

CFA MEMBER SPOTLIGHT—Taking Advantage of Membership *by Hale Rickman - Margaretville, NY*



Hale Rickman—Photo by the Author

One day I received a notification of a Garden show in Delhi and I was in the midst of frustration with insects attacking my 1- 2-year-old fruit trees, approximately 30 at the time closer to 50 now. Also, proper pruning techniques was a concern of mine as the articles I was reading seemed to contradict one another as to when was the best time to prune fruit trees.

I asked my wife Mary if she would like to go, we enjoy Delhi excursions, (Blue Bee Cafe, Tractor Supply, and Stuarts Clothing and Bric-a-Brac store), but she was not interested this time. After winding around Delhi I finally found the Garden show venue.

{We are weekenders in Margaretville on 13 acres mostly forested land, we live in Connecticut.}

At the Garden Show, I saw about a dozen or so tables in a large room, I walked from table to table, only one table had anything close to "gardening" but it was a hydroponic plant, very interesting but not what I was looking for, but at one table I met two interesting people from the Catskill Forest Association. I spent a good amount of time talking to Kathy and John from the organization, long enough to get interested, then I asked, "besides forestry do they have any information on fruit trees", they assured me they have a guy on staff named Ryan that does.

I was intrigued by the fact that they will come out to your property and do an assessment of your forest and make certain recommendations to make it more conducive to wildlife, this was something of interest to me, because in the last year I had decided to install a walking trail so we can enjoy more of our land taking small hikes with visiting friends and enjoying the natural environs around our log cabin.

So, I joined CFA right there. (I also stopped by Titan Drilling table and was enticed into having them install their water filtration system in our home, a decision we are happy with as our water is now crystal clear.

After I participated in CFA's **On-Site Visit Program**, I was hooked. John and Ryan showed up and gave a very thorough idea on what was the problem in our forest. Lack of understory which was unable to support the birds, deer, grouse and other wild animals that should be provided with available food sources, hiding and shelter. I also got a quick introduction into tree identification based on leaves and bark, something I sublimely always wanted to learn, like a foreign language. I'm always impressed when someone can look at a tree and properly identify it.

Also, Ryan provided me very useful information on maintaining my new fruit trees. We discovered an overgrown small apple tree orchard on the edge of the forest that Ryan said could be restored by removing some of the overgrowth and pruning.

I decided to go the next step with CFA and have John and Ryan return to do the **Forestry for Wildlife Program**, which they performed a variety of techniques that ran along the trail we had made in the forest. Now we have a clear area where we are providing some light for the understory to grow. Ryan says I can use this newly cleared space to plant some oak trees I was interested in growing but would not have thrived due to a lack of sunlight prior. They also did some tree hinge cuts which brings the tree tops to ground level where the wildlife can browse on the tree leaves. They will continue to live as the xylem and phloem are still partially intact and live for 3-7 years providing a food source and ground cover during that time.

Trees were cut and felled in place around the old apple orchard so they can get necessary sunlight. Some spruce trees were girdled to sever the xylem and phloem so the trees would eventually die in place and provide the type of environment certain birds prefer, leafless trees with the added benefit of more sunlight getting to the lower level trees that provide additional resources for the wildlife.

To some, this may sound drastic to kill any tree. I have learned from CFA that maintaining a healthy wildlife ecosystem makes practical sense and makes our hikes more interesting as we can observe how nature absorbs these changes. I have noticed animal life abounding in this area. I cannot attest to any statistical change, but it is good to have some sunlight in areas that had none before. Now our wild fruit, and oak trees can thrive. We haven't gone through a spring yet, so it will be interesting to see what happens next.

Ryan and John also installed a screech owl nesting box approx. 50 feet above ground level; we are

awaiting our first Screech owl to set up his or her home in the owl house, we will update when we get a resident.

Other CFA Events:

Since joining the organization, I took part in the following activities offered:

Backyard Edibles & Medicinals with Amy Metnick - Lots of information provided here.

Forestry for Wildlife Walk - At John's family property, very informative, a nice pleasant hike too.

Ginseng Walk - Very interesting and something very secretive, must attend, nice hiking up hill.

Forestry for the Birds - Very Informative. Information provided by an Audubon, NY representative and a narrated hike followed.

Maple Syrup / Backyard Sugaring; this was very interesting to me as I never tapped a tree before. Ryan ran the informative program and demonstrated some techniques and even made some maple candy. I met the CFA President, Mike Porter who happens to live near my home in Margaretville and he was nice enough to come visit my forest after the meeting to identify some Sugar Maple trees that I could tap.



