



Minnesota Woodlands

MFA: an organization of, by and for Minnesota's private woodland owners and friends.

www.MinnesotaForestry.org

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Carol Cartie

MFA Newsletter Vol. 16 No. 4 August/September 2014 The Minnesota Woodlands newsletter is published by the Minnesota Forestry Association.

MFA Board Meetings Cambridge DNR Office, 10 am – 3 pm •October 14, 2014
Conference Calls 8 – 9 am •August 19, 2014 •September 16, 2014 •November 18, 2014 •December 16, 2014

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Welcome back to Jodie Provost who has been on another assignment for DNR and is now back doing her very popular Creature Feature.

Creature Feature: Northern Long-eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*)

By Jodie Provost, DNR Private Land Habitat Coordinator

Why all the fuss? You may have heard mention of the northern long-eared bat in the news lately. Last October, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed to list it as an endangered species under the federal Endangered Species Act due to a dramatic decline in its population.

Decline or loss of the northern long-eared bat is a concern. All native species have essential niches or jobs they fill in our ecosystems. For example, bats eat up to half their weight in insects each night. Recent studies estimate that bats deliver \$6 billion in insect control services to agriculture, forest industries and the public each year!

Federal listing could potentially restrict summer forest management since removal of trees used as summer maternity roosts would be prohibited. Land development activities involving tree removal, such as development for transportation, utilities, mining, and parks, could also be restricted.

The recent population decline of northern long-eared bats is caused by an outbreak of white-nose syndrome, a fungal disease first observed in New York State in 2006 that has spread rapidly

Collaboration is Needed to Protect Bats and Have Responsible Forest Management

By Mark Jacobs, Condensed from a letter published in the Duluth News Tribune on June 25, 2014

There is growing anxiety regarding a particular forest-dwelling bat, the northern long-eared bat. White-nose syndrome, a fungal disease, has decimated the long-eared bat population in eastern states. As a result, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing to protect the bat under the Endangered Species Act. This means significant restrictions could be imposed here on logging and other forest management practices, especially in midsummer when forest bats are roosting in trees. Adding confusion is that there is no indication responsible forest management has caused negative effects to forest bats.

The primary areas of concern related forest management appear to be direct bat mortality from timber-harvest activity in summer and the loss of habitat due to clear cutting.

Continued on page 6



Mark Jacobs

Minnesota Forestry
Association

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MFA Board Actions

The MFA board meets every month. During January, April, July and October, the meeting is face-to-face at the Cambridge DNR Forestry office starting at 10 a.m. During all other months, the meeting is held via conference call. Any MFA member is welcome to sit in on the face-to-face meetings and listen in on the conference calls. See the list of board members and meeting dates elsewhere in this newsletter. Contact any board member for further information. For a copy of minutes from any recent meeting, contact Carol Cartie at Information@MinnesotaForestry.org or 218-326-6486.

Considered several requests for contributions. \$3,000 was donated to the Minnesota Forest Resource Council to help fund the new Harvest Guidelines Book. A copy of the book will be sent to each MFA member. Also \$450 was donated to the National Association of State Foresters which will be holding its annual convention in Minneapolis in September.

Discussed the newsletter editor position after president John O'Reilly announced he would no longer have time to perform the job. While O'Reilly served for six years without pay, the board is prepared to pay the new editor.

Discussed the proposed Boots on the Ground project with committee chair Dave Roerick. Roerick led a discussion on the subject at our annual meeting and will be presenting a plan to the board in August. Under the plan, MFA will arrange two-hour visits by a professional forester to members' property.

Agreed to hold our Annual Meeting and Spring Field Day in Grand Rapids on May 15 & 16, 2015 in conjunction with Master Naturalists and others. This will be a major event.

The SFIA Today

Since its 2001 enactment into law, enrollment in the Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA) has grown from a humble 132 enrollees in 2002 to more than 2,500 woodland owners today covering more than 770,000 acres. That acreage was over 917,000 acres at the end of 2010, but when the annual incentive payment was reduced from \$15.67 per acre to \$7.00 per acre by legislative action, some of the larger ownerships were allowed to withdraw from the program without penalty.

For the past few years, almost every legislative session has seen some activity dealing with the SFIA culminating in an evaluation of the program by the Office of the Legislative Auditor last year. The Auditor's report was quite critical of the program, calling for its repeal unless a number of issues were addressed.

Late last year, Senator Saxhaug and Representative Dill requested the Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR), the Dept. of Revenue (DOR) and the MN Forest Resource Council (MFRC) convene a stakeholders group to address the Auditor's report and come forth with recommendations to reform the SFIA. Under the MFRC leadership, that group has been formed. The group is composed of representatives of the following organizations:

a large landowner, forest industry, a county assessor, conservation, sportsmen, and recreational interests, the U of M Forest Resources Dept., the DNR, DOR, and MFA.

