



# CFA NEWS

Winter 2025

Vol. 43 No. 4

*Help Us Launch CFA's  
Prescribed Burn Program  
Go to page 14!*



# CFA NEWS

Winter 2025

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# CFA Staff

**Mission Statement:** To connect people to woodlands by providing conservation-based forestry education and services to privately-owned forest ecosystems.

**Ryan Trapani**  
Director of Forest Services  
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As Director, Ryan oversees the day-to-day activities at CFA. He is involved in the creation and administration of the Catskill Forest Association's programs and events. Ryan is a Forester and an ISA-Certified Arborist.



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As Program Manager, Zane directs the development & implementation of CFA's programs, services, and events. Additionally, Zane oversees CFA's Forest Saver and is an ISA-Certified Arborist.

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As Education Forester, Giovanna provides consultations, assists with field programs, and develops the forestry education services. Giovanna oversees CFA's Forest Farming program.



**Vision Statement:** To improve the overall health of the Catskill forests through the expansion of educational offerings and innovative services in forest health, wildlife, timber, arboriculture, and recreation, and by establishing the Catskill Forest Association (CFA) as the primary educational and service-based resource for private forest stewards in the Catskill Region.



**Jen Betz**  
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As a Forest Technician, Jen oversees our Legacy Tree Program and helps support our IT & business systems. Additionally, she assists in the implementation of CFA's programs, services, and events.

**Amy McCann**  
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*amy@catskillforest.org*



As Office Manager, Amy oversees all administrative duties for the Staff and Board of Directors at CFA. She also manages invoicing for programs and services.



**Cindy Buerge**  
Administrative Assistant  
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As Administrative Assistant, Cindy manages our membership services. She also plays a key role in organizing our Annual Membership Meeting and supports event logistics throughout the year.

# From the President's Desk: Winter 2025

By: Mike Porter, Board President

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Welcome to winter in the Catskills. Today, I want to talk about our unique position in life as owners of forest land in the Catskills. We can be thankful that we own land here in the region because we are relatively safe from Forest Fires, Tornadoes, Hurricanes and Earthquakes. When we look at what is happening around the world, we should feel very thankful that we do live here. We might have to deal with the occasional flood, cold spell, snow storm, heat wave or wind, but these can be mitigated so they are not as critical to our safety. That said, there are some issues that can be problematic for forest owners. We have been impacted by diseases and pests attacking our chestnut, elm, ash and hemlock. Insect pests regularly experience population explosions throughout our area, with Forest Tent Caterpillars and Spangly Moths (Gypsy Moths) being the most common. There are several other organisms that might become threats to our forest's health that we should be made aware of. Spotted Lantern Fly (SLF) and Asian Longhorn Beetle (ALB) are a couple that come to mind, with the SLF being relatively new as a threat to us. It seems that foresters and land managers have, for now, contained the ALB to its recent locations.

We can be thankful for all the foresters, scientists and land managers who are working around the clock to keep our forests as safe as possible. There are things we can do as landowners to contribute to forest health. Keeping abreast of developments in our region and asking questions of those experts will help determine what actions we can take on our own forest land. When we have a garden, we weed and cultivate it to keep unwanted plants and pests at bay. We do have to do the same thing with our forest land. It is a monumental task even on a small parcel of land, especially if you want to do the work yourself and save some money. When there are things to do, think small and do a few simple things as you have time or can afford them. When something seems too big for your skills, hire a professional to help out. This is where CFA comes into the picture. Our staff members have the skills and equipment to take care of many of the issues you might be facing.

When you look at your forest, realize that if you do nothing to it over time, it will change as succession progresses. In other words, if you like your forest the way it is now, you have to work to keep it that way. Whatever your forest, there will be rapid changes as the shade-intolerant species are overtaken by more shade-tolerant species. If you like the early succession forest, you have to keep it young by removing the trees

that might shade out your preferred forest population. If you want to encourage more permanent species to colonize, you really don't have to do anything except wait until the tolerant species germinate and grow up through the canopy.