Hale Rickman—Photo by the Author

I purchased a 3-pail starter kit, (\$76) and the day that was prime for taping, Becky Porter came up to my home with drill in hand and she showed us the proper tapping technique, angle and tree compass location best for tapping; my wife and our visiting friends were totally enthralled as we tapped our first tree and had our first taste of maple sap. Becky informed us that since we did not intend to make the sap into syrup due to our weekend status that we can immediately use the sap for our coffee.

Overnight we collected almost 3 quarts of sap; more than enough for coffee for all to enjoy!!!

What fun and great people we found in our short time in the CFA organization so far.

Looking forward to **apple tree grafting**, and all future hikes and hope to meet additional members on these future events. Until then, happy trails to you.....

by, CFA Member, Hale Rickman



Hale Rickman Tapping his first sugar maple with help from Becky Porter,—CFA Board member—and friends
Photo by the Author

***Note from the Editor:** This article, written by CFA member Hale Rickman, was contributed as a member spotlight for the Spring 2017 CFA News. All members are welcomed and encouraged to contribute their stories as part of the CFA News Member Spotlight series. If you would like to have your article published in a future CFA News publication, please contact John MacNaught, Wildlife Specialist and CFA News editor (845) 586-3054. Or, submit to jmacnaught@catskill.net. **No matter what you use your woodland for, CFA wants to share your forest experience!**

Watered Down Firewood

Executive Director, Ryan Trapani



Half as Much for the Same Price

Imagine one fine day you find your favorite maple producer and purchase 1 quart of maple syrup for \$15. After a couple of months, you manage to chug down the sweet tree concoction and return to the same maple producer. He hands you the same volume of syrup (1 quart) as you purchased last time; however, he informs you this quart is ½ water and ½ pure maple syrup for the same low price of \$15. “Same low price for ½ the syrup,” you exclaim.

Well, in this fictitious story, the maple producer had watered down his syrup; yet he charged the same amount. When buying firewood – or harvesting yourself – firewood too can be “watered down” yet the same price is charged. Now, you might be wondering, “Holy cow; I’m about to hear how my firewood guy has been pulling a fast one on me for years.” The purpose here isn’t to call out firewood producers. Instead, it’s to show how you might retrieve the most value from your firewood.

Firewood isn’t maple syrup; that’s no surprise. Sure they both share a couple of things in common; both come from trees and both represent one way a tree stores the sun’s energy over time. However, it seems to me that selling syrup is much easier to sell than firewood. When someone buys maple syrup, they seem to understand what they’re getting. Although maple syrup can range in taste from one producer to another, it normally is consistent is sugar content. Pure maple syrup is approximately 67% sugar. In other words, whether you purchase a quart of maple syrup or a gallon, both containers should contain a liquid substance that is approximately 67% sugar.

All Cords Are Not Created Equal

In fairness, firewood producers have 2 difficult challenges: (1) Moisture content; & (2) Species composition. For starters, firewood is sold by the cord; a more difficult and awkward measurement

than a quart or a pound of something. One cord is equivalent to 128 cubic feet, or a pile that is 8 feet long x 4 feet high x 4 feet deep; whatever weird shape or height you stack your pile, it should add up to 128 cubic feet. Okay, but a cord is simply a measurement of volume, not heat value.

Heat value can be drastically influenced by moisture in the firewood and tree species (density). In other words, 1 cord of wood – like the aforementioned watered-down fictitious maple syrup story – can be more “watery” than another. If wood has not been seasoned or dried long enough (about 20% moisture content), heat value can be drastically different. For example, my father used to buy unseasoned firewood back in the 1980s. He used 8 cords to heat his raised-ranch. One year, he bought firewood that had been properly seasoned and he used about 4 cords. The lost heat value in the unseasoned firewood was due to moisture content. For example, a cord of unseasoned sugar maple wood weighs about 4,386 lbs. A cord of seasoned sugar maple wood weighs about 3,577 lbs.; that means that 809 pounds of water must be boiled away before heat enters your home. In other words, you are paying the same amount for half the heat value! If you’re cutting your own firewood, then you’re moving 809 lbs. of extra weight into the house for burning; more importantly, twice as much wood must be cut, split, stacked, and moved for the same heat value. Wet wood also can lead to a dirty chimney and a fire hazard too. Also important to consider is species. A cord of basswood has ½ the heat value as a cord of hickory; assuming both are adequately seasoned.

Don’t Blame the Firewood Guy

It’s one thing to buy seasoned firewood and learn that it’s not. However, buying firewood early in the year is one easy way to get what you pay for. As one firewood producer told me, “My job is to cut the firewood, the seasoning is your responsibility.” You can also ask what species are included in your cord; a mix of hardwoods is normally good for the variety of winter days received.

