



**Starting out with CFA's 55 gallon drum evaporator.**

In other words, some producers had too little bacteria in their sap before boiling, while others had too much bacteria. Some were just too cleanly, while others too dirty. He explained how one producer was so obsessed about cleanliness and keeping cold, clean sap that his syrup was rendered tasteless. In that particular operation, the producer harvested the sap rapidly using vacuum-pumps and white sap lines which reflected heat and kept the sap extremely cool. The sap was boiled right away, and produced a very light color. However, the syrup was tasteless, since microbes had not enough time to break down sucrose into some glucose. On the other hand, another producer might use black lines which absorbed too much heat, stored the sap too long, that produced bitter tasting syrup that had too much glucose.

Joel stressed that it is not so much the color of tubing lines, buckets, or evaporator used that creates too much glucose or sucrose. Instead, it is **how** these modern – or ancient – appliances are used. In other words, if you like the taste of your syrup, take a glucose reading of the sap right before boiling. (The amount of glucose and sucrose is permanent right before boiling). This reading can serve as your baseline and indicate that everything in your operation is going well. However, if the syrup be-



**Ryan found that he needed help with his new, larger and more modern evaporator...& it appears that he's looking to size up again!**



comes too strong, something throughout the operation needs more attention in order to reduce microbial growth. If the syrup becomes too weak, the sap needs more time before boiling to take on microbes and glucose and regain a stronger, maple flavor.

The underlying theme of Joel's talk was that maple syrup can be made delicious using the most rudimentary equipment, or screwed up using the most advanced and modern equipment. It depends on how they are used. So, I guess the old saying holds true in this case, "Everything in moderation." Don't be too clean, and don't be too dirty.

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



# Can Ground Cover Plants Teach Us Forest History?

*By Michael Kudish*



Several years ago, a friend inquired why he does not see hobblebush in the Catskills below an elevation of about 2500 feet. Hobblebush is a shrub, and is also known as witchhobble, or locally Shinhopple (hence the name of the hamlet below Downsville). The scientific name is *Viburnum alnifolium*, although some botanists have changed it to *Viburnum lantanoides*. See CFA Educator Ryan Trapani's article on hobblebush in the winter 2014 issue (volume 29, number 4) of Kaatskill Life magazine, pages 60 to 62. In my forest ecology course at Paul Smith's College, I used to spend nearly a full-hour lecture on the fascinating biology of this shrub.

My friend's inquiry caught me by surprise. I had never thought of a relationship between hobblebush and elevation, but he was, for the most part, correct. The inquiry started me thinking. Let me share with you what I have found to-date:

First, I had to look through 46 years' worth of field notes (over 3000 pages) to see where I had seen this shrub and where I had not. Indeed, it is frequent above 2500 feet, and even more frequent above 2800 or 2900 feet. But why? Because it requires the cooler temperatures? Probably not. Few plants up high prefer the short growing season, but are forced to live there because of other reasons –most commonly because they are free from competition of plants downslope.

Then I realized that there are other ground cover plants (herbs, ferns, shrubs, and mosses) that live on the forest floor under the trees and are also restricted to the upper slopes and ridgelines. But again, why?

## IN MY BACKYARD

I had been noticing for nearly a decade, in the

young woods and pine plantations around my home at 1500 feet elevation, that certain ground cover plants, common above 2800 or 2900 feet, had seeded in (or spored in for ferns and mosses which have no seeds) under the young forests of black cherry, white ash, and red maple. These young hardwood stands, plus the plantations of red and eastern white pines, are all on abandoned pastureland. Here is a list of the more common of these plants, not in any particular order:

Hay-scented fern, *Dennstaedtia punctilobula*

Evergreen woodfern, *Dryopteris intermedia*

Star flower, *Trientalis borealis*

Canada mayflower, *Maianthemum canadense*

Wild sarsaparilla, *Aralia nudicaulis*

Whorled aster, *Aster (Oclemena) acuminatus*

Tree clubmoss, *Lycopodium (Dendrolycopodium), obscurum*

Ground cedar, *Lycopodium (Diphasiastrum), digitatum*

Mountain maple, *Acer spicatum*



**Hobblebush also known as witchhobble, or locally as Shinhopple. (*Viburnum alnifolium* / *lantanoides*)**

These plants are coming in on their own in abandoned pasturelands in abundance also throughout the Catskills.

But hobblebush, and several other species which are abundant at the high elevations, are nowhere to be seen at the lower elevations (except rarely in small patches usually in ravines and swamps dominated by eastern hemlock):

Wood sorrel, *Oxalis montana*



Shining clubmoss, *Lycopodium* (Huperzia),  
lucidulum  
Clinton's lily, *Clintonia borealis*  
Goldthread, *Coptis trifolia*  
Mountain woodfern, *Dryopteris campyloptera*  
Bunchberry, *Cornus canadensis*  
Large-laved goldenrod, *Solidago macrophylla*  
Skunk currant, *Ribes glandulosum*

#### AT THE NATURAL HISTORY PRESERVE IN STAMFORD

The Natural History Preserve was established by friends of mine in Stamford, New York (see Erwin Karl's article in the fall 2010 issue of Kaatskill Life, volume 25, number 3, pages 36 to 42). This preserve has provided a great opportunity for us to study and map vegetation on sites with different known histories, namely those young forests that were once pastures, and those older forests higher up on the slopes – above 2300 or 2400 feet - on sites that had never been pastured. We have been carefully mapping the border between the pastured and non-pastured portions of the preserve; we call it the Upper Pasture Limit, or UPL for short. We plan to build an interpretive trail following it; the differences in vegetation above and below the UPL are striking if one knows what to look for.