33 years ago, we had a forester come and look over our 17 acres and give us an idea of plans that could maximize the value and usefulness of our forest. We were directed to remove certain trees to make room for the more desirable species in our woods. We took the advice and made several thinning cuts to get started. This year, as in the last few years, we have been paying attention to some of these recommendations again, and are cutting firewood in areas we previously worked, continuing to follow



the guidelines given by the forester. It is pretty interesting that what we are cutting now, were once simple small stem trees at the time of the visit. The first cuts were not very fruitful as

the trees were very small and didn't contain much volume for firewood. Today's cuts are producing much more per stem than if we had left them as dense as they were when we bought the property. Also, what we are now leaving behind are quite straight and limb-free harvest quality trees.

Our first major cut, 37 years ago, was in our Scotch Pine plantation where we harvested the logs for our homebuilt log cabin. We had to be careful to cut only trees that were large enough in diameter to make good cabin wall logs. It was quite a task to find enough of that quality. We also cut and let lay all dead and dying individuals (about 50% of the plantation was dead or dying). They were self-thinning because of their Shade Intolerance. This left ample room for the remaining trees to grow nicely. Today, I am harvesting some very nice specimens of Scotch Pine for use in building material for other projects as I now have a bandsaw mill. There are still some pines that will not amount to anything, but it is expected, as there is still some density and other

species are growing and succeeding in squeezing the pines out.

This is where the firewood harvest is beginning. I am cutting



red maple, sugar maple, white ash, black cherry and some black birch for firewood. When we bought the land there was very little hardwood in the parcel. Now the

hardwoods are nearly dominating the stand. Things have changed over the years we have owned and managed the land. Change will continue despite our best efforts to maintain our black cherry and red oak, as the more shade-tolerant species are squeezing these desirable trees out. To help combat this loss, I am releasing oak and cherry to give them more light, expecting they will thrive with less competition for the sunlight.

I have been doing a broad scale removal of white ash because of the EAB and am using most of the smaller stems for firewood. There are some larger stems that will find their way to the sawmill where I will, hopefully, create some nice lumber for furniture or other projects. Again, this is taking advantage of a condition in the forest that will, and is, causing wholesale change.

We are experiencing an “invasion” of American beech now that is potentially choking out other more desirable species. When we bought the property there was one beech tree on the property. Now, through its insidious ways, it is showing up in most sections of our property and is dominating. Becky and I are trying to control it with a judicious application of Roundup to each stem we cut off or using the process of hack and squirt. Initial indications are that it will work but with much more effort put into the task. Similar problems with striped maple and black birch are showing up. I am choosing to culture the birch as it makes good firewood and may make nice lumber once allowed to grow. The striped maple is suffering the same fate as the beech, except that the stems make great walking sticks for our quinquennial Family Reunion.

So, I have to manage for small stems to continue to grow to supply the sticks. These management techniques are necessary to achieve our goals for the property and forest.

When we bought the property in 1987, we took stock of what was there and, as time progressed, we noticed that in spite of our work, the forests changed in not-so-subtle ways. Observations have shown that bird populations are changing as the trees are going through their succession, despite our attempts to stall succession on parts of the property. We can only hope that any of the problems mentioned in the opening will somehow be minor and not really affect our forest trees much. The weather seems to be a major part of the impacts but has not really affected the trees in terms of damage. An occasional blowdown happens. Occasionally a tree dies from being shaded or, as with the Elm, is impacted by something outside of our control.

We can all look at our forest land with the same eye by learning about what is in the woods, what the character of the trees will be and determine if the outcomes will be in line with our list of goals.

Have a great holiday season, enjoy the winter and be safe.

From the President's Desk  
Mike Porter

# Sustaining Vegetation Management

By: Ryan Trapani, Director of Forest Services

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“Sustainable.” Sustainability can be defined as the ability to achieve or do something over time. Some things are just more easily sustained over time than others. Anyone in vegetation management—lawn mowing, tree pruning, removal, firewood, logging, landscaping—is aware of the energy or labor required to sustain vegetation control. Despite the existence of better technology, managing vegetation seems to be overwhelming many homeowners and forest owners. It wasn’t always this way.

## **Eat It, Spray It, or Cut It**

Look at the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, or as I call the “golden era” for rural characters and rural living in New York State. These Americans didn’t just keep up with vegetation but tamed it for better or worse. Peak agriculture occurred somewhere in the late 1800s. The “8<sup>th</sup> Wonder of the World” is considered by some to be the northeast’s hidden gridwork of stonewalls. These Americans were tough stock. They cut hemlock and stripped its bark to make “19<sup>th</sup> Century plastic” or leather, used for a variety of things that today are made from petrochemicals. Many pastures were for cattle before beef and milk could be shipped to cities faster by rail. Sheep for wool, before we had today’s petro-derived clothes. Forests were also cleared for horsepower, since real horsepower was needed before it would be contained under the hood of a car. I don’t know how much, but you need a lot of pasture to feed one horse, let alone a nation. Oxen too were used for work, like pulling heavy loads. All these livestock continually controlled vegetation until fossil fuels came online, making their work less needed, and hence, forest regrowth.

