

The Western Finger Lakes Forest Owner



Spring 2022

Volume 36, Number 1

NYFOA Spring Meeting

Save the date: April 22-24, 2022

The Western Finger Lakes chapter will be hosting a spring meeting for all NYFOA members on the weekend of April 23. The event will be based at Finger Lakes Community College in Canandaigua.

We will have an informal social gathering Friday evening for those who want to arrive early. The main program is on Saturday, April 23. Conrad Baker is keynote speaker. He is an outdoor educator at Letchworth State Park and will take us into the watery world of the beaver, New York's official mammal and our largest rodent. Mr. Baker has mitigated wildlife-human conflicts since age 12. Beavers are often a nuisance but they are fascinating creatures and Conrad will help us understand and appreciate these remarkable animals. Participants can then choose between presentations by Jim Engel, who will talk about using natural processes and native seeds to restore a woodlot after adverse events such as an emerald ash borer infestation, and Steve Kinne, who will help us learn to identify birds by their songs.

After an interlude for lunch and a chance to catch up with friends, there are three afternoon sessions to choose from. WFL's own Dick Starr will guide participants in making a device to measure tree height, tree diameter, log diameter, log length, lumber volume and basal area. They will learn to use this device and take it home to their own woods. Kristina Ferrare will explain what makes a forest resilient in the face of disturbance and show us the Forest Resiliency Scorecard, and Jim Engel will host a visit to his White Oak Nursery.

For those who don't get enough on Saturday, on Sunday morning DEC forester Emily Bonk will lead a woodswalk at a DEC logging operation in Hi Tor Wildlife Management Unit near Naples.

For those wishing to spend Friday and/or Saturday night in Canandaigua, a block of rooms has been reserved at the Microtel Inn, 1299 St Rte 332, Farmington, NY 14425. Call them at 585-433-1300 and ask for the NYFOA rate (group code CGNYF1) when making a reservation.

Please join us in Canandaigua and help us show NYFOAns from around the state some of the highlights of the Western Finger Lakes region.

The full agenda and registration form are on page 3. More information about the program and the speakers is at nyfoa.org.

Editor's note: Big shoes to fill

By Mike Seager

This is my first attempt as newsletter editor. Jim Minor, who has been our editor for many years, passed away in January. It was my pleasure to work with Jim in a number of contexts on both the WFL board and the NYFOA state board. I found him unfailingly professional and pleasant. NYFOA has lost a hard-working member who made many contributions to the organization, and I have lost a good friend.

It is with some trepidation that I take over the job of assembling and publishing our chapter newsletter. Jim leaves some big shoes to fill. While he was very helpful in passing on lots of information about his process for getting a newsletter out the door and into your mailbox, actually sitting down to work on it leaves me feeling a bit daunted. I will do my best, and I hope you will bear with me through this transitional time as I get my bearings.

This newsletter is by and for our WFL membership. We welcome contributions from you, our members. We also welcome suggestions about topics you would like us to cover. You can send articles or other material to me or to Dick Starr; our contact information is below.