Firewood is a strange industry. For some reason it seems consumers are not willing to pay significantly higher prices for “seasoned” firewood or firewood that contains high-density tree species despite different heating values. Markets exist in other fuel sources; gas stations normally have three options or grades of gasoline. In fact, the lumber industry has a very complicated and differentiated grading system; all due to consumer demand. Currently, no grading or differentiation exists – that I know of – in firewood. Maybe someday. Until then, I guess “the best wood, is the wood you got.” www.catskillforest.org

THE EXPLANATION?

How can the mountain paper birch distribution be explained historically? I cannot very well because this birch, unlike yellow birch, eastern hemlock, red spruce, and balsam fir, is a typically well-drained, upland site species and does not occur in bogs. Mountain paper birch parts (wood, bark, leaves, twigs, fruits, etc.) do not readily fall into *Sphagnum* (peat moss); they cannot be preserved in the peat and therefore cannot be radiocarbon-dated.

I can offer only a guess at an explanation. Mountain paper birch occurs only on peaks with abundant dense balsam fir and/or red spruce. These sites have shallow-soils and are very exposed especially to wind, but also to ice and heavy wet snow. The two evergreen conifers are more susceptible to blowdown than the hardwoods. Canopy gaps (open sunny spaces between trees) are common, giving the shade-intolerant mountain paper birch a chance to pioneer. On the all-hardwood western Catskills peaks, blowdown is not as prevalent, the canopy gaps not as frequent, and the paper birch cannot survive.

Both the spruce and the fir, as they invaded into the Catskills from the Poconos about 14000 years ago, left behind relict populations, some quite large, along their migration route through north-western Sullivan County and up the Fir Brook Valley (see map). But why aren’t there also relict populations of mountain paper birch along Fir Brook? Probably because at these lower elevations (1700 to 2000 feet), there is less exposure to wind, less conifer blowdown, and therefore less opportunity for the birch to pioneer. For some detail on the postglacial migration of these conifers into the Catskills, see *CFA News* fall-winter 2012-2013 (volume 30, number 4, combined with volume 31, number 1, pages 12 through 14), issue for the fir, and the spring 2013 (volume 31, number 2, also pages 12 through 14) issue for the spruce).

Mountain paper birch does not require the presence of spruce and/or fir to exist. There is no symbiotic relationship. It does enjoy, however, the canopy gaps created by the frequent blowdown of these conifers.

Paper birch, generally below 2500 feet in elevation, requires open spaces created not by spruce-fir canopy gaps, but by abandoned pastures, clearcuts, and forest fires.

THE “ECOLOGICAL SCHIZOPHRENIC”

In *The Catskill Forest: A History* (Purple Mountain Press, 2000, page 24), I called paper birch the “ecological schizophrenic” because it grew in two seldom overlapping kinds of sites. At that time, I considered paper birch and mountain paper birch to be a single species. What do I think now after the geneticists have reported their findings? I’m still not certain whether we have a single species or two. The overlapping morphological features and 28 chromosome pairs suggest one species, but the different ecological distributions suggest two.

POSTSCRIPT: FRANK WINKLER'S BLACK CHERRY INQUIRY

CFA Board Member Frank Winkler followed up on My Black Cherry article in the last issue of the *CFA News* (Winter 2017, volume 35, number 1, pages 6 and 7). He wondered whether the 2005 through 2008 forest tent caterpillar defoliation and subsequent demise of sugar maple could create an increase in black cherry populations in the western Catskills. I think yes under certain circumstances, but not in others.

On the middle-elevation slopes (generally 2000 to 3000 feet), black cherry could replace some or many of the maples under the following conditions: (1) where soils hold enough water to support dominant sugar maple populations, (2) where there was defoliation, and (3) where blackberry and/or other thickets have not invaded. I visited a number of places, especially in Delaware County, where most sugar maples were dead, dying, or severely reduced in crown size (i. e. lost many branches). Among the dead and declining maples were interspersed scattered, healthy non-defoliated black cherry; forest tent caterpillars apparently do not prefer cherry. My guess is that it would require about 150 years for the sugar maple to return under the cherries, barring any further major disturbances, and create a sugar maple-dominated forest much like that before 2005.

But the major obstacle may be blackberry, with some raspberry, hay-scented fern, and/or meadowsweet. These plants create such dense stands that black cherry, as well as other tree species, may have difficulty coming up beneath and through the thickets. Many blackberry thickets are still as impenetrable as ever, even after ten years following sugar maple defoliation. Ask any hiker who bushwhacks! I have no idea how long the blackberry thickets will persist. My guess is for many decades until the forest closes in on them and shades them out from the sides.