So, we lose animals to control vegetation, but we still need to manage vegetation. Chemicals really began to be popular after World War 2. The benefits and costs of using herbicides should be fairly weighed. They can be expensive or harmful if inappropriately used or “off-label.” However, they can also

be highly selective in targeting unwanted vegetation. They can be “safer” when compared to mechanical ways of managing vegetation (i.e tree felling, cutting, etc.). As a Commercial Pesticide Applicator, I often use insecticides (management of insects) and herbicides (management of plants). On a small scale, they can be highly effective in managing “weeds” or unwanted plants. In a forest, they are used to target “invasive” plants or kill trees to benefit residual ones. But treating whole forests with herbicides isn’t cheap and not without labor. It takes 1 or 2 people a lot of time and labor to treat 1 or 2 acres of medium-density invasive shrubs or plants. Besides, some people are just against the use of pesticides, despite being ignorant of their actual risk or ability to cause harm. So, the ability to use pesticides is under threat too.

Okay, so we’re losing livestock as farms dwindle and pesticides aren’t as fashionable as they once were. What are we left with? I mentioned mechanical means. The use of chainsaws comes to mind. There is no doubt that chainsaws have been a game changer since the mid-20<sup>th</sup> Century or so when they began to really gain popularity. The labor savings from using cross-cut saws and axes to fell and process trees has been significant. However, chainsaw use represents the most dangerous occupation on land, according to OSHA (Occupational Safety & Health Administration). The amount of labor involved in managing dense timber or shrubby land with chainsaws or forestry mulchers is extremely hard work, dangerous, and expensive.

And yet, the growth in vegetation marches on. In fact, forests may be denser than ever. Dr. David Foster of Harvard Forest coined the terms “densification” and “mesophication” for the eastern forest. The forest is becoming extremely dense and moving in a direction with plants and trees more adapted to moisture and shade-tolerant conditions; This is at the expense of disturbance-dependent tree species that include many of our fruit and nut trees and plants. What’s a Forest Manager to do? How can we make the appropriate cuts, thinings, etc. to open the forest canopy or keep unwanted vegetation at bay to meet a variety of ecological goals,

desired wildlife habitat, or future “desirable” timber? If we factor in increasing labor costs, then managing vegetation becomes even more complicated. Markets in wood products are hurting in New York State, particularly in low grade, which include paper/pulp, woody biomass, firewood, woodchips, pellets, etc. These markets are crucial for forest managers seeking economical ways to get the right trees cut and meet a variety of forest management goals. Please, don’t make it more difficult for these industries to locate in our neck of the woods the next time they come banging next door!

### **Bring Back Fire to Burn It**

One forest management tool barely makes the papers, and when it does, it’s often somewhere where it got loose. This tool or practice has been gutted from the Forester’s metaphorical toolbox. Prescribed burning has been relegated mostly to Southerners who manage forests, fields, farms, and wildlife habitat more than anywhere else in America. Fire used to be a tool for some folks in the northeast up until the 1940s, especially those mountain-types wanting to keep vegetation down, or produce more blueberries, etc. The Blueberry Festival held in Ellenville, NY testifies to this forgotten culture.

When alcohol was outlawed in the 1920s and early 30s through Prohibition, it killed a culture of bars, restaurants, supply chains and culture that made a good cocktail. Distilleries ran away into the mountains of Tennessee and Kentucky to evade government. It would take many decades for this industry to recover in New York State after entry-laws for local distilleries were finally relaxed. The same is true with fire today. The war on fire gutted both indigenous knowledge surrounding this practice as well as American knowledge in some areas where it was used commonly, like on the Shawangunk Ridge or Escarpment area of the Catskill Mountains. New York is one of 8 States that does not have a Prescribed Burn Association (PBA). PBAs serve to promote the use of Prescribed Fire for land management. Prescribed Fire can apparently be an extremely economical and effective tool in managing vegetation in



comparison to the above-mentioned options. Its costs are mainly in the planning phase and up-front equipment costs. Indirect costs make it extremely expensive, like uncertainty or lack of clarity surrounding the approval process and protection of its use on private land; Prescribed Burns must be approved by NYS DEC. Also, the lack of clarity surrounding liability serves as another hurdle.

