



Minnesota Woodlands

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

www.MinnesotaForestry.org

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MFA Newsletter
Vol. 14 No. 2
April/May 2012
The Minnesota Woodlands Newsletter is published by the Minnesota Forestry Association.

MFA Board Meetings
Cambridge DNR Office, 10 am – 3 pm
• April 17, 2012
• July 17, 2012
• October 19, 2012
Conference Calls
8 – 9 am
• May 15
• June 19
• August 21
• September 18
• November 20
• December 18

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Register NOW for Spring Field Days!

There is a fabulous door prize waiting for one lucky person who registers for Spring Field Days before May 1st. Fill out and send in the enclosed flyer and *YOU COULD BE THAT LUCKY PERSON!*

Friday's bus tour will leave from the Sawmill Inn where the banquet will be held in the evening. Make your room reservation by calling the Sawmill at 800-667-7508. Saturday's events will be held at Grand Rapids' Forest History Center, which is less than two miles from the Sawmill Inn.

Hope to see you in Grand Rapids in May!



Thinking of harvesting timber on your land?
Call Before You Cut
A free service for members of the Minnesota Forestry Association
218-326-6486

The Typo King Strikes Again!

Thanks to the Typo King, the area code was wrong on the Call Before You Cut card attached to the last newsletter.

This number is correct! We apologize to those members who tried dialing the number and reached a fax machine. If you try again, a real person, Carol Cartie, will answer!

At the Legislature ...

Bruce ZumBahlen, chair, MFA's Government Affairs Committee

Compared to last year's legislative sessions, little attention has been directed to The Sustainable Forest Incentive Act (SFIA) this session. However, there is a proposal to have MN's Forest Resources Council study and report to the legislature on the status of private forest land management and the policy of the state to promote healthy and robust forests. The report would be due by January 15, 2013. To my knowledge, it has not been introduced at the time of this writing.

No doubt, this study would take a hard look at the SFIA and the 2c Managed Forest property classification as well as other issues. According to the MN Dept. of Revenue, 2,527 landowners



Bruce ZumBahlen

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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 a 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.

How do we compare to woodland owners who are not members of MFA?

A few months ago, over 250 MFA members filled out and returned the Survey that was included with our Election Ballot. At the Duluth Woodland Owners Conference, we got 150 non-members to answer the same questions. Here is how we compare:

Which ONE of the five descriptions fits you best?	MFA Members said "YES"	Non-members said "YES"
Interested but do not own woodland.	10%	11%
Own woodland PRIMARILY for its beauty and recreational value, which could include hunting. Plan to do little or no harvesting or active management of the woods.	15%	30%
Own woodland BOTH for its beauty and recreational value and as a financial asset. Hope it increases in value over time. Also hope to earn some income from harvesting trees, etc.	70%	55%
See woods PRIMARILY as a financial asset. Hope it increases in value over time. Also hope to earn some income from harvesting trees, etc.	4%	2%
Do own woodland but not very active in managing or using it.	4%	2%

These results indicate MFA members are more likely to actively manage their woodland, to include some harvesting.

With regard to age and work status, on average MFA members are older and more likely to be retired.

	MFA Members	Non-members	MFA Members	Non-members
Under 35	4%	10%	Still Working	25%
35-50	9%	20%	Semi-Retired	71%
50-65	29%	52%	Fully Retired	3%
Over 65	62%	18%		20%

As incentive to take the 60-Second Survey, we offered a drawing for a Stihl chainsaw.



Left: Our thanks to Jodie Provost, DNR wildlife specialist, who did the drawing.



Right: Terry Anderson, Cloquet, won the chainsaw. He said, "Now my wife Vicki will expect me to go out and use it!"



Plus, Gander Mountain GSX Titanium Pliers were won by: Jerry Carlson, Holyoke (left) and Mike Quale, Aitkin (right).

Member Profile: Roger Howard, Aitkin, MN

Says a professional forester, "Roger Howard is the best private woodland manager I know. He is constantly working on his woods and the results are outstanding!"

Roger and his wife Linda live on their land in Aitkin County. The main place has 560 acres, 160 acres of which is crop land and pasture, leaving 400 acres of woods and wetland. In addition, the Howards have 120 wooded acres nearby and Roger and 15 partners own 640 acres of hunting land, also in Aitkin County.