The group has not met since its initial meeting last spring, but expects to be rolling soon. SFIA landowners take note, particularly if your management plan is older than 10 years. One issue that is almost a sure bet to be part of the SFIA's reform package is a requirement to register your management plan with the DNR if you haven't already. The registration of plans is not currently stipulated in the SFIA law, but is stipulated in law for woodlands under the 2c Managed Forest property classification. The law stipulates that the DNR shall provide a framework for plan content and updating, but is silent on how old the plan can be since it was written or updated. Current DNR policy is that the plan must have been written or updated no more than 10 years ago to be viable for the program. So, if your plan was written more than 10 years, you would be encouraged to get it updated now.



Bruce ZumBahlen

Minnesota Women's Woodland Network

The Minnesota Women's Woodland Network toured the Hinckley Fire Museum recently. The museum recounts the four-hour fire storm of September 1, 1894 in which over 400 people died. The flames reached over 4,000 feet into the sky and could be seen in Mason City, Iowa.

For more information on the Women's Woodland Network, send an email to Barb Spears at Barb@twfllc.com or Jan Bernu at TwoxFour@2z.net.



Participants pictured here in the front row, l-r, are Peggy Meseroll, Esko; Gail Bong, Cloquet; Suzanne Smith, Minneapolis; Arlene Roehl, Minnetonka; Julie Salmon, Moose Lake; and Sandra O'Reilly, Hinckley. In the back row, l-r, are Maddy Papermaster, Marine on St. Croix; Mary McDermid, Excelsior; Jan Bernu, Cloquet; Barb Spears, St. Paul; Linda Gormanson, Little Falls (DNR Firewise Program) and Marge Johnson, Apple Valley.



Relief House Photo – caption: Relief houses were built for fire survivors. This reproduction was built by museum volunteers with donated materials.

Forester Phone Line Update

A free service for MFA members only.

Retired DNR forester Dean Makey manages our Forester Phone Line. Here are Dean's summaries of three recent calls:

One member had questions about selling overgrown Christmas trees, mainly white spruce and Scotch pine. I provided him information about a possible Scotch pine market, Norbord. We also discussed the merchantability of his trees. He was advised that most of his trees were too small for pulpwood, and that chipping or grinding them for biomass might be the most probable market. I provided him with a follow up letter and copies of timber sale contract forms. And finally, I gave him contact information with an inspecting forester for the American Tree Farm System.

Another member had questions about what plants would be beneficial to bees and wildlife. I provided him with some trail and wildlife opening seeding recommendations for deer and grouse forage that will be good for pollinators, too. I referred him to a Natural Resources Conservation Service (NCRS) web site that has information about honey bees and other pollinators. It provides information on establishing many species of plants in different situations.

A third member is considering selling timber from his pine plantation and wanted to know who the procurement forester is for Potlatch in his area. I provided the name and contact information for Brian Bignall of Potlatch.

Do you have an idea or a question? Call MFA's Forester Phone Line at 218-326-6486.



Forester Dean Makey

Member Profile: Tim & Sharon Gossman

The southeastern Minnesota farm Tim and Sharon Gossman bought 30 years ago has brought endless joy, and work, to the family. They have named their place Thorn Apple Farm which is reminiscent of what local farmers used to call the Hawthorne growing in the area.



Tim and Sharon Gossman

The farm, located near Rochester and six miles from Chatfield, is 200 acres. Originally it was half wooded and half crop and pasture land. Now, 30 acres of the pasture land have been converted to forest.

Managing and caring for the land has been a family affair. When Tim and Sharon bought the farm, their daughters, Sophia and Sarah, were in elementary school. All pitched in to plant and prune Christmas trees and perform other woodland tasks. Today, after graduating from college, the daughters still come back to help.

One of Tim and Sharon's achievements is a great example of neighbors working with neighbors, the Lost Creek Hiking Trail. Four neighbors got together and discussed the possibility of a trail going across their land. There are lots of bike trails in the area but few hiking trails. The neighbors settled on a hiking trail.

Today, the Lost Creek Hiking Trail extends six and a half miles from Chatfield to Tim and Sharon's farm. The route crosses the land of six private owners who have all signed easements for the trail. Construction of the trail was done by volunteers using donated materials, including materials for a bridge crossing the creek.

The neighbors did obtain one grant to erect signs along the trail. Now 31 signs point out good forestry practices along the trail. Tim says, "The signs make it possible for people to take an educational field trip anytime they want."