About Us

NYFOA Western Finger Lakes 2022 Board of Directors

Richard Starr, Director and Chairman

231 Farm View Dr.
Macedon, NY 14502
(585) 377-4849
pockaa@aol.com

Dale Schaefer, Director and Vice Chairman

6017 County Road #37
Springwater, NY 14560
(585) 367-2849

Nick Jensen, Director, Secretary and Annual Meeting Coordinator

51 E. Market Street
P.O. Box 1424
Corning, NY 14830
(607) 936-3785 Ext 156
silvoplanning@gmail.com

Ron Reitz, Director and Treasurer

6086 Canadice Hill Rd.
Springwater, NY 14560
(585) 367-2847
rrrlpr@aol.com

David Deuel, Director, Newsletter Distribution,

3236 Telephone Rd.
Caledonia, NY 14423
(585) 226-2952
dsdeuel@gmail.com

Greg Lessord, Director and Chapter-Designated Representative to the State Board

449 Hubbell Rd.
Spencerport, NY 14559
(585) 703-8513
buckslyergs@hotmail.com

Colette Morabito, Director and Program Coordinator

1100 Main St
East Rochester, NY 14445
(585) 248-0654
colettemorabito57@gmail.com

Eileen Schaefer, Director and Outdoor Activities Coordinator

(585) 367-1023
schaeferileen1@gmail.com

Mike Seager, Director and WFL Newsletter Editor

P.O. Box 1
Swain, NY 14884
(585) 414-6511
seager_michael@yahoo.com

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

Membership is open to anyone interested in understanding how to manage a woodlot. NYFOA membership can bring returns in the satisfaction of growing quality timber, stabilizing forest industries and markets, providing permanent jobs, increasing the value of your woods, enlarging areas of natural beauty across the state, and leaving behind a monument in living trees to bless the tomorrows for the youngsters of today. For information on becoming an NYFOA member, contact Liana Gooding, NYFOA Secretary, NYFOA, P.O. Box 541, Lima, NY, 14485 or at 1-800-836-3566. Annual membership is \$45 and includes: subscriptions to this newsletter; to the bimonthly NYFOA state-wide publication, The New York Forest Owner; attendance at chapter meetings; and to statewide meetings. Membership at the Contributing level \$50-\$99; Sponsor level \$100-\$249; Benefactor \$250-\$499; and Steward \$500 or more are also offered. For more information visit www.nyfoa.org.

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

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

Note: The deadline for the Summer 2022 issue is May 15

NYFOA Spring Meeting Registration Form

April 22-24, 2022
Finger Lakes Community College
3325 Marvin Sands Drive
Canandaigua, NY 14424

Agenda

Friday, April 22: Informal gathering starting at 7:00 pm
Eddie O'Brian's Grille & Bar, 5975 Route 96, Farmington NY 14425

Saturday, April 23:

9:00 am: check in and light refreshments

9:45 am: Welcome

10:00 am: Keynote Speaker: Conrad Baker
Beaver in New York

11:00 am: Choose one session

___ Restoring a woodlot using natural processes and native seeds with Jim Engel

___ Identifying birds by song with Steve Kinne

12:00 noon: Lunch

- Silent auction
- 50/50 raffle
- Ash tree liability discussion with Gary Koplun

2:00 pm: Choose one session

___ Make-and-take tree measuring stick with Dick Starr

___ Forest Resilience with Kristina Ferrare

___ Visit to White Oak Nursery with Jim Engel

Sunday, April 24:

9:30 am: Woodswalk at Hi Tor Wildlife Management Unit with Emily Bonk

Name(s): _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Please provide contact information in case there are last-minute changes.

Make checks payable to NYFOA and send to Ron Reitz at 6086 Canadice Hill Road, Springwater, NY 14560.

- \$30/person if postmarked by April 4
- \$40/person if postmarked April 5 - April 14

No registration after April 14. No day-of registration.

*Please note: NYFOA is required to ensure that all attendees adhere to FLCC's Covid protocols. At the present time, that means all attendees **must show proof of vaccination** on entry, and **must wear a mask during the event**. Campus security may deny entry to anyone refusing to comply with their policy. The policy might change by the time of the event; watch nyfoa.com for the latest requirements.*

Thump-thump! Thump-thump! The Sequel

By David Deuel

In the winter issue of this newsletter, I wrote an article concerning the issue of dead ash trees along our highways. This is the sequel, what actions we have taken since early November. Our main concern was the lack of action by NYS DOT to remove this safety hazard and how we, as landowners, could be deemed liable and negligent if a fallen tree should cause a highway accident.

We penned (or should say emailed) letters to all our federal and state legislators. We received back from all, with the exception of NYS Senator Gallivan, the standard, "Thank you for contacting our office with your concerns. We take all our constituents correspondence seriously and will review and respond to yours as our staff has time." A representative from Senator Gallivan's office actually called us and engaged in a conversation. She called NYS DOT on the issue and then called us back with basically the same response, "DOT is aware of the dead ash tree issue



and is removing the trees as they have time to do so." I thanked her for her time and effort in attempting to resolve this issue.