Those ground cover plants that are frequent around my home are also frequent on the formerly pastured portion of the preserve. But hobblebush, wood sorrel, shining clubmoss, and the other species noticeably absent around my home are also absent on the formerly pastured portion of the preserve. One has to climb to the upper boundary of the preserve, between 2500 and 2600 feet, to find them.

Observations at the preserve gave me an idea. I made the assumption that hobblebush, wood sorrel, shining clubmoss, and their associates were on the lower slopes of the preserve prior to clearing of the original forest for pastures in the early nineteenth century. Something prevented them from returning after the pastures were abandoned in the middle of the twentieth century.

#### AND ON OLD BURNS –

I have noticed that plants like hobblebush, wood sorrel, and shining clubmoss are not only absent from lands that had once been pastured, but from lands that had been repeatedly burned by Native Americans, and often burned later by European settlers (see the summer-fall 2014 issue of CFA News, volume 32, numbers 3 & 4, pages 5 to 9) for the article entitled “Shavertown Oaks”). Such repeatedly burned lands are prevalent throughout the lower Esopus Valley below Phoenicia, the Ashokan Basin, and along the Catskills Escarpment. Examples of such burned-over hills are Mounts Tremper, Tobias, Tietzeneyck, Pleasant, and Shokan High Point.

#### CAN GROUND COVER PLANTS TEACH US FOREST HISTORY?

I'm beginning to think yes, and more and more so. Pastured lands and repeatedly burned lands seem to prevent certain ground cover plant species, common at high elevations, from regenerating, while other high-elevation ground cover species seem to have no trouble at all. Can the very ABSENCE of hobblebush, wood sorrel, shining clubmoss, and their associates tell us that the



Another picture from further back of Hobblebush or Witchhobble.

lands were either pastured or repeatedly-burned, or both? I cannot yet tell which lands were pastured and which were repeatedly burned by the ground cover; I need the trees to tell me that. I know only that at least one of these histories had occurred.

But why? I simply do not know. A possibility that requires exploring is that the mycorrhizal fungi and/or symbiotic bacteria that live on and in the roots of hobblebush and its associates at the high elevations had been destroyed by pasturing and/or repeated burning. These fungi, bacteria, and other soil organisms might assist in the water absorption, mineral nutrition, and/or general health of these plants. And when these “little friends-in-the-soil” go, the ground cover plants go with them.

In the forest, relations may not be this simple. There are other possibilities that could eliminate ground cover species, too. For example, what about dense populations of eastern hemlock and/or beech which can shade out most small plants?

Next time you walk in your woodlot and wonder about its history, let the ground cover plants tell you whether or not it had been pastured and/or repeatedly-burned. These smaller plants might be able to teach you more than the trees can!

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

## Moderation Makes Maple Flavored Magic

By Ryan Trapani, CFA's Education Forester



Many of us are aware of *winos*. I'm not talking about complainers, but those whose palettes are well-acquainted with an assortment of grape-wines. They don't just gulp it down to catch a quick buzz. Ice cubes clinking in your glass of red wine will surely raise an eye brow with these winy patrons; perhaps even a scowl.

Sure, they'll pour you a glass of wine, but you'll first have to wait for it. You'll hear a long story half in French, and the other that assumes your about to attend a feast for a king. Now that your wine has been given time to breath, you can finally forget the French and missed salmon dinner with mango salsa by drowning in yeast excrement, or better known as alcohol. Behind each wine's taste are claimed associations with a plethora of environmental conditions, weather patterns, climate, yeast, and some other magic-making. All I can say, is that wine tends to be better – and the same – by the second or third glass.

Aficionados are not exclusive to winos. They can be found in other circles too. Some maple producers claim their syrup is the best. “After all, Pennsylvania makes the best,” claimed one producer I met on the side of the road. I wanted his syrup not because I was really in need of it, but wanted to add Pennsylvania to my collection of syrups by state. I didn't say anything. I didn't want to hurt his feelings, since obviously the best syrup is made in the Catskill Mountains! We have calcium-rich soils that are well-drained; conditions that every sugar maple requires and desires; right?

Maple producers in the Berkshires also claim their syrup is the best. I bet even those in Rhode Island claim theirs is the best because of the nearby sea-breeze that “adds an ocean-like flavor.” And we all know too well how special Vermonters believe their syrup is. But what's that saying again? “Those who *think* they *know* it all are very *annoying* to those of us *who do*.” Hey, we got to pick on the competition a little bit.