Higher up on the ridgelines, generally above 3000 feet where drier soils support few or no sugar maples, black cherry will continue to dominate as usual. I looked at my copy of New York State Forester Karl Schmitt’s 1917 “Fire Protection Map of the Catskill Forest”. He shows many ridgelines in the central and western Catskills damaged by “worms” in 1909. That high up, the “worms” must have been EASTERN tent caterpillar, not FOREST tent caterpillar. The EASTERN tent caterpillar feeds mostly on cherries. The black cherries have returned well to these ridgelines since.

As far as gypsy moth defoliation, it seems unlikely in the western Catskills except in areas where oaks are dominant because of millennia of burning by Native Americans (see *CFA News*, Fall 2009, Fall 2014, Spring 2016, and Summer 2016). These oak stands seldom climb up onto the high ridgelines.

by, Dr. Michael Kudish

The Membership Survey Analysis is Complete

CFA Board Member, Dave Northcutt

Yes, we know, it took us quite a while to get through all the surveys you sent in last year, and we apologize for the delay, but the analysis is complete, and we have learned a lot from what you have told us. First and foremost a big **Thank You** to all who responded. The survey was sent to 350 active members and 172 of you responded; an amazing 49%! Your feedback is helping the board and staff to move the CFA forward.

Before we present some of the detailed results, here are the high-level conclusions the board has drawn from the survey:

Members are generally satisfied with the current level of services that the CFA offers. While we don't intend to become complacent because the results were positive, we believe we are on the right track with our efforts.

Residence and recreation are the driving forces behind land ownership for most of our members. Almost 75% of members use their land year-round.

Members are very active on their land, with a diverse set of uses for their properties. This diversity, while a challenge for a small organization, is also an opportunity for the CFA to improve and expand our impact.

The Forest Festival is the "crown jewel" of our offerings, and a significant way in which we attract and retain members.

Members want information, they look to the CFA to provide that information, and we should examine additional avenues for meeting members' needs. Members found the newsletter to be a valuable source, rating it at 6.5 on average on an 8-point scale. There is also huge untapped potential for us in the electronic and social media spaces.

The area of timber management and sales was mentioned often enough that it warrants our increased attention.

Wildlife habitat and management were key areas that scored highly across several survey questions.

While there isn't enough space here to show all the results, below are some of the highlights from the statistical analysis of the survey questions. I have limited each question to the most frequent responses.

Question: What do you feel is the primary

benefit from CFA membership? Access to Information, 33%; CFA newsletter and other educational material, 27%; On-site visits/Consultations, 14%; Expert Advice and confidentiality, 14%.

Question: What are the primary and secondary purposes for owning your property? Residence, 33%; Recreation, 32%; Hunting, 12%; Family Inheritance, 11%.

Question: What uses do you have planned for your woodlands? Enhanced Habitat, 24%; Manage timber resources, 22%; Learn about my forest resources, 20%; Trail development, 16%; Enhanced hunting, 13%

Question: Name a favorite event hosted by CFA. While many events were mentioned, the *Forest Festival* and the various *Walks* we sponsor were the runaway top vote getters.

Question: What additional services would you like to see CFA provide? There were 48 suggestions, and the top areas were: More educational programs, 9 responses; Logging advice, 6; References to service providers, 5; Invasive species assistance, 4.

Question: How often do you visit CFA's Website; Facebook page; Instagram; YouTube? The Website was the only one here that received significant visit frequency from members. We believe the website, www.catskillforest.org, is a valuable way to communicate with you, and we have been working to continue to improve it. We will also continue to work on the challenge of increasing our social media presence.

As with any survey, it is always important to think about the voices we didn't hear. Half of the members did not return surveys. While it is likely that the non-respondents are not significantly different in many ways from those we heard from, it is also likely that there are some great ideas that we have missed because of non-response. If you didn't get a chance to give us feedback on the survey—or even if you did and you have new input—we encourage you to drop us a note at cfa@catskill.net, or call us directly at (845) 586-3054. We'd love to hear from you.

By Dave Northcutt,
CFA Board of Directors

Mountain Paper Birch

by Dr. Michael Kudish

In the winter 2016-2017 issue of *Kaatskill Life*, CFA's Ryan Trapani wrote on mountain paper birch. Before that, in the winter 2010 issue of the same magazine, he wrote on paper birch. Perhaps some elaboration on these two puzzling, close-cousin birches may be beneficial to CFA members, although from what I've learned recently from forest geneticists, it could cause even more confusion!

For decades, forest ecologists have argued among themselves whether mountain paper birch is only a variety of paper birch (*Betula papyrifera* var. *cordifolia*) or is a distinct species (*Betula cordifolia*). Recently, forest geneticists have tended to favor the idea that mountain paper birch is a separate species, but the features that separate the two are not clear-cut by any means.