Another wind storm, another ash tree falls near the road, again fortunately, no damage or accident. Cecilia and I decided we were done playing Russian roulette with the possibility of a lawsuit and losing our home, property, retirement savings, and everything. It was a bitter pill to swallow, but we contracted with an arborist to drop the dead ash trees along the highway.

The trees are now down. We sleep better at night. We encourage all land-

owners with dead ash trees on their properties to engage in a conversation with their elected officials. Perhaps if enough people express their concerns, action will be taken sooner rather than later. We also want to raise awareness on landowner liability. It is something we all need to give serious thought to. What policies should be enacted going forward? Who is liable for damages caused by invasive species? This is an issue that is not going away, and in all likelihood, will only get worse in the future.

As always, thank you for the privilege of your time. Stay safe in the woods and enjoy!

To Woods Walk or Not to Woods Walk, That Is The Question

The Who, What, Where, When, and Why of Woods Walks

By Colette Morabito

Are you new to the New York Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) or a long-standing member? Perhaps you are content and secure to simply enjoy your own chapter's activities. Regardless of your membership status, Woods Walks are a common theme to our organization. Some of us can count on one hand how many woods walks we have attended. Others are unable to count the multitude of locations they have traveled, all over New York State, over many years. Kind and hospitable NYFOA members often share their woods for a morning/day with others to enjoy an organized woods walk on their beloved properties. Walking, talking, guided learning, descriptions of all kinds on countless topics including all things of the natural world, forest management, as well as timber management plans. Each woods walk is specific to each property owners needs and goals. No two woodland owners are ever alike. Our forests, land, goals, and soil are all as unique as each of us. Countless nature sightings clearly take the talks on many different tangents. If you have never attended a woods walk, or perhaps might like to host one for your chapter, this simple tutorial may help.

The Who of Woods Walks

The NYFOA website has all 10 Chapters' Events listed very clearly. Typically, if you see a woods walk advertised and it interests you, I recommend that you RSVP to the host of the woods walk. This gives them some idea as to how many people might be attending. Invitees may be asked to supply their own picnic lunch from home or perhaps receive a hot-prepared lunch by the host; all these and more options are acceptable and enjoyed by the guests. Some folks come with note pads and take scrupulous notes. While others in attendance, with a background in or substantial experience with any number of specialties such as hydrology, ecology, botany, ornithology, etc., may share their thoughts throughout the course of the day. Who hosts woods walks? Anyone with the desire to share their woods. We all can learn from one another and there is never a better time to learn than now. Who attends woods walks? Everyone is encouraged to attend woods walks. Bring a friend, neighbor, or other interested person who might enjoy and learn along with you. We can observe other forest owners progress and compare it to our own management style. There might be activities that are happening on the trails and in a woodlot of which you may have never encountered. Questions and observations are always encouraged.

The What of Woods Walks

What you wear is of extreme importance. Often, regardless of the weather, the woods walk will take place. Proper footwear, layers of warm clothing, rain gear, hat, bug spray (to share), sunscreen, interested neighbors or friends, bottled water, and binoculars might be a bonus. What

you might expect is uphill terrain, a long walk to the subject area, a weather event, lots of laughs, great information, contacts for future work you might need help accomplishing, and a great day spent outdoors. There are some locations that take you on a wagon ride pulled by a tractor. What I always hope to bring home is more knowledge and new ideas. Listening to other people's stories, mistakes, accomplishments, and making new connections are but a few of the benefits to be had. In conclusion, we can translate what we have learned from another NYFOA member's property to simply improve our own woodlot.

The Where of Woods Walks

Where might a woods walk be located? As stated earlier, they are generally listed on the NYFOA website or advertised in your chapter newsletter. Finding the location can be tricky at times but with technology today, finding locations with your GPS is easier than ever. Where the trails and information take you on the woods walk is both beautiful and inspiring. I find that I learn best when actively participating in an activity. For example, heading into the woods for identification of trees by touching the bark, observing firsthand the countless woodland wildflowers, uncovering edible mushrooms, songbirds can be seen and heard, etc. All these many observations and firsthand experiences can be made with knowledgeable and experienced forest owners like yourself. Where else could you get this great learning experience for free!