So we all think ours is the best. However, I have noticed that syrup varies tremendously from one producer to the next even here in the Catskills. More specifically, taste can differ from year to year and day to day at the

same sugarhouse. Don't misunderstand. Maple syrup is like ice cream; it's always good, but some varieties are better. Although taste may vary from season or day, it does seem that the same producers turn out extraordinarily good-tasting syrup, despite similar site conditions or trees in the Catskills or Poconos. What's up with that? In January I attended the New York State Maple Conference in Verona. Joel Boutin – *Quebec Maple Cooperative* – spoke about *How to Produce Better Tasting Syrup*. Before diving into the chemistry behind maple syrup, he gave a brief history of maple sugaring. It wasn't too long ago that producers were boiling syrup in large cast iron kettles over smoky fires. Buckets for gathering sap were normal while brace and bit drills were used in place of today's electric and gas-powered drills....And yet, some maple producers turned out a product that was not only palatable, but delicious. How'd they do that?

Vacuum pumped tubing systems, stainless steel evaporators, gathering tanks, filter presses, reverse osmosis filters, and steam-aways have made the process easier today, but not always better tasting. How is that possible? Joel explained that he has tasted syrup that ranged from tasteless to bitter. He has also tasted syrup that was somewhere in between and delicious. “Maple syrup”, he claimed, “can be highly inconsistent in taste, even at the same operation on a different day.”

Joel explained that fresh sap out of the tree is pure sucrose. However microbes or bacteria are excited about its emergence too. Microbes begin breaking down



the sucrose into glucose. Sucrose, glucose, and fructose are simple sugars. Without getting too technical, the more microbes present, the more sucrose is converted into glucose. Joel began using a glycometer – available at any pharmacy – to test syrup throughout Quebec. He found that he could correlate taste with the amount of glucose present in the syrup; more or less glucose did not translate into better tasting syrup. Instead, it was the “right” amount of glucose that made syrup “the best.”



2015 deer hunting season.

I don't know at the time of writing this if anything that we did has enhanced wildlife but I predict that it will be a huge improvement to enhancing wildlife. We put up a trail camera in the area near the oak trees with trees hinged cut around it. Ryan predicts that the deer will be in the area.

The evidence on the trail camera will prove or disprove it.

If you want to enhance your land's wildlife habitat, participate in CFA's Forestry for Wildlife.

Sincerely,

**John Ingoglia**, Fellow CFA member

*(Mr. Ingoglia owns land in Delaware County and has been a member of the Catskill Forest Association since January 2008. He participated in its On-Site-Visit program in January 2010 and recently in the Forestry for Wildlife program. Mr. Ingoglia is extremely interested in making his forest better for deer and turkey hunting and is always interested to learn more. Mr. Ingoglia recently wrote an article detailing his experiences with CFA's new program – Forestry for Wildlife.)*

CFA is happy to receive contributions for the CFA News from its members. [www.caatskillforest.org](http://www.caatskillforest.org)



**A member of CFA had a logging operation performed on his property this year and asked one of us to take a look at it. He hired a reputable Forester that marked his timber, drew up a contract and put the timber up for bid. He marked a lot of poorer quality trees to be removed for firewood, favoring the better-formed oaks and maples to leave behind to really start putting on value as well as growth. A good local logger was awarded the bid and is doing a fine job!**

**Don't forget that CFA's On-Site-Visit Program can be used for many purposes. Call us before you cut!**

## CFA Hat – \$15



In an effort to broaden our membership rolls and increase awareness, CFA is offering an incentive to existing members to recruit new members. Because each of us know other landowners with forested acreage or who have other interests, this is a good opportunity to recruit a new member.

CFA offers so many services and opportunities that it seems logical to encourage new membership. In addition to being part of an organization that promotes long term forest health and vitality there are many other reasons to join; onsite visits, marking for timber and firewood harvests, educational programs, the Forest Festival (held this year on July 25), "From The Forest" airing weekly at 6 PM on WIOX radio.org or FM 93.1 or Channel 20 on MTC cable, and many other educational workshops.

As an incentive to our members, CFA will give a CFA ball cap to anyone successfully recruiting a new member. Anyone reaching a friend or neighbor with acreage may contact the CFA office to receive a registration package. Upon submission of the package to CFA offices, a neat ball cap will be sent to the successful member.

**CFA will set up a field cam for a week for CFA members. Cost is \$25 plus mileage.**



**Call Michele at 845-586-3054 to schedule it. 1st Come—1st Serve Basis.**

# Larry Schacher's Labor of Love

by Ryan Trapani, CFA's Education Forester



*Larry standing by the hot water heater which is heated in the summer by the sun and winter by wood.*

"Burning firewood is a labor of love," says CFA member Larry Schacher. Larry has been burning firewood since 2008 when he moved to the Village of Ellenville in Ulster County. I first met Larry at a Firewood Management presentation at the Ellenville Public Library & Museum. Larry, who had just "downsized" into his home, had an old whole-house wood boiler beside and connected to his new modern oil boiler. He researched how to best re-brick the old wood boiler for safety and performed that work. Since then he has made plenty more modifications to his heating system.

I once heard an older gentleman – a veteran wood-burner – describe the process as "a lifestyle." I couldn't agree more. Unlike other energy sources, burning wood stretches beyond simply placing a stick in a box and warming your bones. It's an endeavor that falls both inside the house and outside; oftentimes stretching into the nearby woods and beyond. Sure, I guess some of us could theoretically drill a well and strike oil, but chances are slim. Wood is literally within arm's reach.