Roger knows his woods. He graduated from the U of M with a degree in Forestry and spent 33 years of his working career as the land commissioner in Aitkin County. This is an appointed position responsible for managing the county's Land Department. Roger said, "The county owns 225,000 acres of land which amounts to 19% of the land in the county. Most of the land is wooded and was acquired through tax forfeiture in the 1930s and 40s. Many of the counties in the northern part of the state acquired land in this manner. Some of them sold it off while others, like Aitkin, have kept it and managed it. The Land Department does everything for county land that the DNR does for state land except we don't enforce hunting regulations."

The Howard's home land has lots of oak and ash, some aspen, a few balsam but very few other conifers.

Now, in retirement, Roger's work day starts about 7:30 a.m. as he heads outdoors. "I usually work until about 9:30, come in for breakfast and then go back out until dark. Linda seems happy that I'm out of her way for most of the day."

Roger works steadily at timber stand improvement by removing lower quality trees. "Some years I take out 100 cords and some years it's only 50 cords. I'm a fair-weather logger because I don't work outdoors when it is really cold or when the snow is too deep. Days like those are spent working in the wood shop."

Roger hauls the logs he cuts to one of several small landings where he sorts and stacks the wood. Some is saved to be sawn by a contractor whom Roger brings in every couple of years. When he gets enough pulp wood stacked up, he calls a trucker who has a contract with Sappi in Cloquet. The trucker gets a fee for hauling and a percentage of the payment with Roger getting the rest. Whatever wood Roger can't sell to the mill, he cuts for firewood. He uses 16 cords a year in his Heatmaster furnace, which is enough to heat the house and the garage-woodshop, and sells the rest.

The Howards have two daughters and six grandchildren. All of their land is in a trust to avoid probate, with Roger as the trustee. All of the forest land is enrolled in the SFIA. "That payment last year was pretty nice," Roger said. (In 2010 SFIA enrollees received over \$15 per acre. Last year, the payment was down to \$7 but still nice.) We are very fortunate the SFIA program has survived in light of all the cuts made by the legislature in recent years."



Continued on page 6



Top: Roger with logs in one of his mini-landings.

Middle: Linda Howard with one of Roger's finished burls.

Bottom: All of Roger's logging is done with a chainsaw, a 1967 Ford 4000 tractor and a Farmi 501 winch. "When I bought the Farmi 20 years ago they had two sizes. I bought the larger size and am glad I did because it can handle just about anything in my woods."

Roger seems to like trying new ideas in his woodland. Right now, he is experimenting with spalting, which is any form of wood coloration caused by fungi. The unique coloration and patterns of spalted wood are sought after by woodworkers. To promote spalting,

**Minnesota
Family Woodlands:
A Landowner Conference**
March 9 and 10, 2012

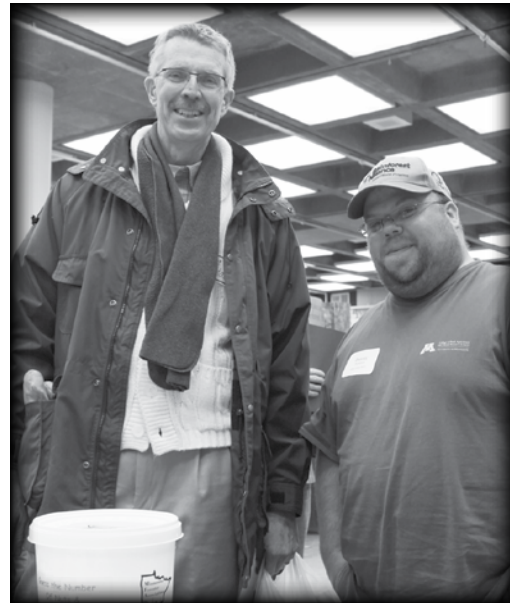
With over 65 presentations and a huge exhibit hall, the 2012 Minnesota Family Woodlands Conference picked up where the 2001 and 2006 Million Acre conferences left off. Over 500 people attended the event, held in Duluth's Convention Center on March 9 & 10, 2012.



Thanks to Gander Mountain, Hermantown, for the bags plus three Gander Mountain GSX Titanium Pliers that were given away.