The When of Woods Walks

When do you attend a woods walk? Whenever it is possible, of course. Many times, life and pandemics get in the way of our desire to hear new things and venture to different places. So, when the timing is right and gas prices are not an issue, just go for it. When you do decide to attend a woods walk, be open to truly listening and hearing the information provided. When in doubt, ask questions of the woods walk leader and the other participants. When is the best time to host a woods walk? Hosting can be rather intimidating at first. But if you have a goal for your woods walk, an individual who can guide your guests in communicating the information, the rest will easily fall into place. Whenever you feel you have time and a subject to share, people will come. The WFL board will be happy to support you in your desire to share your woods walk and we are happy to advertise to our general membership via the newsletter and NYFOA website.

The Why of Woods Walks

Why do woods walks happen? 74% of NYS forests are owned by private landowners. Forestry education is essential for proper stewardship. Sharing experiences in a safe and thoughtful way between forest owners is paramount for attendees to learn what to consider in making proper forest management decisions. People and the lumber industry have changed the forests of

New York State over numerous generations. Forests have been fragmented but nature does not identify our man-made boundaries. Many components of our woodlots have a significant history. We cannot change the past. So sustainable forestry needs to be communicated to new and seasoned landowners alike. So, why consider soil composition? Why do the cleared fields abutting the woods play a significant role for wildlife? Why did I never consider where my woods are in succession? When I fell a tree, why should I be concerned about what is left? Please consider attending and/or hosting a woods walk. It is sure to be a captivating experience. Enjoy the fulfillment of bringing like-minded people together in your own forest. Why you ask? "In every walk with nature, one receives far more than he seeks." John Muir

Game of Logging Saturday December 11, 2021 Rick and Joan Schmidt's Woodlot

By Eileen Schaefer

Rick and Joan graciously agreed to host the Game of Logging, Level 1, at their woodlot in Springwater. They have a beautiful property with an amazing view of the surrounding hills and valleys. The morning of the class was chilly and windy, but the students braved the elements in order to become safer in the woods. The hot coffee, water and yummy doughnuts provided by Rick and Joan were much appreciated!

Bill Lindloff's ProCuts partners with NYCAMH (New York Center for Agriculture Medicine and Health) combining "classroom" instruction with a hands-on component. The Game of Logging class is a leader in logging safety. Proper use of a chainsaw is critical for professionals and just as important for the average property owner. The New York State Department of Health subsidizes the classes through generous grants.

Seven hardy participants arrived to take the safety class. The first half of the day included the use of personal protective equipment, chainsaw safety features, safe starting, and sharpening. After lunch it was time to head into the woodlot in order for each participant to fell a tree. Bill discussed hazards, crown weight, how a tree leans and most importantly having an escape route! He demonstrated how to cut the first notch for the hinge on your tree as you prepare to topple it. The participants learned how to point their chainsaw towards a target (such as a smaller tree or rock or any marker). The target would be the spot where you want the tree to fall. That can be accomplished no matter what direction the tree is leaning. A felled tree was used to practice cutting out a notch and hinge. Then each student had the opportunity to cut a tree down. Everyone came away with a toolbox of safety tips to carry into the woods the next time they are cutting with a chainsaw.

This class is critical for anyone that uses a chainsaw. If you are interested, watch for upcoming classes offered in our area.

More classes will be scheduled in 2022. For further information, visit the GOL websites at www.gameoflogging.com or NYCAMH at www.nycamh.org. To sign up or ask about upcoming events call NYCAMH at 1- 800-343-7527 x2200. Watch for notices in the WFL newsletter and the email notifications sent out to our WFL membership.