Larry calls himself a sort of "commodities trader in wood." Unlike other commodities though, this one keeps growing within view. In order to keep his asset healthy, he took advantage of CFA's Tree Marking Program. In 2010, CFA's Education Forester, Ryan Trapani marked the keepers or crop trees on his two-acre woodlot. Trees not designated with paint were candidates for removal. In this way, Larry could literally heat his house and grow his forest better too. Trees that were selected to

remain were mostly sugar maple due to ideal site conditions. Also included were nut trees like shag-bark and smooth-bark hickory, and red oak in order to add diversity and a benefit to wildlife.

Larry has other supply chains in his newly found commodities venture that stretch beyond his survey markers. Larry is disabled, but he doesn't let that stop his burning cycle. He hires locals from nearby to cut, split, and stack his wood. More recently, he has found a wood supply that worked so well that he had to issue a "stop-work order" on cutting trees nearby. Larry has made the acquaintance of many local tree cutters who bring Larry logs from local clean up jobs. If they can agree on a price, they leave the logs for later splitting and stacking by other local workers. This "commodities business" is not about making money says Larry (who does not sell wood). "It's about staying warm in the winter." All of Larry's heating dollars go back many times into the local economy. One local firewood dealer has been bringing Larry odd-lengths at a reduced price of \$100 per cord! "Hey, it still burns," says Larry.

Yeah it does. Jim Waters (CFA's Executive Director) and I were toasty when we visited Larry, even in his basement where his furnace sits. Larry heats his entire nineteen hundred square foot house – including hot water – using his older wood boiler.

Excess heat from the boiler is channeled into a "dump-zone" consisting of two cast iron radiators located in his garage. The coldest part of the garage – near the door – is a brisk 53 or so. Not bad. The



*Larry's wood boiler is sitting next to his oil burner which was left as an emergency backup.*



rest of the basement sits comfortably in the high 60s and low 70s. Essentially the basement is heated for next to nothing. "The basement and garage would be cold and damp, if I used the oil boiler" says Larry.

After hiring a contractor from the area to re-line the wood boiler with new firebrick, Larry looked at his old and inefficient hot water system. A local contractor recommended he use solar for his hot water with electric as the back-up heat source on cloudy days. Larry suggested that they could use the wood boiler! A custom system was designed and installed that took advantage of the excess heat from the wood boiler that was just "dumping" into the garage. In the summer time, water is pumped to the solar thermal panels on his roof to heat the household water. He can use oil or electric as a backup heat source for cloudy days in the summer when he is not burning wood. Larry states that this hot water system has already paid for itself. "Not from the sun, but the wood!" Larry said that wood he uses is really just solar energy from the 1970s stored in trees.

Larry used to live in Rockland County, where he simply paid his gas and electric bill. Saving money was about turning down the thermostat to the lowest temperature you could live with and putting on a sweater or staying under blanket. Moving to Ulster County was a shock when he realized there was no natural gas and that any heating fuel you used other than electricity needed to be "trucked in" such as oil or propane. Now he is comfortable, saving money, and able to invest this money into other things.

"Burning oil is a tax," says Larry. "When you have to hire a plumber or someone else to do something for you, you're paying a tax, in a way." Larry now has more control over his energy source. It also keeps him healthier and more active since some tending of the wood is always required.



Larry hired a local contractor to reline an old wood boiler with firebrick.



Larry took advantage of CFA's Tree Marking Program to have the "crop" trees marked. He will eventually have them all released by removing the rest of the trees and using those to heat his home.

This winter kept Larry – and other wood-burners – busy as well. In January alone, he burned two cords. Still, that translates to about \$200/month for both heat and hot-water. Not bad. One cord of firewood is equivalent to approximately 100 Gallons of fuel oil. Even at the season low of \$2.55 per gallon (and you don't know how long it will stay that low), this was huge savings. When winter does finally recede, Larry takes advantage of solar hot-water he has added to his system. Even when the power goes out, Larry has compensated by enabling his system to still provide heat via "gravity feed." He shut off the power to show the two skeptics. "This here is my innovation," pointing to the top of the boiler. "I just tap the wrench a little bit here, (it gets a little stuck sometimes) and now you can feel the system circulating without power."

Burning firewood sure is a lifestyle. But if you enjoy it somewhat, can really pay off. A cord of firewood stacked up in the yard that'll be used for heat two winters from now is a secure feeling. As Larry says, "Paying tomorrow's energy bills with today's dollars is a sound thing." Despite two consecutively cold winters, the wood commodities market is thriving; replacing an old saying with a revised edition, "What does that have to do with the price of oil in the Middle East?"

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



## CFA MEMBER CONTRIBUTION

By John Ingoglia



The right trees cut down & the right trees left standing in the forest to provide better habitat for deer.

Fellow members of Catskill Forest Association,

I recently had the pleasure to participate in The Catskill Forest Association's (CFA'S) program, Forestry for Wildlife.

I am writing this for the purpose of recommending this program to other CFA members who are interested in enhancing their property's wildlife habitat; particularly, deer hunting.