There is hope though. Our neighbor Pennsylvania has made immense progress in creating a statewide Prescribed Burn Association and facilitating programs to increase resources for those seeking the ability to burn private land. In addition, protections for private burners and landowners have also increased if they follow a Prescribed Burn Plan and have the appropriate credentials that are more accessible than other States. We are hoping to start a PBA here in NYS and bring back fire to Forestry. We'll see. In the meantime, unwanted vegetation continues to grow, and my search for a good Manhattan continues. [www.catskillforest.org](http://www.catskillforest.org)



## Help Us Launch CFA's Prescribed Burn Program

***It's time to reintroduce fire***—carefully and at small scales—so we can rebuild this knowledge and restore fire as a valuable forestry tool to restore habitat, reduce invasive species, enhance biodiversity, maintain plant communities dependent on fire, and strengthen the health of our woods.

Decades of fire-suppression have diminished our understanding of fire's ecological value. While the South maintained a fire culture, states like New York lost much of this knowledge—even though fire once played a vital role in Northern forests, as seen in pyrogenic species like oak and chestnut.

**YOUR GIFT IS DOUBLED** to help launch our **NEW Prescribed Burn Program**, which will focus on low-complexity, small-acreage burns—an essential first step as we rebuild capacity and fire expertise in our region.

**Your support will help us bring fire back to the Catskills** in safe and meaningful ways by:

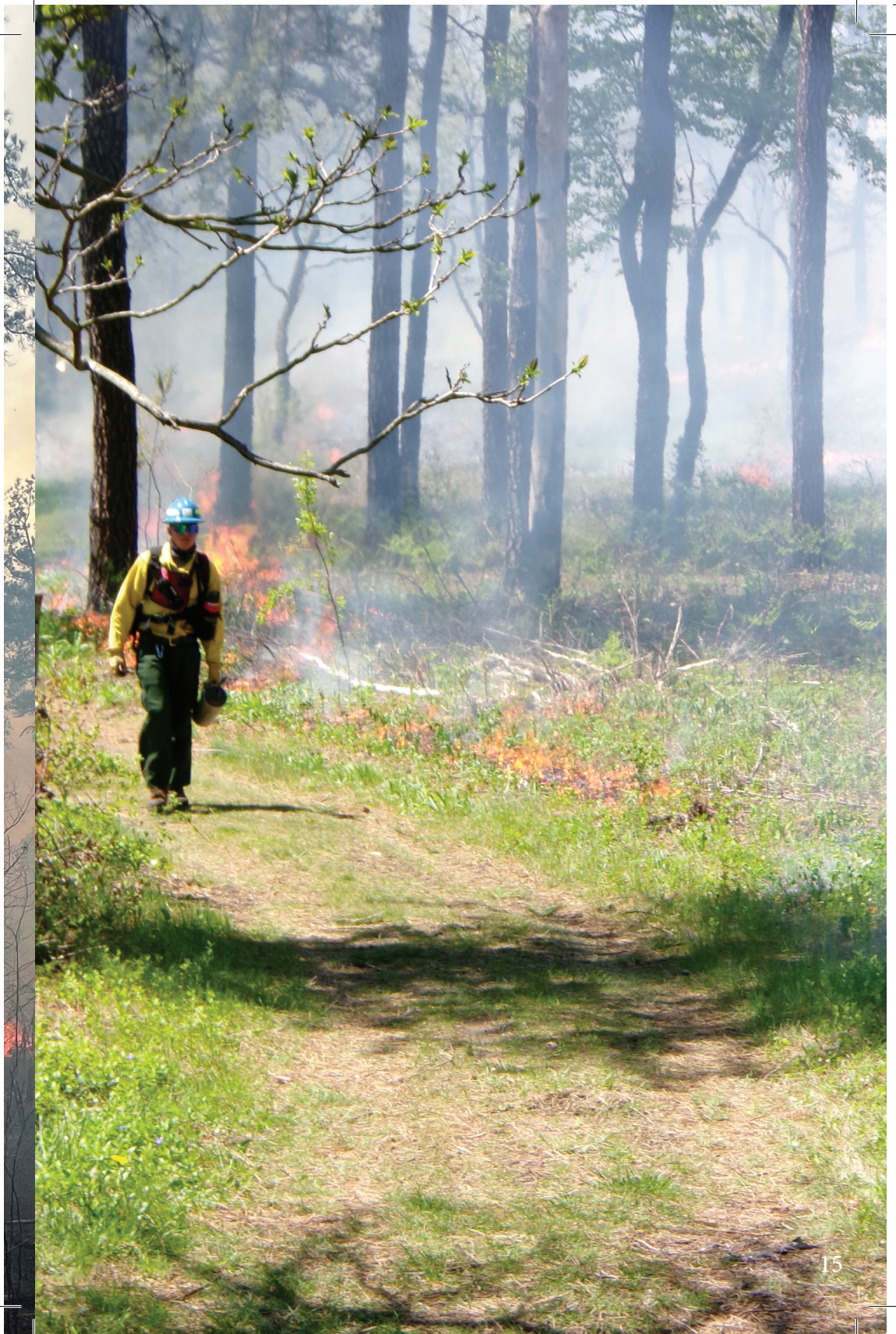
1. **Purchasing essential equipment**—from hand tools and PPE to larger fire-suppression gear.
2. **Securing expert guidance** from veteran prescribed burners across the U.S. to help CFA build skills, protocols, and technical knowledge.
3. **Obtaining specialized insurance** required to conduct prescribed burning safely and responsibly.