Right: Kelly Smith, Carlton, MN



Left: Eric Hofsted, Cloquet, past MFA treasurer, with current treasurer, Dennis Thompson, Aitkin.

Below: Gary Michael family.



Top: Jim Marshall and Dave Roerick, both of Grand Rapids, MN

Above: Steve Ludwig, Lake George, MN and John O'Reilly, Hinckley, MN

Below left: John Zasada, Grand Rapids, MN



Left: Priscilla Harvala, Osage, MN

Below left: Mimi Barzen and Stephanie Kessler



Nut Guessing Contest

Our jar full of nuts contained black walnuts, butternuts and buckeyes. Dennis Thompson, Aitkin, who gathered the nuts, purposely did not count them in advance he didn't want to be bribed! Here, Lyle Keller, Peterson, worked on his guess. It turned out there were 310 nuts in the jar. The closest guess was 314 made by Richard Foss, Minneapolis, who wins a Gander Mountain GSX Titanium Pliers.

Left: Lyle Keller, Peterson, MN

Member profile continued from page 3

Roger has some 18" sugar maple logs set up in a shaded area out in the woods. He also has individual logs stored inside plastic bags in his woodshop. He's trying various types of moisture inside the bags to promote fungus growth including plain water, Diet Coke and beer!

Roger grows and manages balsam fir for Christmas trees which he gives to friends and relatives. And relatives they have plenty Roger and Linda each have about 70 cousins, with most living in the area!

In the spring, Roger taps one maple tree for each grandchild. They have a contest to see which tree produces the most

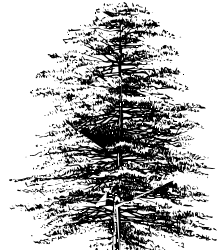
sap. From the sap, Roger makes a couple quarts of syrup.

"Have you ever tried producing Shiitake

mushrooms?", Roger was asked. "You bet!", Roger said. He has logs inoculated with Shiitake mushrooms set out in three locations in his woods, experimenting to see which location is best. While many people like ironwood for mushrooms, Roger has found that red oak works better for him. By soaking a log in water for just the right amount of time, he found he can force the mushrooms to flush. Roger has an aluminum tag with a number attached to each log so he knows which were soaked and when.

Whenever Roger cuts a tree with a burl, he saves the portion of the trunk with the burl. He has some recently cut ones stored out in the woods. Others have been sawn into slabs and are drying in a barn. "I'm not sure what I'll do with all these burls but I might come up with something someday," Roger says.

Oh, and to fill any spare time, Roger has 30 head of beef cattle. "I used to have 60 head but that was too much work."



Meet a Tree Black Cherry

Black cherry, also known as wild black cherry, rum cherry, and mountain black cherry, is the largest of the native cherries and the only one of commercial value. It is typically found throughout the eastern United States; however, its growing range does extend into southeast Minnesota. Large, high-quality trees suited for furniture wood or veneer are found in large numbers in a more restricted commercial range in parts of Pennsylvania, New York, and West Virginia. In Minnesota, black cherry is often a small, poorly formed tree of relatively low commercial value. It is however, a very important tree for wildlife.

Black cherry grows well on a wide variety of soils and can tolerate a range of moisture regimes from well-drained sites to somewhat poorly drained sites. It can also tolerate a range of altitudes. In Canada, it grows near sea level whereas in the Appalachians, it can be found at elevations up to 5,000 feet.

Black cherry flowers are white and solitary and rely on insects for pollination. Seed production can begin on trees as young as 10 years old and may continue until the tree is as old as 180 years. Good seed crops occur every one to five years; however, some individual trees may never produce significant quantities of seed even under ideal growing conditions.

A common fungus easily spotted on all cherries including black cherry is black knot. This native disease causes long black swellings several times the diameter of the normal stem. Small twigs may be killed within a year after infection. Large cankerous swellings, a foot or more in length, may occur on the trunks of larger trees. If such lesions are scattered along the main stem of the tree, it will be worthless for lumber.