I heard of the program this past summer at CFA's annual Catskill Forest Festival in Margaretville, NY fairgrounds. I found it very interesting because as a deer and turkey hunter, land with little or no undergrowth is poor for wildlife. As the land in the Western Catskills transitions from agricultural use to 2<sup>nd</sup> home vacation use with less hunting, the fields that were once a great source of food for deer and turkey are getting shaded out by larger growth trees; particularly Red Maple and Ash.

This is basically what CFA, the CFA board, Ryan Trapani, and John MacNaught conveyed to the attentive members.

On Sunday, April 19, 2015 CFA's Forester Ryan Trapani came over to my property at 9:00AM. I explained to Ryan that I have primarily five different characteristic stands on my property:

Fields.

Apple Trees – I have been periodically releasing and pruning those.

Mature forest that was logged in 2007.

A less mature forest that has not been logged but contains about seven to ten oak trees.

A pole-stand.

Ryan recommended that the first priority for this property that will enhance wild-life habitat is to concentrate on items 4 and 5 because the oaks can use immediate help and the pole-stand offers little or no habitat. Item # 3 has a lot of undergrowth because sunlight has been getting to the forest floor as a result of the 2007 logging.

By the time we gassed up the chain saws and loaded the ATV's we (I tried to help out) commenced work at around 10:00AM. Ryan explained everything that I should try to achieve and even though I often use my chain saw, Ryan went over all pertinent safety instructions especially the importance of wearing proper protective head gear and chap pants. He also stressed that we must stay very far apart as we both simultaneously use the chain saws and trees fall.

We started with item # 4 above. Ryan put red tape around the oak trees for me because I do not know an oak tree from any other tree species especially when there are no leaves on the trees. Ryan also explained that for best results hinge-cut everything that is not an oak or black cherry tree in a ten foot radius in all directions of a particular oak tree. Hinge-cutting is cutting in such a way that the tree is NOT totally cut. It is the practice of cutting the tree about 75%-80% and then pushing the tree either by hand for smaller trees, or with a tool called a habitat hook for larger trees. The purpose of hinge cutting is to keep the red maple or ash tree alive so as to provide winter buds as the tree stays alive for a few years. We worked on this stand for around three hours. I got my chain saw stuck in a tree but Ryan never slowed down. I probably cleared trees around two oaks, whereas Ryan cleared trees around seven oak trees and his hinge cuts were excellent.

We then proceeded to the pole stand area and worked there for about another 2 and a half to three hours. There are no oak trees in the pole stand. It is basically a stand that has immature forest that was once pasture. There is no undergrowth in this stand and the wildlife cannot utilize the nutrition that the red maple and ash winter buds provide but with hinge cutting, these winter buds became accessible. We did our best to hinge cut the trees. I once again jammed my saw after about an hour of work. Ryan continuously worked. I went to help him by pushing trees down with the habitat hook after Ryan made the 75%-80% cuts.

After we finished, Ryan helped me get my saw that I jammed out of the tree. Ryan also recommended a good place for a tree stand for the





## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:

As you know, the Catskill Forest Association sponsors and hosts its annual Catskill Forest Festival on the last Saturday of July, this year that date is July 25th. Each year CFA tries to offer new and more exciting events and activities to draw and inform more people. We have toyed with a lumberjack demo in addition to the "Game of Logging" competition. Each year there has been a sawmill and wood splitter demo. With HudSon Sawmill not coming last year, I chose to demonstrate the use of my Alaskan chainsaw mill. It didn't really fill the void of a cool sawmill and wood splitter but many people were interested in how such a simple device would work. I felt people received my demonstration well and would consider doing it again if there was a void.

Our "Tent of Knowledge" was a huge success as presenters spent 20 minute blocks discussing various aspects of forest information. We fully intend to continue with this program this year. We display different equipment from local loggers and hobbyists. Our kids' area was and will be a huge draw as families and kids enjoy games and activities while visiting. Our forest-related vendors get more numerous and varied each year. Organizations from around the area come to display their wares and discuss their programs.

If you read this and contact the CFA office at 845-586-3054 you can claim a souvenir from CFA at no obligation. We are looking for members who have special wood-related skills or interests to share as I did last year. Possible suggestions would include woodworking skills that might lend themselves to an active demonstration like bentwood furniture building, carving, and using a lathe or other tools to make special items or craft making with wood derived materials. This is only a partial list that I came up with so the sky is the limit with whatever you can come up with.

We have 325 or so member units so it seems to me that there is someone out there

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Call Michele at (845) 586-3054



who would have an interest and/or skill to demonstrate. Remember that The Catskill Forest Association is your association and the Catskill Forest Festival is your festival. Taking part in your association's festival is a part of the membership advantage.

Yours in the Forest,

*Mike Porter*, President, Board of Directors

Purchase a personalized, four foot log bench for \$100 from CFA!



# SAVE THE DATE! SATUR-



## PRESENTS THE GROWING DEER DEBATE

*Discussing Solutions for Deer Impact on the Environment*



### ABOUT THE CONFERENCE

*"No other threat to forested habitats is greater at this point in time—not lack of fire, not habitat conversion, not climate change. We can argue about which threat is more significant than another, but no one who walks the eastern forests today can deny the impact of deer to forest condition."* **The Nature Conservancy, 2013**

### *The Growing Deer Debate Conference*

Seeks to raise awareness of deer impact on the environment in the Catskill Mountain Region & throughout the eastern US.