**Give today and help** liberate fire from the confines of a chainsaw's combustion engine to running on the forest floor. Help us bring fire back to New York in a safe, informed, and ecologically responsible way.!

**Your gift of any amount makes a difference!**

**DONATE TODAY:**

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



# It's Not About the Rack

By: Jen Betz, Forest Technician

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As I write this, I am preparing for rifle big game season, deer specifically. I love “deer” season, as I call it. It’s one of my favorite times of the year to be in the woods. I have hunted for many years, since about age 12, and before that I would tag along with my dad when he hunted deer, as early as age 5. Back then we relied on the meat, and we would get 2-3 deer every season. Now I hunt for my friend who cannot hunt anymore, and myself. I am the 4<sup>th</sup> generation of hunters on our land. From when my great- grands moved up and bought the farm in 39’, they hunted. The tradition continued with my dad and his dad, and I continue to hunt with my stepdad, family and neighbors. We do “deer camp” the night before opening day, and it is a gathering of fellow hunters, family, and neighbors with good eats and drinks, laughter, smiles, camaraderie, stories of seasons past, and plans for the season upcoming.

The countdown to rifle, or “deer” season as we call it up at Otto Hill Farm, is one that I truly love. Preparation starts a few months before, shooting lanes, and checking stands that we have had for years. Some are nothing more than logs stacked, an old milk crate to sit on, or an old 5-gallon bucket, with some tattered netting. Others, like my grandfather’s stand, are a little more elaborate, constructed on a big flat rock, about 12’ high, a 4-sided structure that is about 4’ high and held together with generations of nails, screws and random logs and even zip ties, netting, and has two seats for companion hunting. It’s my favorite stand. It has great views in all directions, and more importantly, there is history and memories.

I have great memories from past years of my family and neighbors who hunted with us using the stand and harvesting deer and even bears. Some were great harvests, and ones that we recall every year at “deer camp”, when we tell stories about great hunts and the ones that got away. Like the one instance where my neighbor Charlie Z wanted a first bear in the worst way, saw one, shot at it, shot its back toe off, and it kept running.... He radioed to my stepdad, who was hunting nearby and had heard the shot. The bear came running by him and he finished it off, a joint effort. I remember Charlie