GENETICS

Genetically, paper birch has 28, 35, or 42 pairs of chromosomes in each cell (except gametes), while mountain paper birch has 14 or 28 pairs. This variability in the number of chromosomes, plus the overlap at 28 pairs, in both species, makes the distinction between the two blurred. Even crossing (i. e. hybridization) is possible.

MORPHOLOGICAL FEATURES

How can one tell the two species apart without counting chromosomes under a microscope? Forest geneticists have described several ways, but none of them works all the time. Some geneticists say that the most reliable way is to look at the scales that subtend the fruits. The scales and fruits are densely packed into cylindrical, hanging structures called aments (popularly called catkins). Each scale has three lobes, a main central lobe and two side (lateral) lobes. In paper birch, the lateral lobes tend to diverge from the central lobe at a wide angle, while in mountain paper birch, the lateral lobes tend to curve upward and become almost parallel with the central lobe. I have looked at this feature in both paper birch and mountain paper birch and it's not 100% reliable.

Some authors say that one can count the number of pairs of lateral veins (the veins that diverge from the main midvein of a leaf) – nine or fewer pairs in paper birch, nine to twelve pairs in mountain paper birch. I've tried this, but it does not always work either.

Mountain paper birch is supposed to have heart-shaped leaf bases (hence the specific name *cordifolia*), while paper birch is supposed to have rounded or truncated leaf bases. I found that this feature is not always foolproof, too.

There also tends to be a difference in bark color. Both species start out with trunks and major limbs as a dark reddish-brown. Paper birch starts

turning white when the trunk and major limbs reach a diameter of about two inches and age ten years. The initial red-brown bark begins to peel off, exposing the newer younger, inner white bark beneath. By diameter four inches or so and age twenty, the trunk and limbs are mostly white. In contrast, in mountain paper birch the inner, younger bark tends to retain more of its red-brown (sometimes pinkish) color, so many older mountain paper birch trunks and limbs are not bright white.



Mountain Paper Birch—
Ryan Trapani

SITE

I had to "dig out" fifty years of field notes to prepare the mountain paper birch distribution map included here (page 6). This species is restricted to the highest elevations, generally above 3000 feet, in the eastern Catskills, and occurs only on sites that have extensive dense stands of balsam fir, red spruce, or both. It is completely absent from the all-hardwood western Catskills peaks at similar elevations. Even the central Catskills peaks which have smaller and/or scattered populations of balsam fir (Balsam Lake Mountain, Doubletop, the range from Big Indian Mountain north to Balsam Mountain, North Dome, Sherrill Mountain) lack the mountain paper birch.

When plotted on a map, mountain paper birch ranges from Peekamoose Mountain eastward over the intervening peaks to Balsam Cap and northward to Cornell and Wittenberg Mountains. It is abundant on the Slide Mountain massif, with a smaller population on Panther Mountain.

It skips over the Esopus Valley and resumes on the Hunter Mountain Range from Indian Head westward to West Kill Mountain. There is some on Kaaterskill High Peak and Round Top, as well as on North Mountain, Stoppel Point, and the East Jewett Range. There is still more on the Blackhead Range.

Along these ranges, mountain paper birch is often discontinuous. It may cap only the summits and shoulders of the peaks, but is absent in the mainly hardwood cols between them.

On certain peaks, mountain paper birch populations are quite limited, e. g., from Acra Point over Burnt Knob to Windham High Peak, and on Overlook and Plattekill Mountains. Here, the high-elevation mountain paper birch and the low-elevation paper birch populations could possibly overlap and it's difficult to determine whether there is any "monkey business" (i. e., hybridization) going on between them.

CFA Hires Executive Director

by Mike Porter, CFA Board President



The Catskill Forest Association is proud to announce that 10-year Education Forester, Ryan Trapani, has been hired as the new Executive Director. Ryan brings experience in the operation of CFA, familiarity with members, and a deep knowledge of the 6-county CFA area.

Ryan lives in Samsonville with his wife, Sara, and 2 daughters, Metta and Maple. He is a certified ISA arborist and a QDMA deer steward. He lives his life in the outdoors, making maple syrup, tending his fruit orchard, and teaching his girls the value of woodlands.

From the Forest,

**Mike Porter, President
CFA Board of Directors**

Forestry Fridays

Join CFA staff for informal discussion about the forest at the Catskill Forest Association's office on the first Friday of every month beginning at 6pm.

Previous Forestry Fridays have featured discussion about trespassing laws with a NYS DEC ECO, and 'Winter Wildlife' with CFA's Wildlife Specialist, John MacNaught.

Join us with ideas, questions, or just to share your thoughts. We will see where the conversation goes!