In this day-long event, a variety of experts, professionals, & authors convene to discuss out-of-the-box & cutting edge solutions to tackle this growing issue.

Morning sessions will analyze the multi-faceted issue of deer impact on the environment, while the afternoon will focus on creating solutions; challenging conventional methods in which deer have traditionally been managed.

**OCTOBER 31st, 2015**  
**9am — 4pm**

@ Margaretville Central School  
415 Main St., Margaretville, NY

**REGISTER EARLY & SAVE!**

**\$25—Pre-Registration**  
**\$30 — at the Door**  
**Student Discount — \$15**

To Register Call: **845-586-3054**

### THE SPEAKERS (in order of appearance)

**RYAN TRAPANI** is CFA's Education Forester. An ISA Certified Arborist & Certified Deer Steward, QDMA, Trapani is a regular contributor to many local publications such as Kaatskill Life, Shawangunk Journal & Mother Earth News.

**JIM STERBA** is author of *Nature Wars: The Incredible Story of How Wildlife Comebacks Turned Backyards into Battlegrounds*. Sterba has been a foreign correspondent, war correspondent & national correspondent for more than four decades, first for *The New York Times* & then for *The Wall Street Journal*.

**TOM RAWINSKI** is a botanist with the USDA Forest Service. A former Director of Ecological Management at the Massachusetts Audubon Society, Rawinski has written scores of technical reports & publications. In 2001 he received the New England Wild Flower Society's Conservation Award...

**DAVID DRAKE** is Associate Professor of Wildlife Ecology & extension Wildlife Specialist with the University of Wisconsin. Drake co-authored the article from *The Wildlife Society Bulletin: Regulated Commercial Harvest to Manage Overabundant White-Tailed Deer: An Idea to Consider?*

**EDWARD STRINGHAM, Ph.D.** is Davis Professor of Economic Organizations & Innovation at Trinity College. He was President of the Association of Private Enterprise Education, & a board member for the Center on Entrepreneurial Innovation & the Center on Culture & Civil Society at the Independent Institute. An author & editor of numerous publications, Dr. Stringham is also a winner of several awards including the Templeton Culture of Enterprise Best Article Award.



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# THIS IS HOW CFA CAN HELP YOU!!!

(As well as how you can help preserve the forest and all of its benefits for generations to come.)

## STEP 1 —

Become a member of CFA. It's only \$50 per year.

- Quarterly Newsletter
- Help over the phone or when you come in to the office on anything that deals with owning forest property, from legal, trespass and surveying issues to hiring foresters & loggers, to management for various objectives...just about anything you can think up! Test us!
- Most workshops and woodwalks are free for members.

## STEP 2 —

Sign up and schedule an On-Site-Visit.



A CFA Forester will visit your property to discuss your intentions with the trees, woodlot or forest on your property to establish realistic goals and objectives with you. The forester will walk your property with you to give you insights and answer questions. A discussion will then ensue to come up with options for management treatments.

- ♦ For anyone with an interest in their property & trees.
  - ♦ 1/4 of an acre to 1,000+ acres
- ♦ Just bring an open mind and enthusiasm for doing something
- ♦ Bring along others & make it an event!

Fee for new CFA Members — \$150 plus mileage. (Offer expires after 30 days from membership sign-up)

Fee for CFA Members after 30 days — \$200 plus mileage. Fee includes a one year membership renewal.

## STEP 3 —

Select from a list of programs specifically designed for you. (Details on next page)

- Woodland Use Guide
- Tree Marking Program
- Forestry for Wildlife Program
- **Apple Tree Grafting Program (Call for details—winter and spring only.)**



**"LIKE" Catskill Forest Association on Facebook!**



**We've also set up a Vimeo account where we post videos for you to enjoy.**

**(vimeo.com/channels/fromtheforest) — no spaces!**

**In addition, check out the [www.watershedpost.com](http://www.watershedpost.com) site, click on "sponsored content", then "From the Forest".**



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Hello everyone! I'm happy that spring has finally showed up! Hope all of you fared well this winter. It certainly was a cold one. I have not heard about a lot of winter deer-kill, but imagine that there was some....however, I have seen an awful lot of deer this spring.

Speaking of deer, CFA is planning a seminar being held this fall called "The Growing Deer Debate". NYFOA held a conference on this subject in Syracuse earlier this year, setting the ground-work for CFA's discussion. Our symposium is seeking to further the awareness of the deer impact on the Catskill environment and to create solutions that challenge conventional methods in which deer have traditionally been managed. This could be a controversial subject for many, but needs to be talked about. The deer population is changing around us, demonstrating that what the DEC (the public) is currently doing to manage it is not working. (See page 13.)

I'd like to give you an update on the progress of the DEC on making changes to the Forest Tax Law, 480a. (I wrote in the previous issue of CFA News, Winter/2015 Issue, about some of the discussion surrounding their formulation of a proposal.)