Morabito Woods Walk

By Colette Morabito

Thank you to all who attended our woods walk late last summer. We had a wonderful day with so many terrific people in attendance. The sun shone brightly while the mud stylishly stuck to our hiking boots! Puppy Lexi Lessord made a delightful appearance, and we enjoyed her unexpected baptism in our newly constructed forest pond. Bruce Robinson, our Forester who is always humorous and generous with his wealth of knowledge, guided our group. It was a wet summer indeed but forest management pushes forward. Here are some of the general take-aways from our walk in the woods:

We had the pleasure to hear Bruce speak extensively about forest succession. To better understand your present-day forest structure, it is extremely important to understand where your forest is in succession. Once upon a time, there was subsistence farming. You would only take



Before heading out into the woods, Bruce Robinson gives a basic overview of what we will see and learn.

from nature what was truly needed or you bartered for other essentials. As time went on, the human influence upon the forests of New York State was profound when considering the extent of what was removed. The forests were exploited for profit or razed for agriculture. However, today you need to understand what is happening in the "here and now". Consider some of the following: tree species, soil composition, history of the land, slope, stand density, and present-day succession.

In a nutshell, Early Succession begins primarily with abandoned agricultural fields, scrub, and shrubs to young forest. The site will be dominated by pioneer tree species.

For example, some of our woodlot was abandoned agriculture and there were two major high grading timber sales prior to our purchasing the property. There are some other open areas that we have allowed to return to forest. They are in the very early succession stage (20 years old). Some typical examples of the pioneer trees present today include Thorn Apple, Aspen, White Pine, and Sumac. These species tend to thrive best when there is little or no competition for sunlight. Bruce articulated the benefits of Sumac which produces fruit after two years. Migratory birds returning in the spring depend on Sumac when snow covers the ground and food sources

are scarce. Guests mentioned observing Woodpeckers, Robins, Thrushes, Bluebirds, and Sparrows to name a few. Bruce Robinson has observed between 40-45 different bird species feasting on Sumac over his many years of study. He manages his Sumac as it will begin to decline or out-compete itself. He suggested cutting half of the declining clump to re-invigorate the shrub/tree.

The next level of forest succession Bruce identified as Mid- to Late-Mid Succession. Mid-tolerant shade species dominate this period such as Red Oak. This is the earliest state of the forest beginning to take form. As a note from our conversation in the woods, Mr. Robinson took time to discuss the soil. Not just any tree will immediately reseed in abandoned agricultural fields. Mycorrhizae fungi needs to be present for the next forest succession to occur. We discussed Ash as a pioneer tree. The presence of Ash is evidence of mycorrhizae fungus in the soil. The relationship between beneficial mycorrhizal fungus, which lives in and around the roots of most plants, is the vital link in a plant's nutrient cycle. For this next forest succession to occur, the presence of mycorrhizae in the soil is essential. However, the Emerald Ash Borer has delivered a tremendous blow to Ash trees. Sadly, today only non-commercial grade Ash serve this role. General observations on the forest floor at the end of this successional period will include shade-tolerant species taking hold in the understory.



The Climax stage of succession is ripe with species such as Sugar Maple, American Beech, Red Spruce, and Hemlock--all species that are shade

Bruce Robinson explains the trail improvements involving standing water problems.

tolerant. When Maple is dominant, it typically means the soil is changing biologically. When areas in the forest are dominant with Hemlock, this climax state is 100-200 years of growth. Soil conditions are most important at this juncture.

As we hiked up the forest trail to higher and higher elevations, Bruce clearly pointed out his observations of the different characteristics of several of our successional stands. There was less and less evidence that the woods had once been abandoned agricultural. Sedges and ferns were on the top of the mountain. It was clearly never farmed there. The soil at the pinnacle of the property is only good for forest. As a result of our thinning and stewardship, the regeneration of ironwood and plenty of oak seedlings and saplings are evident. There is enough regeneration, in fact, that the deer cannot consume it all. The deer are managed yearly during the

hunting season. We have reached a healthy balance. There is a strong forest resiliency evident in the timber management that Bruce has created for us. He did however remind us to maintain our boundary lines to minimize theft.