CFA's John MacNaught speaking at Forestry Friday

Meet the CFA Board of Directors



Frank Winkler I grew up in Andes on a small dairy farm. College and a career as a resource conservationist for USDA took me away from the Catskills for 25 years. My wife, Vickie and I did come home on

weekends with our two children to build a house and care for our 100-acre woodlot, which was the back half of the family dairy farm. In 2000 we did get to move back home full time.

My 41-year career as a resource planner was mainly working with the farming community to reduce adverse environmental impacts, while trying to enhance farm profitability. Now that I'm retired I enjoy working with several forestry organizations, serve as chair of the Andes Planning Board, and as a director with the Delaware County Electric Cooperative.

One of my main hobbies is doing timber stand improvement, enhancing wildlife habitat, collecting firewood; all while getting some exercise (and Vickie doesn't think I can multitask!)

I find it very rewarding in assisting CFA in helping our members understand their natural resources,

work towards their goals, while enhancing critical resources. We are fortunate to be able to offer unique programs to our members and to provide a wide range of informational forums to help us better understand the Catskills that we all love.



Jake Rosa I am a lifelong resident of the town of Middletown, Delaware County. I have a small farm raising beef and eggs. I'm also the owner of Dry Brook Custom Sawmilling and Logging. I am Trained Logger certified and a Certified Timber Harvester. DBC specializes in customized land manipulation to meet any landowners goals. We do everything from trail system layout

build and maintenance, selective timber harvesting, food plot construction, boundary marking and posting, pond and drainage work, and land clearing. If there is anything that needs to be done on the back forty DBC can make it happen. We specialize in low impact logging with high quality results. I am a Member of the WAC forestry committee, NYLT board of directors, ESFPA, and Town of Middletown town board since 2010.

NYS DEC Catskill Region Stumpage Report—Winter 2017

The New York State Department of Environmental conservation (NYS DEC) posts average stumpage prices acquired by voluntary reporting from various buyers and sellers of standing timber in four regions of New York. The chart below is a summary of the full report posted by NYS DEC and represents only six trees within the Catskill Region (Winter 2017). For a copy of the full report, please visit <http://www.dec.ny.gov>

Prices reflect average price paid to the landowner for standing timber per thousand board feet (Scribner Rule). This is only a guide to show some market trends. It is highly encouraged to speak with a private consulting forester (and the CFA) before selling your timber.

Common Species	Average Price (Dollars/thousand board feet)
Ash, White	\$300/Mbf
Cherry, Black	\$375/Mbf
Maple, Red (Soft)	\$300/Mbf
Maple, Sugar (Hard)	\$500/Mbf
Oak, Red	\$390/Mbf
Pine, White	\$80/Mbf



The Catskill Forest Association is pleased to host **"From the Forest,"** a weekly radio show on WIOX, our local radio station in Roxbury, New York. The CFA's Ryan Trapani and John MacNaught, along with other guest speakers, discuss; trees, logging, wood, maple syrup, nuts and berries and the pressing issues central to our forests.

WIOX Community Radio, 91.3FM.

Don't get 91.3FM where you live? Don't worry, you can also stream live at www.wioxradio.org.

Missed the Show? We archive shows at www.catskillforest.org

WIOX 91.3FM
a wskg community partner
wioxradio.org

CATSKILL FOREST FESTIVAL!

Mark your calendars! The annual Catskill Forest Festival is **Saturday, July 29th** this year. Each year the CFA celebrates the Catskill forests by holding the Forest Festival, located at the Margaretville Pavilion behind the Freshtown Supermarket.

This festival promises a day full of forestry education, forest-related vendors, as well as tree felling, skidding, sawmill and wood possessing demonstrations.

Each year the CFA Board of Directors and Staff seek help from our membership to make this festi-

val a success. **We are currently seeking volunteers** interested in helping to set up the day before and the day of the festival, greet visitors at the gate, provide assistance at the CFA trailer and tents, or help clean-up after the festival is over. If you are interested in helping with one of these tasks and joining the group of volunteers that help make this festival a success let Kathy know at the CFA office.

The board of directors is also looking for one or two motivated CFA members to join the Forest Festival planning committee. If you have ideas on how to make this festival an even greater success in the future and wish to help steer us in the right direction, let us know! (845) 586-3054 or cfa@catskill.net

Saturday, July 29th

10am 'til 4pm



2017 Spring Events

***Pre-Registration
Required**



Cutting Firewood

April 15th

10AM—Noon

Learn how to improve your forest while cutting firewood. Cutting wood will benefit growing timber and wildlife habitat too. See how one CFA member does it.