I stated that the DEC's proposals would continue to change and that CFA would be sending out a list of these proposals in a second mailing to elicit your thoughts and input so that CFA could formulate an official response. Well as of May 13<sup>th</sup> I have only heard that the DEC is close, but not quite ready, to submitting a written proposal for changing the law. They seem to be leaning towards keeping all 480a participants in the program the same as it is for now, but slowly winding it down over a longer period than just 10 years. They declined to say how long a period or how they would do it.

They seem to be sticking with the "Green Certification" option, naming just 2 certification parties, SFI & FSC. We are hoping we can get Tree Farm included in this. The Green Certification option proposed earlier was:

- Requires enrollment in a DEC-approved, independent, third-party forest certification program with annual audits, by accredited auditors, at the ownership level (currently, only FSC and SFI meet these criteria).
- Minimum acreage for eligibility 25 acres.
- No mandatory work schedule required and minimal interface with DEC forestry staff.
- No stumpage tax on timber harvests.
- Requires annual 10-year, rolling commitment, with verification of continuing forest certification enrollment.
- Provides 70% assessment reduction for enrolled acres.

They also have said that they will continue to push for the "Time of Harvest" option that is basically a 15 year easement on open space land, starting when an approved harvest is completed, for a 40% assessment reduction:

- Reduces required acreage for eligibility from 50 to 25 acres.
- Expands definition of "eligible land" to include up to 50% not meeting current "forestland" definition.
- Enrollment at time of voluntary commercial timber harvest.
- No penalty conversion to this option for lands currently in 480-a.
- Enrolls entire non-agricultural open space excluding developed areas of participating holding. Timber harvest (minimum 10 acres) can occur on any portion of enrolled holding.
- Initial commercial harvest requires DEC-approved "Sustainable Harvest Plan", prepared by professional forester.
- Fixed 15-year term enrollment period from time of har-

vest with no change of land use allowed on enrolled acres.

- No management plan required for entire property.
- No mandatory work schedule or required non-commercial practices.
- No mandated harvest schedule or interval.
- Future harvests permitted only under another DEC-approved harvest plan.
- New harvest may extend 15-year term enrollment and assessment reduction, at owner's option.
- No 5-year updates or plan amendments required.
- No mandatory boundary line maintenance.
- No stumpage tax on approved timber harvest.
- Provides 40% assessment reduction for enrolled acres.
- Penalties for violation of program terms (similar to current 480-a?).

Come hear all about these serious changes that may take place and have a large impact on you at the Catskill Forest Festival. I will be making a presentation in the education tent!

They did say that they are going to start a harvest registry on-line and that it would be somewhat voluntary. I'm not sure what "somewhat" means to the DEC.

The legislative session is coming to an end and the DEC is still trying to assess votes to see if it is worth trying to get something through this legislative session. I doubt that they will, but I do believe they will continue to work on this and I will keep you all informed on what I hear and see.

CFA's new full-time Wildlife Specialist, John MacNaught will be starting work the week of May 18<sup>th</sup>! We are looking forward to his help. He fits in well and is a hard worker. If you have not met John during the last two years that he was a summer intern, you should stop by the office or attend one of CFA's events this year to meet him and welcome him to our family. He brings a strong wildlife and GIS component to add to CFA's forestry expertise.

We have many workshops planned as well as the Annual Catskill Forest Festival on the last Saturday in July, the Annual Meeting on Saturday the 3rd of October and the deer symposium on Saturday the 31st of October. Please join us for one or more of these. Also, don't forget to take advantage of one of our member programs listed at the end of this newsletter and listen in to our weekly radio show on WIOX named "From the Forest".

Please be patient for CFA's new website. It is up now, but is going to take a couple of weeks to get it the way we want. ([www.catskillforest.org](http://www.catskillforest.org))

Naturally,

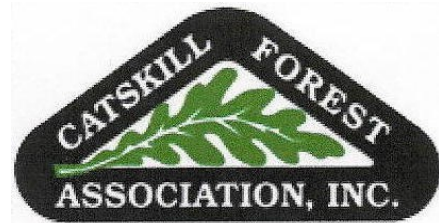
*Jim Waters*



**Listen to "From the Forest", Wednesday evenings from 6 pm to 7 pm with Jim & Ryan. Streaming on the Internet — go to: [wioxradio.org](http://wioxradio.org).**







**CFA News**  
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Subscriptions: *CFA News* is mailed quarterly to members of the Catskill Forest Association. If you are interested in joining CFA, give us a call, visit our office or fill out and mail in the form on the back cover of this publication. Contact information is located above. Please submit address changes to Michele at the address above.