The fruit from black cherry is an important food source for many species of wildlife including birds, squirrels, deer, turkeys, mice, and moles. The bark has medicinal properties. In the southern Appalachians, bark is stripped from young black cherries for use in cough medicines, tonics, and sedatives. The fruit is used for making jelly and wine. Appalachian pioneers sometimes flavored their rum or brandy with the fruit to make a drink called cherry bounce. To this, the species owes one of its names - rum cherry.

Did you know? The leaves, twigs, and bark of black cherry contain a bound form of cyanide. When the foliage is wilting, cyanide is released and domestic livestock that eat wilted foliage may get sick or even die. Deer can eat the foliage without harm.



Photos: Paul Wray, Iowa State University



Photo: Ted Dick

A shorebird that lives in the woods, the woodcock, sometimes called the timberdoodle, is one of the oddest birds you'll have visiting your property and also one of the most interesting. Once you learn a bit about their quirky traits, you may want to manage some of your brushy shrub/young forest habitat to invite these magical birds back to your place every spring.

In addition to the fact that it is a misplaced shorebird, the woodcock also has an upside down brain and eyes set so far back on the side of its head that it has binocular vision to the rear! Its ears are found between the eyes and the bill. It also has a very long bill with a flexibility that allows opening just the tip while the rest remains closed. Most of these adaptations are thought to have evolved for probing for earthworms in moist soil.

But with all these traits that make them so unique, the best reason to manage your land with some young forest is to be able to witness the remarkable woodcock sky dance. In springtime, the territorial males stake out a space in a relatively open area near shrubs and brush to perform their dance in the hope of attracting females. If you are reading this before the end of May, there is still time to check out this wonderful natural spectacle. Aldo Leopold described the dance in *A Sand County Almanac*:

"Knowing the place and the hour, you seat yourself under a bush to the east of the dance floor and wait, watching against the sunset for the woodcock's arrival. He flies in low from some neighboring thicket, alights on the bare moss, and at once begins the overture:

Legislature continued from page 1

are currently enrolled in the SFIA covering 775,444 acres. Another 182,569 acres are classified under the 2c Managed Forest classification in 64 counties.

Management of the 2.5 million acres of school trust lands by the MN Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR) has been the most visible issue that could affect forestry this legislative session. A number of bills have been introduced with the intent to improve net revenue from their management in support of

Creature Feature



By: Ted Dick, Grouse Coordinator, Minnesota DNR

American Woodcock, *Scolopax minor*

Get a springtime "tweet" from the original twitterer.

a series of queer, throaty peents spaced about two seconds apart, and sounding much like the summer call of the nighthawk.

Suddenly the peenting ceases and the bird flutters skyward in a series of wide spirals, emitting a musical twitter. Up and up he goes, the spirals steeper and smaller, the twittering louder and louder, until the performer is only a speck in the sky. Then, without warning, he tumbles like a crippled plane, giving voice in a soft liquid warble that a March bluebird might envy. At a few feet from the ground, he levels off and returns to his peenting ground, usually to the exact spot where the performance began, and there he resumes his peenting."

To find a woodcock on your property, you should look in a place that has all the habitat components; they like young forest and they also like alder with open ground layer (broad leaves instead of grass are good for probing). Take a kid out on a warm spring evening at sundown and listen near an opening in the brushy young forest for the peents. There are many places you can learn more about these fascinating birds. One good source for a recording of the peenting call is at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology website:

http://www.allaboutbirds.org/guide/American_Woodcock/sounds/ac.

There are other videos on Youtube where you can see the stocky little strutters in action but if you maintain some young forest, with shrubs and openings, you'll be able to see them up close for yourself.

public education. The trust lands comprise about half of MN's State Forests.

One bill passed by the House of Representatives with bipartisan support would place management of the trust lands under a new five-member Permanent School Fund Board appointed by the Governor. The Board would have the authority to hire a director and negotiate management of the lands with the DNR or other entities. It remains to be seen if this law would be enacted.

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.

Thursday, April 19, 2012

- Noon – 1pm. Phenology: Tracking Minnesota's Ever-changing Forests (Webinar). Phenology is all about noticing, and keeping track of, the changes in your woods. In this webinar we'll discuss the importance and value of good phenology data to not only sound woodland care and management, but also research. The instructor will be Rebecca Montgomery, Associate Professor in the University of Minnesota Department of Forest Resources. To register for this and other webinars, go to <http://z.umn.edu/2012webinarreg>.