We also discussed how every species has an ideal density. When analyzing basal area, it was agreed that you are mostly managing air! Always look before you cut. It is extremely important as to what will grow back. Harvest without harm. Do not forget to look up into the canopy of your woodlot. A dominant tree of lesser quality can be eliminated based on where the forest succession is today. In contrast, when looking down at the ground, flat does not work in a forest. Angle your forest access for water to run off your paths, trails, and forest roads. We did observe some of our wet trail improvements that we accomplished last summer.

At the end of the day as we cooked hot dogs over an open campfire and roasted marshmallows for dessert, we spoke about how you cannot avoid paying taxes on your property. Discussing this reality, there were varied opinions and debate about clear cuts in forest management. A clear cut may bring in financial benefit in the short term, but your woodlot may forfeit your ultimate investment goals. Two factors to consider might be the time it takes to have the trees regenerate back into a viable forest. And, regardless of what was in the overstory before the clearcut, it may not dominate the seed source you are expecting! If a clear-cut management style fits your goals, the benefits might include wide open space for agriculture, considerable sun exposure, and improved habitat for deer and certain species of songbirds.

Our property is ripe with energy and life. We have used clover to reseed our trails and paths to negate erosion on these wide-open spaces. It will reseed itself and is a wildlife enhancement.

We are utilizing the naturally occurring springs to improve wildlife opportunities on the property. The vernal pools that were haphazardly created on our trails from skidding logs out of the woods, have now been moved to the edge of these access paths, to encourage undisturbed wildlife habitats. In the end, my biggest take aways from Bruce's tutorial was how essential soil is in our forest management and how forest succession should always be considered as you observe and manage your woodlot. The forest is "speaking" to us, we simply need to learn how to listen.



Host Dave Morabito listens to the forest after the woodswalk.

∞ Upcoming Events ∞

Note: For possible updates to these meetings and to learn about events in neighboring chapters and across the state go to our NYFOA website's EVENTS section at

<https://www.nyfoa.org/events>

Garlic Braiding

The Second Annual Garlic Braiding Class in Mount Morris is planned for August, 2022. As Mother Nature will determine the exact date of the harvest, time is also required to properly dry the plants. Therefore, no firm date is currently available. The cost is \$25.00 per person, per braid. Bringing home your own hand-braided, locally grown, garlic braid is quite a treat. It is suitable for hanging in your kitchen, using it in all your culinary treats, or to simply offer as a gift. No previous braiding experience necessary! The class will take place at Harmony Acres Garlic Farm in Mount Morris, NY. Owner and instructor, Michelle Scutt, is delighted to have us return. More information will be forthcoming in the Summer issue of the WFL Forest Owner. Colette Morabito will be organizing this event. My information can be found in the WFL newsletter, on Page 2 "About Us". Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Classifieds

Tree Tubes for Sale - Member/(Non-Member) price: 4' w/o stake (\$6.00/\$6.50); 4' w/ stake (\$7.00/\$7.50); 5' is special order... please call (585) 880-1799 or (585) 367-2847 for price quote. Proceeds benefit WFL chapter.

PLEASE NOTE: Space permitting, the WFL Board of Directors allows members to place free classified ads in this newsletter pertaining to good stewardship practices. However, ads presented here are not an endorsement by WFL.

Welcome New Member

William Huber

Rochester, NY



Our most energetic WFL member, Lexi, with Greg and Kathy Lessord.



New York Forest Owners Association

Post Office Box 541, Lima, NY 14485

Return Service Requested

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
AVON, NY
PERMIT NO.32

The Western Finger Lakes Forest Owner



Spring 2022

Volume 36, Number 1



photo credit: Eileen Schaefer

Why would you draw black lines on a brand new chainsaw? Check out the answer in our next issue.

Mark Your Calendar

- Weekend of April 23, 2022. WFL hosts the State Annual Meeting. See pages 1 and 3 for details.

Note: For event reminders and late-breaking news, subscribe to our email list by sending a blank email to-

nyfoa-wfl-news-subscribe@npogroups.org