being over the moon, he had got a bear, and my stepdad was happy to have helped. I was on pickup duty that day and came up with the ATV and the wagon to get the bear and hear the story...the smiles on both of their faces...priceless. It was a team effort. Then there was the year my stepdad shot a deer late in the day on opening Saturday. He came out of the woods in the dark and needed my help. He had tracked it, and we needed to be creative getting it out, as it was not near a trail, it was in the area I call "deliverance land" inhospitable and full of boulders, deadfalls, and steeply sloped. I followed him up with my ATV, lights and rope, and we crafted a plan to get it down. Knowing the land, I had him drive down below where one of our trails looped through, with the headlights on pointed uphill, so I had something to aim for as it was **that** dark. I was on deer detail and had to get it down the hill. Fortunately, there was snow on the ground. I did a combo of sliding it over and around tree trunks and rocks, and at one point it took me out, and I rode it down the hill for a bit. It wasn't pretty, but was still going downhill, aiming for the lights, listening to the coyotes that were not far away, hoping they did not decide to visit. They did come near, we could see their eyes, but I was able to get it down to the ATV, and we gutted it and then down to the barn to be hung, safely. One year, when I was around 15, it dumped snow on opening day so all of us said the heck with it. It was a miserable, wet snow, and we all came in early, and headed to Charlie's. We were recapping stories from the first day, a bunch of us sitting around a fire, watching the snow fall, having a cocktail or two, when my Pop looks out the back window and sees a beautiful ten pointer standing in the snow 30 feet away in the woods...he could have shot it, admiring the deer, and vowing to get back out the next day. Or one year when it was warm, super warm, balmy – around 40, and Charlie was hunting up in my granddad's stand. The sun was beating down, and I was walking through thinking I was so quiet, but I really wasn't. He was snoozing, enjoying the sunshine and fresh air...he was a go out early at "dark thirty" and stay-out-all-day hunter. I am more of a walk-and-sit, more of a hike-and-stop here-and-there hunter, but I stopped and sat with him. We did not see anything that afternoon, but we sat in the sun and talked about

what deer had been moving and where he might hunt tomorrow. It makes me smile recalling that day. Good memories. When I am in our woods, I can look around and fondly remember hunts of years past.

It's not about the rack, it's about camaraderie, teamwork, and true sportsmanship. Harvesting a deer, gutting and cleaning it, and feeling a sense of accomplishment. Processing it, butchering it and packaging it up - also good memories there and camaraderie, as friends and family, neighbors helping. Any time spent in the woods is time well spent. Admiring a fellow hunter's sweet buck or commiserating over a beautiful slammer that just wasn't in range to shoot. The buck that got away, or the time when I decided to go do a loop in the woods with my stepdad and not bring my gun. Yeah, yeah, I know, silly right? I did it, and, of course, I saw a beautiful 10 way out in the "ding weeds" as I like to say.... Of course, my stepdad could not see it as this was before he had his cataract surgery. I remember saying about 5 million times, do you see it, now? He's moving! Look, look! He was the one that got away to live another day.

I have so many good recollections of stories, and hunts, and good feelings about hunting, and sportsmanship. So many years of experience hunting, and knowledge. As I prepare for deer camp this Friday, and write this, I think about our hunters in heaven, smiling as we carry on the tradition of deer hunting, of stories, of watching out for each other, helping each other. They are wishing us well and will be listening as we tell stories and plan our hunts. I am proud and excited to carry on the tradition here on my land and happy to teach new hunters our brand of hunting sportsmanship. No envy, safe hunting, and good sportsmanship and camaraderie.

Good luck to all those going out. Hope you hunt safe and shoot straight.





# White Out Work

By: Giovanna D'Angelo, Education Forester

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In the spirit of refraining from writing another article about fungi (which would be three in a row), I'm resigning instead to talk about my plans for winter. Having now surpassed my one-year mark of living full-time in the Catskills, it's safe to say that I'm living more seasonally than I ever have before. It's a little hard not to, what with working a career outdoors and committing to supplying my own firewood. I appreciate more intimately now than ever that certain tasks and activities have a place within our four-season cycle that just make sense, so here are my plans for this winter.

## Working the Land:

On my land, the big-ticket item for me is felling seven more Colorado Blue Spruces that are taking up valuable sunlight and space. A favored planted species, Colorado Blue Spruce likes it high and dry (hence the name). Our climate here is much too moist for them so they tend to face an array of diseases, a common one of which is *Rhizosphaera* needle cast (*Rhizosphaera kalkhoffii*) which is a common foliar disease of spruce trees growing outside of their native range. Two of them will be felled by the time you're reading this. Their tops, which still have that characteristic blue foliage, will find a second life as beloved Christmas trees this year. The rest will come down some winter day before maple sugaring season, to be used for sapwood. In addition to removing those trees, I am also planning on taking my chainsaw to the wood line and pushing it back a few feet. Sunlight is scarce on my property, but my hands are itching to plant some fruit trees. So, I've got to push back that canopy and get some light on the ground in order to be able to plant next spring and fall.