**For a CURRENT listing of CFA's EVENTS you must visit CFA's Web-site!**

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

Cover Photos:

*Looking West from Huckleberry Hill (top)  
and Sugar Maple Leaves & Flowers  
Coming Out (bottom two)  
[photos by Jim Waters]*

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**CFA 'T' shirts:**  
**Adult & Children Sizes**  
**\$10!**

## Welcome New Members!!!

**2015**

**February**

Michele Kieszkiel – Freehold

**March**

Jane & Richard Cormack – Delhi

Jake Fairbairn – Arkville

Douglas Whittaker – East Meredith

John & Lisa Sackel – Arkville

Richard Arnot – Milford

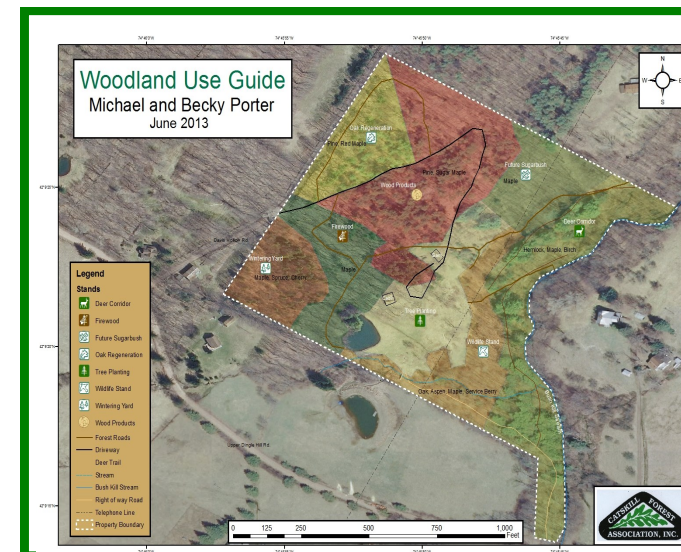
Kristina Zill – Hobart

David Goldman – Roxbury

**April**

Emilio Tirrito – Andes

Town of Middletown – Margaretville



## CFA Woodland Use Guide!

Detailed maps, stand descriptions and recommendations, unique features' locations and descriptions. Lots of pictures included. GIS mapping and GPS locations of all features! (Call CFA to see a sample Woodland Use Guide.) AN "ON-SITE-VISIT" FEE OF \$200 (INCLUDES MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR ONE YEAR) PLUS MILEAGE will be charged.

**The cost of the Guide is given after an onsite visit is done. Every property is different. This program is only done on 20 acres and less.**

## CFA Tree Marking Program!

This is a great way to get an area marked that will provide you and others with firewood as well as improve the health of your forest. You are welcome to join us during the marking to learn how to do it yourself. This could save you money down the road as it will sharpen your understanding of forest management and you will be developing your own tree selection skills. Thinning out the forest will make it more resistant to insects and disease, a better water filter, better wildlife habitat and increase the value of the timber.



AN "ON-SITE-VISIT" FEE OF \$200 (INCLUDES MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR ONE YEAR) PLUS MILEAGE may be necessary for selecting, designating on the ground the area to be marked, and determining the acreage to be included. Otherwise the cost is just mileage plus \$100 per acre. **This program is only done on 10 acres or less per calendar year per**

A thinning typically removes about 4 to 5 cords per acre. If you had 10 acres marked, that would be about 45 cords of firewood being made available to you! That means that for an on-site fee you would get a rare and valuable educational experience along with the trees marked by a professional forester from CFA.



## CFA Forestry for Wildlife Program!



DOES YOUR FOREST LOOK LIKE THIS?

- A technique used to improve the quality of habitat to provide the essential needs of the wildlife that you are interested in.
- Fruit and nut bearing trees and shrubs are favored to increase the food variety and availability for wildlife.
- Increasing understory cover will make animals feel safer while feeding, traveling, and bedding on your property as cover protects animals from predators.

Price estimates are developed at the end of an on-site visit. Every property is different.



WOULD YOU LIKE IT TO LOOK LIKE THIS?

For more information on any of CFA's Programs, call us at (845) 586-3054 or email us at [cfa@catskill.net](mailto:cfa@catskill.net). Our office is open from 9am 'til 4pm Monday—Friday. If you would like to sign up for a program, circle the program(s) that you are interested in, fill out the info on the back of this page and mail the entire page to us at PO Box 336, Arkville, NY 12406





PO Box 336  
Arkville, NY 12406

## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I believe in enhancing the quality of the forest land in the Catskill Region through proper forest management.  
To that end, I am interested in joining the Catskill Forest Association and supporting its efforts.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Categories (Select the level & if you'd like, make an additional donation):

Membership	\$50 + \$ _____
Contributing	\$75 + \$ _____
Business / Supporting	\$100 + \$ _____
Supporting	\$150 + \$ _____
Sustaining	\$250 + \$ _____
Benefactor	\$750 + \$ _____

Do you own land in the Catskill Region? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Property address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone #: \_\_\_\_\_ County: \_\_\_\_\_

Total acres: \_\_\_\_\_ Forested acres: \_\_\_\_\_ Pond Y / N Stream Y / N River Y / N

Would you like a CFA forester to come to your property to walk it with you, making suggestions and giving you impartial and confidential advice? (IT JUST COSTS \$200 PLUS OUR MILEAGE AND THE \$200 INCLUDES A ONE YEAR MEMBERSHIP.) Y / N  
(If so we will call you to schedule an appointment.)

Amount enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

All membership dues and donations are fully tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. A copy of the most recent financial statement filed with the New York Department of State is available upon request.



# CFA NEWS



The Newsletter of the Catskill Forest Association, Inc.

Volume 33, Number 2 - Spring 2015



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

CFA Member Contribution—"Forestry for Wildlife" Program.

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