The Bluff Country Hiking Club, which manages the trail and

maintains liability insurance covering the landowners, has a nice web site at www.BluffCountryHikingClub.org

Another of Tim and Sharon's major projects on the farm is reforesting the creek valley which had been overtaken by reed canary grass. Two major strategies were adopted, one for areas of the valley that could be worked with a tractor and the other for areas inaccessible to tractors.

In the tractor accessible areas the strategy, carried out over several years, was to control the reed canary grass through a combination of prescribed burning, herbicide application, mowing and tillage. Once the reed canary grass was mostly eliminated, a mixture of bottom land hardwoods and shrubs was planted by direct seeding. The mixture included Kentucky coffeetree (featured in Meet a Tree in this issue), black walnut, burr oak, swamp white oak, plus plum, black cherry, alternate leaf dogwood, highbush cranberry and grey twig dogwood. After the trees and shrubs sprouted, the challenge was to protect them from deer, which was done with annual bud capping and installing tree shelters.

A different strategy was followed for those creek valley areas which are not accessible to a tractor. This strategy was based on the fact that reed canary grass requires full sun to thrive and will die off in shade. Here fence post-sized poles of willow and dogwood were planted. Once these trees shaded out the reed canary grass, other bottomland tree and shrub species can be planted for additional diversity.

Tim Gossman created a power point presentation on both the Lost Creek Hiking Trail and the restoration of the creek bottom land. This presentation, with over 80 photos, can be reviewed on our web site at Tim and Sharon's Member Profile at www.MinnesotaForestry.org.

Oh, by the way, in recognition of the work they have done with the hiking club, reforestation of pasture and of the creek bottomland, Tim and Sharon were named 2014 Tree Farmers of the Year for the Southeast Region.



Sarah Gossman

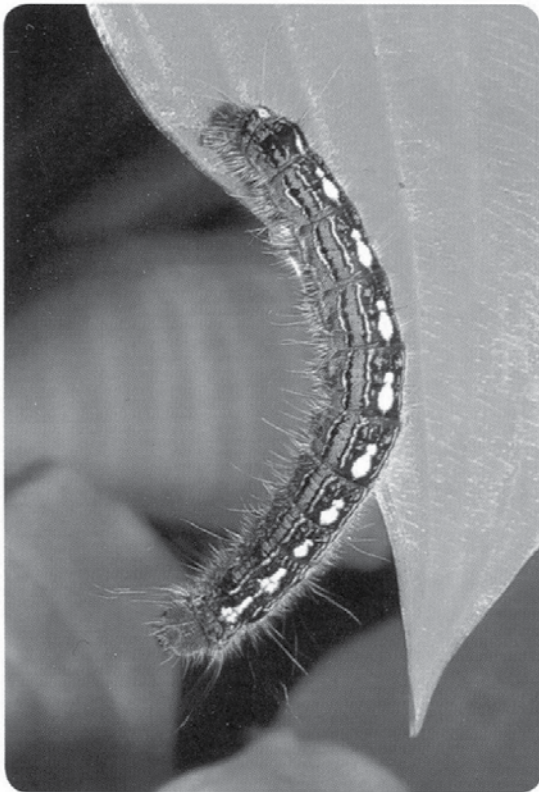


The Gossman's Miniature Pinscher, Tony in cut reed canary grass.



Tim Gossman with a washed out one-year-old cottonwood.

WE Can Help With Research on These Two Key Insects



Forest tent caterpillar



Eastern bumble bee



In a day or so, you will receive a mailing from the U of M's Insect Ecology Lab. You'll be asked to fill out and mail an enclosed postcard when you see either of the insects shown here. With the help of citizens like us, the researchers will be able to estimate the numbers and distribution of these important insects.

Watch for the mailing and thank you for your help in this important research!

Northern Long-eared Bat continued from page 1

from eastern North America westward. The disease is expected to spread throughout the range of northern long-eared bats which includes much of eastern and north-central United States, and most of Canada. In Minnesota, long-eared bats occur in both summer and winter, have been found in many caves and mines, although typically in low numbers, and are currently designated as a species of special concern.

Biology, the northern long-eared bat is about three to four inches long with a nine to ten inch wing span. Its fur is medium to dark brown on the back and tawny to pale-brown on the underside. As its name suggests, it is distinguished by its long ears, relative to other bats in its genus, *Myotis*, which means mouse-eared. Winter is typically spent in cracks and crevices of caves and mines, called hibernacula, which have constant temperatures, high humidity and no air currents. In summer, the bats roost under bark and in crevices and cavities of live or dead trees. Males and non-reproductive females may also roost in cooler places, like caves and mines.