My other project on my land is prepping firewood. I have basically been non-stop bucking up and splitting firewood since July, trying to get enough for this winter (my first one with a wood stove or any heat source for that matter) and for next year's cold season too. I've had the benefit of Ryan Trapani in my ear giving sage

advice when needed, though I am a far cry from the well-oiled machine that he is, splitting all his wood by hand three years out and apparently only needing “four sticks a day to heat his place.” What can I say? Firewood is a way of life, and I’m certainly still in my infancy. Also, on the docket for this year is to get a heck of lot better with an axe in my hands. Now would be the time to give out a hearty thank you to the one and only Mike Porter for saving my butt from freezing a second year in a row by lending me that God-tier, savior of a machine called a wood splitter. And for his continuous generosity and evidence that it really does take a village sometimes. He inspires me to be a great villager and help where I can.

Lastly, a smaller and more creative project I’m taking on this season is weaving one or two fences on the property. Utilizing some musclewood (*Carpinus caroliniana*) from a dense thicket, I’ve created posts that got pounded into the ground before it froze. During CFA’s apple tree pruning season last year, I can’t tell you how many beautifully straight applewood suckers I tossed aside into brush piles. This year, I’m prepared to take home those generous vegetative suckers and weave them around those musclewood posts to make some lovely fences to compliment the landscape. If all goes well, maybe I’ll add more with every pruning season.

#### Tasting the Land:

Winter is where things slow down substantially with foraging wild edibles and basketry materials. I used to get dispirited by this, eagerly awaiting spring’s burst of new greens, flowers and fungi. This year, however, I welcome the slower foraging calendar with less edible goodies out for longer periods of time. I was so busy this summer and fall that I had to pass on quite a few wild harvests I was excited for – notably early black walnut harvest for nocino, golden rod for infusing honey, chicory root, autumn olive, the list goes on. As I keep telling myself... we’ll get ‘em next year. As for my winter foraging redemption arc, I’ve got my eye on birch as the star of the show. I’m planning on perfecting the brewing temp/

time combination for teas and simple syrups (for birch soda). My other project is to make birch twig extract to be used in baking and drinks much like vanilla extract would be used.

I can't even think about the flavors this season offers us without also thinking about the upcoming maple sugaring season. This year's, like most of the skills I'm attempting to learn, should see improvement from last year. The plan is to fully commit to four taps in four of my land's wooded sugar maples and to boil every single weekend. My fridge will be grateful to know that it gets to house actual food this year instead of just sap in various vessels from the land of misfit containers because I'll attempt to store sap in my concrete-floored garage this time around. What the sap is to be held in and how I'm going to get enough seasoned sapwood to actually boil every weekend are details I, admittedly, haven't worked out yet. I'd also like to tap birch again this year just for drinking, but technically, this is more indicative of early spring than of winter.

#### Identifying the Land:

Working an outdoor job means changing roles and responsibilities seasonally. Working in the field so much during the warm season, the topics I need/want to research seem to get backed up. So, now's a great time to dive into my backlog and answer all the curiosities that popped up on my consultations in the warm seasons.

Additionally, I am a person who loves and lives by lists. I currently keep an ongoing personal curriculum and a work curriculum to spur continual self-learning. My work curriculum this season is an ongoing study of mycology and fungi identification. When I am inside, you'll find me nosing through my identification books, participating in New York Mycological Society's Monday night online ID sessions, leafing through iNaturalist fungi pictures to train my eye, and reading some great fungi blogs (namely Aubrey Carter's Mushroom Monday) (now one must ask what is it with fungi and Mondays?). As for the field, a polypore hates to see me coming. Polypores are a large, diverse group of fungi defined by their pored



spore-bearing reproductive surfaces. Many species of this group are saprobic or parasitic, meaning that they grow on hosts that are already dead, or on declining hosts where they glean nutrients. These types of species tend to persist on their hosts into the winter, so this will be a great time for me to get frustrated trying to identify these shelf fungi rather than the fleshy mushrooms that had the pleasure of frustrating me during this past growing season.