Forest Flowers Walk

May 13th

10AM—Noon

Spring is a great time to see flowers on the forest floor before the leaves come out. Join us for a walk to see what we can find.

Staff

Ryan Trapani—Executive Director
John MacNaught—Wildlife Specialist
Kathy Fox—Office Manager

Game of Logging Level 1

April 22nd

7:30AM—5PM

Level 1 topics include personal protective equipment, chainsaw safety features, chainsaw reactive forces, bore cutting, pre-planning the fell, & understanding hinge wood strength.

Deer Exclosure Walk

May 27th

10AM—Noon

Demonstration exhibiting deer impacts in the Catskills' forests. See what grows on the forest floor when deer are excluded via a fence.

Backyard Edibles and Medicinals

June 24th

10AM—Noon

Learn to ID a few plants in your backyard for edibility & medicinal use with Amy Metnick.

Apple Tree Grafting Demonstration

May 6th

10AM—Noon

Turn a lousy apple tree into something that tastes good via grafting. We will show you grafts from previous years, as well as graft a new tree.

Forestry for Wildlife Walk

June 17th

10AM—Noon

Demonstration on how to create better wildlife habitat in the forest.

Contact

cfa@catskill.net
(845) 586-3054
www.catskillforest.org



From the Executive Director's Desk

CFA's Executive Director, Ryan Trapani

Adapting to the Weather

It feels like yesterday that I was walking in the mountains searching for the mighty white-tailed buck in a short-sleeve shirt on Opening Day of Gun Season. Last November's opener was incredibly warm. In reality, I didn't really feel like hunting that day; instead I was "taking the gun for a nice walk." I did manage to watch a black bear for 30 minutes dig beneath the leaves and rocks in search of food. If I did somehow see and successfully take a deer, I would have been rushing through the woods to process that deer before spoiling.

The "warming" phenomenon didn't end during hunting season either. A couple of days ago (February 25th) I took down my maple buckets for gathering sap; that's right, you heard me correctly. I took them down, and not up. January 16th marked the first day I gathered sap for boiling into syrup. For the first time in my short 10-year tenure as maple hobbyist, I terminated operations before March 1st.



Flowers emerging below sap buckets—
Ryan Trapani

Sure, I could have kept going and the sap was running. However, 2 or 3 consecutive days of 65°F seems to take the wind out of my maple sugaring sails. In addition, I just don't like the sap quality when temperatures begin to average in the upper 40s and 50s. Neighbors down the road heard spring peepers last week and I swore no-seesums were biting the back of my neck; I may have imagined that though.

With all this phenomenal warm weather, there remains an optimistic side. Despite the warm weather, I still managed to see deer where I expected to see them. Despite the warm weather, I made more syrup per tap than I ever have. Adapting to the weather is something not just maple sugarmakers or deer hunters should pay

attention to, but also those in the tree care industry and forestry.

For instance, CFA's Apple Tree Grafting Program takes place within 30 days of flowering for best results. Normally, this seems to occur sometime in mid-April to mid-May. Sure, we could set a calendar date, but paying attention to your trees is the most accurate way to see when they are ready. Maybe this year, we'll be able to graft earlier; it depends.

Another example is in planting trees. Normally, planting bare root trees (mail-ordered trees) occurs in mid-March to mid-April. However, you can plant that tree anytime the ground isn't frozen; maybe late February or early March if this weather continues. Maybe you can get an earlier start on these projects, giving you more time to pursue other forestry matters.

The point of this weather-dependent conversation is to reevaluate our traditional time-tables and rather focus on direct observation; there is no better barometer for what's going on in the woods or on the ground than you on your land and in the woods. Caring for trees and forests is an on-going local process. Maybe the buds are just breaking where your trees are while someone else's buds are still tight due to differences in micro-climate.

Traditionally, the maple season began in March and the deer hunting season occurred when deer could be tracked through snow; that seems to be how many of us like it or expect it to be. But, that's not what we're being given; adaptation may be necessary to successfully make syrup, hunt deer, or better manage one's trees or forests.

Speaking of adaptation, forests have managed to adapt to a changing climate for thousands of years. Forest Ecologist Neil Pederson (Harvard Forest) will discuss "long-term development of forests, from tree to subcontinental scales, as they interact with climate and as trees interact amongst themselves" on CFA's radio show – FROM THE FOREST. You can hear Neil on Wednesday, April 26th @ 6pm on WIOX ROXBURY 91.3 FM or stream online @ www.wioxradio.org

May the forest be with you,

Ryan Trapani
Executive Director

All events require pre-registration. Please contact Kathy at cfa@catskill.net for event registration. All workshops meet at the designated location which can be found on our website www.catskillforest.org



CFA News
Volume 35, Number 2
Spring 2017

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Published Quarterly

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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 the form on the back cover of this publication and mail it in. Contact information is located above. Please submit address changes to Kathy at the address above.