Northern long-eared bats breed in late summer or early fall and enter winter hibernaculum in late August or September. Females store sperm during hibernation until spring, when they emerge from their hibernacula in May, ovulate, and the stored sperm fertilizes an egg. Pregnant females then migrate to summer areas where they roost in small colonies of up to 60 bats and give birth to a single pup in June and July. Adults can live 19 years or more. The bats feed on moths, flies, leafhoppers, caddis-flies, and beetles throughout the night by using echolocation.

What can we do to help? Sustaining a healthy, northern long-eared bat population in Minnesota is critical. Strategies to prevent the spread of white-nose syndrome and maintain diverse, native forests with the structure and ages class of trees needed by bats are particularly important.

In your woodland, where possible and not a safety hazard, leave large, older trees that are dead or dying and that provide loose bark, crevices and cavities for roosting and that may house maternity colonies. Many other crevice and cavity-dependent creatures will also benefit. Properly built and placed, bat houses can provide additional roost sites. (See MFA's web site, www.MinnesotaForestry.org for bat house plans.)

Other mortality factors that may affect northern long-eared bat populations include people entering caves where they might affect bat flight and movement and change air flow and cave microclimate; disturbance by humans during hibernation and when females are birthing and rearing young; loss of summer roosting and foraging habitat due to development, mining, and wind turbines. Steps to address these other mortality factors include protection of important hibernacula, plus the UFWS and partners are supporting research to determine why bats are susceptible to wind turbines, how to operate turbines to minimize mortality and where important bat migration routes are located.

To learn more about northern long-eared bat's use of summer habitat, and keep any limitation on tree removal narrowly targeted and effective, pilot studies were implemented in the Superior National Forest and Camp Ripley Training Center this summer. If funding is available, what is learned about trapping, identification, radio-tagging, tracking, acoustic monitoring, and tree and stand data collection will be applied in more extensive studies in coming years.

For more information about northern long-eared bats in Minnesota, please contact Rich Baker, Minnesota DNR's Endangered Species Coordinator (651-

Minnesota has more than 17 million acres of forestland, and if timber-harvest rates were at the maximum sustainable (about 5.5 million cords per year), about 1.5 percent of the forest would be affected

annually. Due to our vast wetlands, less than half of that harvest would occur in summer. The odds of bat mortality from timber harvesting are very small. But that small fraction amounts to nearly one million cords and many millions of dollars in economic impact each year. The diverse forests created by responsible forestry practices have resulted in many millions of acres of bat habitat in our northern forests.



Photo by Al Hicks, NY Department of Environmental Conservation

I'd suggest that the Fish and Wildlife Service take a collaborative approach in our habitat-rich region by empowering land managers to continue maintaining forest bat habitat via responsible forest-management practices. I believe land managers, loggers and conservationists could rally around the charge of keeping our local bat populations thriving through forest-habitat management. This would allow the limited resources of the Fish and Wildlife Service to focus on stopping the real threat to the northern long-eared bat, white-nose syndrome.

It seems like we should have learned lessons from the ill-fated conflicts regarding the spotted owl in the West. Will our experience be "same story/different place" or can we join together to protect the northern long-eared bat and our forest-based economy?

Mark Jacobs of McGregor is the Aitkin County land commissioner responsible for managing 223,000 acres of public lands certified as "well-managed" since 1997 by the U.S. Forest Stewardship Council.



Meet a Tree **Kentucky Coffeetree**



By Dennis J. Thompson

Kentucky coffeetree is a medium to large deciduous tree reaching heights of 60 to 100 feet. Its natural range extends from New York and Pennsylvania west to Minnesota, southward to Oklahoma, and east to Kentucky and Tennessee. In southeast Minnesota, it can be found growing with oaks, hickories, black walnut, and basswood in moist soils. It prefers full sunlight but will also tolerate drought and occasional flooding. Kentucky coffeetree is a member of the legume family but it will not “fix” nitrogen in the soil like other legumes.

Kentucky coffeetree is not common and generally only found in small clusters. It makes up a rare component of any woodland. In nature, seed germination is difficult due to a hard outer shell. Squirrels do not cache them so seed dispersal from parent trees is rare except along streams where the seeds may be transported by

water. Many trees are planted for ornamental purposes. Kentucky coffeetree lumber is available but not common; however, early pioneer settlers did use the coarse-grained, brown wood for cabinets.

Similar to other legumes, seeds are formed in pods that ripen in September or October. Pods will persist unopened on the tree until late winter or early spring. Each pod will contain four to eight almost black seeds separated by a mass of sticky brown pulp. The seeds have been compared to small jawbreakers, only 2000 times harder. Seeds generally remain in the pod until it falls and is broken up by decay, a process which may take two years or longer. In pioneer times, seeds were often traded and children used them in games.