Tuesday, April 24, 2012

- 6-9pm. Small Woodland Management (Rochester). For the person who has a large wooded yard or a woodland of less than 20 acres. The class will focus on planning and goal setting, identifying what you have, writing a plan, keeping your woodland healthy, planting trees, attracting wildlife and more. We'll connect you to many resources to help you learn more and reach your goals. For more information and to register, call 888-241-4536 or 507-280-2869.

Thursday, April 27 – Sunday, April 29

- 3rd Annual Phenology Gathering (U of M Cloquet Forestry Center). Do you like keeping track of when the first butterflies arrive, when birds appear at your feeders, when trees leaf out or change color or do you just enjoy observing nature? Join us for a weekend full of fun events to learn, share, and enjoy spring in the piney woods of the Cloquet Forestry Center. Enthusiasts, casual observers, professionals, teachers, and researchers all have something to gain. For more details, and to register, go to <http://z.umn.edu/MNphenology>.

Saturday, May 5, 2012

- Recreational Trail Design (Thielman). Learn to design trails for hiking, horseback riding, bicycling, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, or ATVs. Includes route selection, construction standards, clearing trees and rocks, and crossing obstacles—steep hills, wetlands, rock slides, creeks, fences, and more. Class will begin inside and then head to a Zumbro Bottoms, MN DNR land, to look at trails. Instructor: Mel Baughman, Professor Emeritus, U of M Extension Forestry. Pre-registration is required 24 hours in advance. To register call 1-888-241-4536 or mstearns@umn.edu. A \$25 registration fee will be collected at the door.

Thursday, May 10, 2012

- 1-4pm. The Nuts & Bolts of a Timber Sale (Grand Rapids). Cost: \$20/family. For more information contact Julie Miedtke, Extension Forester, 218-327-7365 or email miedt001@umn.edu

Tuesday, May 15, 2012

- 11:30-1pm. Webinar: A 2012 Forest Health Update: What to look for in your woods (Online). This presentation, by Dr. Jana Albers, is targeted to woodland owners but also of interest to loggers and natural resource professionals. It will provide an up-to-date review of this year's most pressing forest health threats and what landowners can do to stay on top of them. Before this live presentation, consider watching Jana's 2011 forest health overview which can be found at <http://z.umn.edu/2011webinars>. To register for this and other webinars, go to <http://z.umn.edu/2012webinarreg>.

Friday, May 18, 2012

- MFA's Afternoon Bus Tour, Annual Meeting, Evening Banquet and Tree Farm Awards (Grand Rapids). Register TODAY using the flyer enclosed!

Saturday, May 19, 2012

- MFA's Spring Field Day (Forest History Center, Grand Rapids): Register TODAY using the flyer enclosed!

Thursday, May 31, 2012

- 6pm. Ash Management with a Timber Sale Visit (Lake City). This class will head to the woods to look at a forest with ash and consider management options and goals for that stand with emerald ash borer so close. We may also visit a recently harvested timber stand. \$25. Pre-registration is required by calling 1-888-241-4536. For more information contact Angela Gupta, 507 280-2869.

Friday, June 15, 2012

- 1-4pm. Itasca County Firewise Field Trip (Grand Rapids). Cost: \$20/family. For more information contact Julie Miedtke, Extension Forester, 218-327-7365 or email miedt001@umn.edu.

Fun Forest Fact:

Species such as whitetail deer, wild turkeys, and wood ducks were almost extinct at the turn of the century. Wildlife conservation and habitat enhancement has resulted in flourishing populations of these and other species we now take almost for granted.

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



Here's what's new at MyMinnesotaWoods:

- Climate and Minnesota Forests: Reflections from a February workshop
- UMN Extension Forestry webinar series begins April 19
- Managing for Black Walnut: Recent presentation by UMN Extension's Mel Baughman
- Meet a MN Logger: Dobbs Logging, Elmer still going strong in his 65th year of logging!

Have a question about your woodland? Post it on the Discussion Board. You may be surprised at how many good responses you get!

For the live version, with much more info on each topic, visit MyMinnesotaWoods.org.

It's Fire Season!

Check out the enclosed brochure.

Creating a Firewise Property

Photo background by Eli Sagor (Flickr: esagor).