Well, I guess I leave this here now that I've somewhat failed at not talking about fungi. I've got fence posts to pound in and polypores to scrutinize. What's on your winter docket? You know where to find me – [giovanna@catskillforest.org](mailto:giovanna@catskillforest.org)



# 2026 Events

2026 is fast approaching and the CFA team is gearing up for another year of hands on education. We've got a slew of new events being offered this year so keep your eyes on our emails and website for dates and times.

Here's just a taste of what we've got to offer this upcoming year:

**TBD**      *Apple Tree Pruning Demo*

**TBD**      *Backyard Maple Sugaring Demo*

**TBD**      *Winter Tree ID Walk*

**TBD**      *Wild Game Potluck Dinner*

**TBD**      *Forest Flowers Woods Walk*

**TBD**      *Herbaceous ID Walk*

**TBD**      *Intro to Foraging Workshop*

**TBD**      *Blueberry Cultivation 101*

**TBD**      *Biodiversity Member Walk*

**TBD**      *Native Plant Sale*

# Programs & Services

Learn more at [catskillforest.org/programs](http://catskillforest.org/programs)

<u>Program</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Time</u>
Consultations	<b>One-hour property visits by field staff to help you learn about what your property holds</b>	All Year
Apple Tree Pruning	<b>Pruning helps keep apple trees healthy and improves quality and quantity of yields</b>	Jan - March
Apple Tree Grafting	<b>A horticultural technique to help bring old, neglected trees back to fruition</b>	April - May
Forest Bird Program	<b>High-Nesting Bird Boxes for ducks, owls, etc. and/or Canopy Bird Feeders that protect against squirrels &amp; bears</b>	All Year
Forest Farming Program	<b>Use agroforestry to manage your property affordably &amp; sustainably by learning to cultivate non-timber forest products</b>	Spring - Fall
Invasive Species Management	<b>Care for trees against invasive insects, and care for forests against invasive plants</b>	May - Sept.
Portable Sawmill Program	<b>A state-of-the-art portable sawmill brought directly to your property to mill your logs to lumber, on the spot</b>	Spring - Fall
Tree Care: Cabling	<b>Preserving large-sized individual trees with structural defects</b>	Spring - Fall
Tree Care: Structural Pruning	<b>Improve tree structure by establishing a dominant leader</b>	Spring - Fall
Legacy Tree Program	<b>Prime placement for up to 2 trees on your property and education about proper planting and installation</b>	Spring - Fall
Wildlife Habitat Management	<b>Forestry practices to help improve your woodlot for wildlife</b>	All Year

# Business Mem



Bovina Montessori School  
Bovina Center, NY  
(917)741-0061  
david@bovinamontessori.com



Café Marguerite  
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Coldwell Banker Timberland Properties  
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(607)326-6292

Field & Stone  
Bovina Center, NY  
(607) 832-4488  
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 Frost Valley YMCA  
Claryville, NY  
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DFF Enterprises, LLC  
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Freshtown Supermarket  
Margaretville, NY  
(845)586-4384



Gardens by Trista, Inc.  
Gilboa, NY  
(607) 588-6762  
www.gardensbytrista.com  
Jeffrey Keiter Landscape Architect  
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Part 2 Events  
(347)371-3078  
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# ber Spotlight



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Steady Slope Fields and Forest

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Mt. Tremper Arts, LLC

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Upstate Property Maintenance & Excavation LLC

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Tomato Tomahto

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## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Become a member at [www.catskillforest.org/membership](http://www.catskillforest.org/membership) or send a check/cash with this application to:  
Catskill Forest Association, Inc. PO Box 336, Arkville, NY 12406.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PROPERTY ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL ACRES: \_\_\_\_\_ FORESTED ACRES: \_\_\_\_\_ POND [ ] STREAM [ ] RIVER [ ]

### CATEGORIES (PLEASE CIRCLE)

BASIC (\$75)	CONTRIBUTING (\$175)
Events free or discounted; CFA News Subscription; CFA Member Property Sign; Access to CFA Programs	SAME AS BASIC + 10% Discount on Services;
BUSINESS (\$200)	SUSTAINING (\$500)
SAME AS BASIC + 5% Discount on Services; CFA Website Listing; Email Referral Advertisements; Free Booth at Forest Festival	SAME AS BASIC + 15% Discount on Services;

### ADDITIONAL DONATIONS

GENERAL OPERATING FUND	\$
ENDOWMENT TRUST FUND	\$
SCHOLARSHIP FUND	\$

Total Amount: \$ \_\_\_\_\_