The leaves, seeds, and pulp from the Kentucky coffeetree are poisonous and toxic to livestock, humans, and pets. Sprouts eaten in the spring have produced toxicosis. Leaves, young sprouts, and seeds with gelatinous matter around them contain the toxin. Cattle have reportedly died after drinking from pools of water contaminated by fallen leaves and seeds from the tree. There is at least one anecdotal report of a human poisoning by Kentucky coffeetree. Due to the tree's toxic plant parts, there is little wildlife usage as a source of food and animals should not be allowed to graze woodland areas where Kentucky coffeetree grows.

Good to Know – Kentucky coffeetree is virtually pest free and would be a great alternative to ash when the emerald ash borer arrives in your woodland!

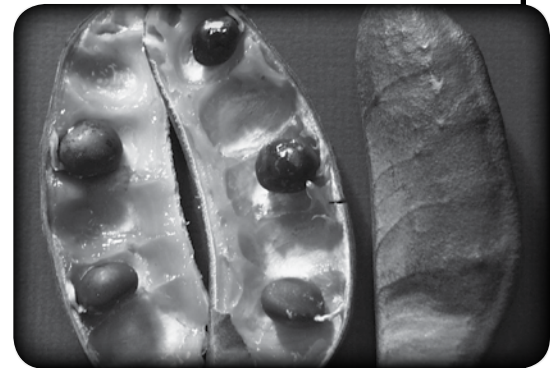


Photo by Paul Wray, Iowa State University



Photo by Jason Sharman, Vitalitree

Membership Application

For New and Renewing Members

Name _____

Name _____
(second person for Family membership)

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Please make any address changes above

Membership Categories

Renewing members, your membership will be extended by 12 or 36 months as you choose.

Category	One Year	3 years
Individual	<input type="checkbox"/> \$40	<input type="checkbox"/> \$120
Family	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$225
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$500 - \$1,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1,500 - \$3,000
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> One-time payment of \$1,000**	
Perpetual*	<input type="checkbox"/> One-time payment of \$3,000**	

*Perpetual Membership is for any estate, corporation, limited liability company, limited liability partnership or similarly structured entity. A Perpetual Membership is entitled to one vote. Call MFA for more information.

**80% of dues from Life and Perpetual Memberships go into MFA's Endowment Fund.

Mail this application with your check to:

Minnesota Forestry Association
P.O. Box 496, Grand Rapids MN 55744

1-2014

Upcoming Events

Find more events, and more information on these events, at the MFA website, www.MinnesotaForestry.org or by calling MFA at 218-326-6486.

August

Tuesday, August 19, 2014 (Online)

- 9:00-10:00a.m. - What's new in green building standards (Online) with Kathryn Fernholz, Dovetail Partners.
- For more information and to register for this webinar, go to <http://z.umn.edu/2014webinars>.

**Thursday, August 21 -
Sunday, August 24, 2014**

- **Wisconsin Coverts Project** (Woodruff, WI)
- For more information, Google Wisconsin Coverts Project

September

Saturday, September 6, 2014

- (Houston MN)
- 9:00a.m.-3:00p.m. - Harvesting, milling and storing wood for studio furniture and art.
- For more information see the Calendar of Upcoming Events at www.MinnesotaForestry.org or call 507.454.2723 ext. 0

Tuesday, September 16, 2014 (Online)

- Noon-1p.m. Resilience and the Minnesota northwoods - Adaptive silviculture for climate change
- For more information and to register for this webinar, go to <http://z.umn.edu/2014webinars>.

Thursday, September 18, 2014

- (Grand Rapids)
- 5:30 - 8:00p.m. Balsam Bough Workshop for Harvesters and Buyers.
- For more information and to RSVP call 218-327-7486.

May 2015

Save the Date!

Friday & Saturday, May 15 & 16, 2015
(Grand Rapids MN)

- MFA's Annual Meeting and Spring Field Day will be held at the Sawmill Inn in Grand Rapids in conjunction with the U of M's Minnesota Family Woodlands Conference.

For MFA members, the two best online sources of woodland information are the MFA website, www.MinnesotaForestry.org and www.MyMinnesotaWoods.UMN.edu.

MyMinnesotaWoods.org
Your source for woodland stewardship advice



Thinking of harvesting timber from your land?

Call Before You Cut

You will be sent a packet of information with no cost or obligation to you.

218-326-6486

MFA's *Forester Phone Line*

A free service for MFA members only!
Call for an appointment with the forester:
218-326-6486