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Cover Photo:

Ash Trees Harvested in Early Spring from a CFA Member's Property

***Photo taken by John MacNaught
Wildlife Specialist,
Catskill Forest Association***

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Welcome New Members!

January

Collin Miller—Hobart
Dina Kaliko—Fleischmanns
Howard Aaron
Garret Matteo
Warren Reynolds—Halcott Center
John Nemec—Cooperstown
Lisa Dokken—Rochester

February

Justin Gallo—Lagrange
Jason Endres—Parksville
Gustavo Tellez—Providence
Matthew Trattner—Roxbury
Gloria Mirsky—Kerhonkson
Adam Hayes—Long Eddy
Carl Martin—Andes
Lois Jaeger—Bloomington
Anne Bloomfield—Olive
Pat Yorks—Accord
Bob Friedman—Huntington

March

Robert Manderson—Andes
Justin Lally—Denver
Pat Pellicano—Fleischmanns
Zach Clark—Margaretville

CFA Programs

Our services are
always impartial
and confidential!



Consultation: CFA will meet with you at your property and help you develop some goals for your property. We will make recommendations as well. Typically lasts 1 hour, or less.

On-Site Visit: CFA will walk your property with you, no matter how large or small. We will give impartial advice and management suggestions and summarize the visit in a letter. Typically lasts 1-3 hours. We can also fly our **drone** and get an overhead look!

Apple Tree Grafting: Rather than risking tree plantings not surviving, why not graft onto an existing tree? Grafts grow extremely fast from mature roots and will fruit earlier than comparable plantings. Grafts are already above deer browse and can preserve the best quality fruit varieties.



Tree Saver: Save your trees being plagued by invasive species. We can treat hemlock and ash trees in a safe manor to save them from certain death. Don't wait until it's too late. Schedule a consultation and plan ahead to save your trees. Treatments cost \$125/ tree and last 1 year. CFA Staff is DEC pesticide Certified.

Forestry for Wildlife: Making your forests more fruitful for wildlife. We specialize in small scale habitat management. We will release fruit and nut bearing trees to sunlight, create cover for wildlife species, and increase forest diversity all by cutting the right trees for the right reasons.

Trail Camera: What wildlife is on your property when you're not around? CFA will install trail cameras on your land for up to two weeks and see what wildlife is on your property. Our cameras take videos too!

Tree Marking: It's about quality, not quantity of trees. Great for someone that cuts firewood each year, but not sure which trees to cut & which to leave behind. **The keepers or crop trees** are marked. The crop trees are left behind while adjacent trees are cut.

Mapping Program: Personalized and detailed maps of your property with all the unique features and points of interest of your land. We map all trails, forest roads, and unique features. Call for more details, or example maps.

Contact
cfa@catskill.net
(845) 586-3054
www.catskillforest.org

For more information, call us at (845) 586-3054 or email us at cfa@catskill.net. Our office is open from 9am-4pm Monday—Friday. All programs are available to CFA members. If you are interested becoming a member of the Catskill Forest Association, fill out the info on the back of this page and mail it to us at PO Box 336, Arkville, NY 12406



PO Box 336
Arkville, NY 12406

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

I believe in enhancing the quality and productivity of woodlands in the Catskill Region through proper forest management.

I am interested in joining the Catskill Forest Association, taking advantage of all it has to offer and supporting its efforts.

Name _____
Mailing Address _____

Phone #: _____ E-mail: _____

Membership Categories (Select your membership level and if you'd like, make an additional donation):

Basic Membership — Newsletters, CFA Sign, Most events free or discounted and 10% discount on most of CFA's Programs
\$50 + \$ _____

Contributing — Same as Basic with a 20% discount on most of CFA's Programs
\$150 + \$ _____

Business — Same as Basic, free table at Catskill Forest Festival, Email advertisement twice per year & Listed on CFA's Website
\$200 + \$ _____

Sustaining — Same as Contributing with a free On-Site-Visit (only our mileage will be charged)
\$500 + \$ _____

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

Consultations are FREE for our members!

Total amount enclosed \$ _____

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 35, Number 2, Spring 2017



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Mountain Paper Birch - Dr. Michael Kudish

Membership Spotlight: Taking Advantage of Membership - Hale Rickman

Watered Down Firewood - Ryan Trapani

Also Included:

CFA Executive Director's Message, CFA Hires Executive Director, CFA's Calendar of Events,
Meet the Board of Directors, NYS DEC Winter 2017 Stumpage Report,
Membership Survey Analysis Review, and **Two New CFA Programs!**