live in Duanesburg and own a woodlot in Rensselaer County. He has spent most of his forestry career working for the DEC.*



Jim House gathers cherry burls.

# Know Your Trees

## BIGTOOTH ASPEN

(*Populus grandidentata* Michaux)



*Bigtooth aspen* is a medium-sized, rapid-growing, short-lived “weed” tree that develops best on deep moist soils, but is more common on dry, upland, sandy or stony sites, where it rapidly covers slashed and burns. Here it provides habitat for wildlife that use early successional cover. The wood is similar to that of the trembling aspen and is used for excelsior, pulp, woodenware, crates, and boxes.

**Bark**—resembles that of trembling aspen, though small branches are of a more pronounced yellow color. The lower trunk is generally more deeply furrowed than is that of the quaking aspen.

**Twigs**—stout, round, reddish or yellowish brown in color in early winter, often

pale and downy as contrasted with those of the trembling aspen which are shiny.

**Winter buds**—usually larger than those of the trembling aspen, terminal bud present; lateral buds generally bending away from twig, dull, dusty-looking, light chestnut brown in color.

**Leaves**—alternate, simple, from 3 to 6 inches long, roughly triangular with square base, blunt apex, coarsely toothed margin in direct contrast to the finely serrate margin of the quaking aspen.

**Fruit**—very similar to that of quaking aspen. A scattered cluster of small, curved capsules, maturing in early spring. Seeds—spread by wind.

**Outstanding features**—coarse teeth on leaf with square base; twigs downy. ▲



BIGTOOTH ASPEN  
Leaf, one-half natural size; twig, one-half natural size; fruit, one-half natural size

Information originally appears in “Know Your Trees” by J.A. Cope and Fred E. Winch, Jr. and is distributed through Cornell Cooperative Extension. It may also be accessed via their web site at <http://bhort.bh.cornell.edu/tree/trees.htm>



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Materials submitted for the July/August Issue should be sent to Mary Beth Malmsheimer, Editor, *The New York Forest Owner*, 134 Lincklaen Street, Cazenovia, NY 13035, (315) 655-4110 or via e-mail at [mmalmshe@syr.edu](mailto:mmalmshe@syr.edu). Articles, artwork and photos are invited and if requested, are returned after use.



**Deadline for material is June 1, 2006**

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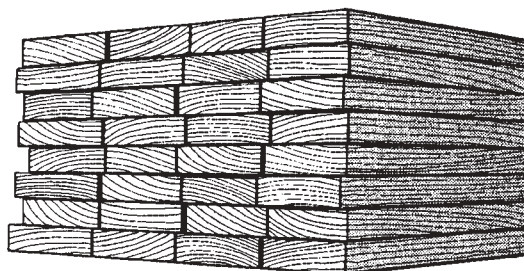
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